

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

March 2017

The following summarizes economic development division activities for March 2017.

Economic Development Activities:

- Marketing/Website: Staff interviewed five finalists for the ED Website project (28 proposals were received). A finalist will be chosen in April for contract. A new ED web is anticipated by the fall of 2017. Staff continues working with Camoin regarding a welcome packet to be printed including key information sheets. Such packet can be distributed to businesses and future employees. Staff attended a social media training session in preparation of the web/social media initiative.
- Logo/Branding Contest: Approximately 30 submittals were received and reviewed by staff and a core GBA group. The review entails selecting the best design and ideas for the future marketing brand. A selection of the preferred submittals will occur in April.
- CT Next – Innovation Places: Significant staff time was devoted to this initiative in March. Groton has been working with SPARK, CURE, New London and City of Groton on a Thames River Innovation Project (TRIP) effort. The goal was to submit the implementation grant proposal by April 1st. The Town Council offered their support at the COW meeting on March 21st.
- Community Wayfinding Signage: Staff conducted all interviews for the short-listed firms for the community wayfinding sign plan. A preferred firm has been identified and final discussions will occur in April leading to a contract.
- CDBG Project: Staff presented to the COW and Town Council (public hearing) regarding an \$800,000 CDBG competitive grant proposal for Mystic Homes. Final submittal of the request to the CT Department of Housing will occur in April.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Oral School): Staff showed the property to multiple interests. Marketing is being ramped up further including the development of new promotional materials. Communication with DECD and DEEP on the project has been positive and ongoing.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff has developed draft rezoning language to be submitted to Groton City.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Discussions with development teams are ongoing.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Staff continues to work with Camoin to develop a TIF program including policy/procedures and multiple TIF districts including areas at Route 184/117, Downtown Groton, and possibly Thames Street Waterfront. Creation of a new TIF Committee was sanctioned by the Town Council.

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- LEAN Process Improvements: OPDS staff finalized the LEAN streamlining process and presented a final report to an internal grouping of multi-department staff. A future presentation will occur before others including the Town Council.
- Nautilus Dock/Water Taxi: Staff is preparing an application to the CT Ports Authority for funding to update the Nautilus Dock Extension Plan including cost estimates for construction.

Meetings/Outreach:

- Staff participated in meetings with partner agencies including CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), seCTer, Greater Mystic Chamber, U.S. Senator Chris Murphy regarding New London Port, Governor's Economic Summit, and Groton Business Association.
- Staff interaction with businesses included communication with prospects and existing businesses. There were about 38 recorded inquiries and communications with businesses in March. There has been ongoing and significant activity on Leonard Drive with three new high profile businesses arriving in future months.