

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

March 2022

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for March 2022.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>

Economic Development Activities:

- American Recovery Plan (ARPA) Programming: Staff has been active in securing more “Budget Simulator” feedback from www.greatergroton.com (see description in next bullet) to gain public input. There was a Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) meet on March 23rd. After much discussion, a motion passed to forward the categories (“buckets”) to the Town Council for endorsement. who held their first meeting with new members on February 16th. Staff met and communicated with several project interests seeking updates on ARPA funding.
- GreaterGroton.com Public Engagement Tool: Staff continues to work hard to promote the GreaterGroton.com site. Staff has promoted the budget simulator tool through social media, as well as print materials handing them out at public locations/events and going door to door in neighborhoods leaving print materials with residents. The average time spent on the simulator by the public is over 11 minutes. This tool allows the public to provide direct input on potential funding allocations. Please register today at www.greatergroton.com to help promote this important tool.
- Exploremoregroton.com Economic Development Website: Staff continues working with Golden Shovel, web contractor, finalizing edits for our website refresh. We are looking forward to promoting a new www.exploremoregroton.com site in the coming weeks.
- Marketing: Staff ran an advertisement in the March 2022 issue of *Site Selection Magazine*. Site Selection Magazine published a Connecticut Spotlight Report in March 2022 that was endorsed by AdvanceCT. <https://siteselection.com/digitalEdition/2022/mar/#page=224>
- Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA): Staff advertised for the NAA program. Applications were due to the department by March 30th. Staff will send a referral to the Town Council for approval before applications are sent to the state.
- Bond Rating Review: Staff participated in meetings (Fitch, Moody’s, S&P) regarding the town’s bond rating. Economic development activity presentations were received positively by all three agencies.
- Mystic Parking: Staff and consultant provided an update to the COW on March 22nd regarding the Mystic Parking Management Plan. Staff is advancing the effort to the next phase leading towards initial implementation. Additionally, a meeting was held on March 29th at the Seaport to understand their parking plans for this upcoming season.
- Data Centers: The Town Council held a meeting on March 29th and voted to end discussions with the data center developer regarding the Flanders Road host agreement.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

March 2022

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): There has been no new activity in March beyond past mediation. Groton was notified that the new development team (Blue Lotus Group Mystic) launched its project website illustrating the company and their plans (<https://www.bluelotusmystic.com/>). It is Groton's understanding that the developer plans on having a significant public outreach campaign to gain input and to educate the public regarding their identity and intent. The property today has 160,000 square feet of existing building space including a 40,000 indoor recreation facility plus the site holds environmentally contaminated land. Any future redevelopment will preserve half of the 80+ acres as public open space. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquiries about its progress.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): ThayerMahan has been completing final internal review. ThayerMahan has grown from three to over 70 employees in three years. They are committed to the project in making this their future world headquarters. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): PJ&A has selected A.R. Builders as their regional housing development partner to build on the four parcels. A.R. is both a national builder with a strong regional focus in Connecticut and Rhode Island. A.R. has projects in Groton and New London. The project envisions less than 300 apartments on 17.75 acres encompassing four lots (two town-owned and two private-owned). Anticipated tax benefits will be in the order of \$1 million annually. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): The project awaits final resolution on the zoning approval appeal. The proposed site plan for multi-family housing has been approved by the Groton Planning & Zoning Commission. Ground breaking is anticipated for a 305-unit multi-family apartment development. Targeted future tenants are both young professionals and "empty-nesters." Anticipated future property tax revenue is in the magnitude of \$1 million annually. <https://www.seelyschool.com/>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Colonel Ledyard School): Bellsite LLC presented to the COW on March 22nd to compare the refined plans with the initial concepts. The COW was supportive of the project and the detailed plans for a total of 64 units. Next step is to submit the final site plans for City of Groton PZC review. Phase I will modify the existing school building for residential unit development. Phase II will include new buildings and apartments on the rear of the site. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): Staff is anticipating future discussion with the Town Council. Staff will be modifying the draft RFP prior to reissuance for solicitations. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated by the development community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

March 2022

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 5 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 838 Facebook followers, a negligible change from February.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 91 LinkedIn page followers, no change from February.
** Please follow the LinkedIn page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/groton-economic-development/>
** Please like and SHARE posts on social media to expand the reach!
- Website Metrics (Mar 2-31) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 865 (732 new/133 returning), 38 pct. Below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.94, 11 pct. Above 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,678, 31 pct. Below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 1 min 27 sec, 35 pct. Above 12-month avg.
- There are 598 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, negligible change from February. Email addresses collected from meetings and events are being added to the mailing list.
(<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)
- There are 92 followers to our LinkedIn page, negligible change from February. Please follow the LinkedIn page and share our posts to your network: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/groton-economic-development/>
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Mar. 2-31, 2022) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 367
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 43
 - New Registrations 13
 - Engaged Visitors 45
 - Informed Visitors 97
 - Aware Visitors 237
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
How should Groton spend our Federal Recovery Dollars?	11	40	147
Suggestion Box	26	30	52
Parking in Mystic	2	27	47
Housing in Groton	6	11	20
Small Business Forum	1	1	6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

March 2022

Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
January 2021	9.1	9.5	8.5
February 2021	8.7	9.4	8.3
March 2021	8.8	9.4	8.3
April 2021	8.2	8.7	7.6
May 2021	6.6	6.8	6.0
June 2021	6.9	7.5	6.9
July 2021	6.8	7.3	6.9
August 2021	5.9	6.6	6.1
September 2021	5.4	6.0	5.4
October 2021	4.9	5.9	5.3
November 2021	4.2	5.3	4.8
December 2021	3.8	5.1	4.4
January 2022	3.8	4.9	4.4
February 2022	4.6	5.7	5.0

Keep up to date on town meetings including agendas, minutes etc. by visiting the Calendar on the town's website here: <http://www.agendasuite.org/iip/groton>

Click here for events going on around Groton: <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/events/?v=list>

Keep up to date on news pertaining to Groton & Economic Development by going to the website here: <http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>