

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

March 2024

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for **March 2024**.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here: <http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>

Economic Development Activities:

- Small Business Pivot Grant: Staff has finalized eight (8) agreements and sent them to awardees for signature. Grant funding is provided on a reimbursement basis after required documentation is submitted. Maximum awards up to \$5,000 may be awarded to existing businesses. This program is funding through the allocation of \$100,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.
- Community Challenge Grant: Staff continues to coordinate with Connecticut DECD for the “Poquonnock Bridge Village Revitalization” project. This involves a state grant of \$6.4 million for the Poquonnock neighborhood to add housing (51 units at Grasso Gardens) and public infrastructure upgrades (sidewalks, boardwalk, and walkways). Next steps include finalizing a legal agreement with the Groton Housing Authority, completing a project “Administrative Plan”, and closing on the Community Challenge grant (town and DECD). The state allows three years to initiate program expenses and up to five years for final expenditure.
- Economic Development Update – RTM Presentation: Staff provided a Groton Economic Development Update presentation to the RTM on March 13th. Staff highlighted specific development and redevelopment projects that have recently occurred or are beginning. The highlighted projects are contributors to Groton’s grand list and overall economy. The presentation link can be found below and begins around minute 11:00.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAxm6eOavM8&list=PLp4s6RQGCh5Ri4F9Tq8RaCh0g-yl1Z7PB>
- Connecticut Commercial Realtor and seCTer Meeting: Commercial realtors attended a Groton EDC hosted presentation by the Southeastern CT Enterprise Resource (seCTer) on March 21st. SeCTer detailed their organizational role, access to business and development resources, business planning, and economic development education. Realtors were eager to become more involved in future meetings and initiatives.
- Groton Community Conversations: Last month, the Office of Planning and Development Services staff initiated the “Groton Community Conversations” workshop series aimed at fostering community engagement and Groton’s future. The second workshop titled “Shaping the Future of Groton” was held on March 28th at the Marine Science Magnet High School. The next workshop is scheduled for April 25th from 5:45 - 7:15 p.m. at the Community Baptist Church, 950 Gold Star Highway, Groton. You can find the first two presentations and

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information on future workshops at bit.ly/GrotonCommunityConvo

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): Staff has finalized most of the ARPA legal agreements. Payments to projects are being made as they meet specified thresholds. Funding is being made available to non-municipal recipients on a reimbursement basis.
- Economic Development Specialist Position: Final interviews for the Economic Development Specialist position were held in early March. A job offer was accepted by Corinne Piazza. She will start on April 22nd.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (former Groton Heights School): Staff attended a Town Council public hearing on March 5th regarding the redevelopment of Groton Heights. Groton staff have maintained discussions with the Bill Memorial Library regarding a potential land swap as a part of the overall project. The previously held TOPE meeting recommended support for this project including advancing a future RFP to the Town Council. Developers were notified that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Groton Heights will soon be issued. As a result, several property tours are being conducted with various groups. Numerous investors and developers have expressed interest in this property.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): PJ&A, holder of the land option agreement, has progressed in finalizing terms with a multi-family use developer (Orr Partners). Plans will be forthcoming shortly that are similar to past plans. The Town Council granted an 18 month extension to the option agreement. The project had envisioned a multi-family housing development 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://ctexaminer.com/2022/05/11/groton-council-greenlights-324-unit-apartment-complex-on-former-town-land/>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): The construction on-site has been progressing over the past few months. Don Mar Development continues with the construction of a 305 unit residential development. The owner stated that they have a large waiting list for these future units. 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 (former Colonel Ledyard School): Bellsite, LLC requested and was provided a permit for interior demolition and partial building renovation. The town and Bellsite, LLC completed the sale for the property on September 14, 2023. The project will include 64 residential units (multi-family) within close proximity to Electric Boat. Phase I will modify the existing school building for residential unit development. Phase II will include new

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buildings and apartments on the rear of the site. <https://www.theday.com/local-news/20230623/plans-for-apartments-at-former-groton-city-school-approved/>

- Public Property Redevelopment (former Pleasant Valley School):) Staff attended a Town Council public hearing on March 5th regarding the redevelopment of Groton Heights. The previously held TOPE meeting recommended support for this project including advancing a future RFP to the Town Council. Developers were notified that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Pleasant Valley will soon be issued. As a result, several property tours are being conducted with various groups. Numerous investors and developers have expressed interest in developing this property.
- Public Property Redevelopment (former S.B. Butler School): Staff coordinated the updating of an appraisal for the property. Staff participated in the Town Owned Excess Property Committee (TOPE) meeting on November 15, 2023. The TOPE opened a discussion regarding the future excessing of the former S.B. Butler School. Public comments were taken during the meeting. Several developers have approached the town indicating interest in the property.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 10 trade name certificates received this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 1,045 Facebook followers, 2.75% increase from February.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network: <https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 144 followers to our LinkedIn page, negligible increase 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 www.exploremoregroton.com – Not available this time period.
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (March 1-March 31) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 994
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 87
 - New Registrations 7
 - Engaged Visitors 19
 - Informed Visitors 272
 - Aware Visitors 716

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- Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London-Westerly Labor Market	Connecticut
October 2022	4.2	4.2	4.0
November 2022	3.4	3.7	3.5
December 2022	3.0	3.2	3.1
January 2023	3.5	4.1	4.2
February 2023	3.8	4.5	4.6
March 2023	3.8	4.1	4.3
April 2023	2.8	2.9	3.0
May 2023	3.3	3.6	3.7
June 2023	3.3	3.7	4.0
July 2023	3.2	3.6	3.9
August 2023	2.9	3.2	3.5
September 2023	2.6	2.7	3.0
October 2023	2.9	3.2	3.4
November 2023	3.1	3.2	3.5
December 2023	3.4	3.7	3.9
January 2024	4.3	4.8	4.4
February 2024	4.4	5.2	5.4

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>

Groton Community Conversations

Workshop Series

Join the Office of Planning and Development Services for a workshop series, designed to empower you with insights into the essential elements that contribute to the success of a thriving community.

Home Matters - Addressing Housing Needs in Groton

- Define what constitutes affordable housing and the various metrics used to measure affordability.
- Understand the factors influencing the balance between housing supply and demand.
- Explore the relationship between transportation infrastructure, commuting patterns, and housing choices.



Food will be provided - come for the food, stay for the workshop

bit.ly/GrotonCommunityConvo



April
25



Community
Baptist Church

950 Gold Star
Highway, Groton



5:45p -
7:15p

Upcoming Workshops

Check website for full
details

May TBD - Civics 101

Stay tuned for our fall
Workshop Series
beginning in September

