

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

November 2023

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for November 2023.

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: The application deadline for the Groton Business Pivot grant has been extended to December 15, 2023. Businesses may qualify for up to \$5,000 in reimbursable grants. Visit www.greatergroton.com/pivot to learn more and apply. This local program, funded by the ARPA grant, aims to support Groton's small businesses as they adapt to the ever-changing and fragile economic conditions. Eligible uses of the funds include diversifying revenue streams, expanding the capacity to provide goods and services, updating business models, or developing contingency plans. Additionally, a microgrant for façade improvements is also available.
- Community Challenge Grant: Connecticut DECD advised staff that the final legal agreement is pending. The agreement will be paired with the recently approved \$6.4 million project budget for the Poquonnock neighborhood to add housing and public infrastructure upgrades.
- Notable Events and Meetings: Staff and an EDC representative attended a CT Ports Authority tour at the New London Port on November 20, 2023. Staff coordinated with the Groton Resiliency Division to hold a Mystic Business Resiliency Zoom meeting on November 15, 2023. Staff attended the recent Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Convention on November 28, 2023. Staff attended the Connecticut Housing Conference on November 2, 2023 and learned about several new housing financing programs including “Build for Connecticut” that targets increasing workforce housing. As a result, staff has recently shared this program with numerous interested Groton developers. Lastly, staff has been in communication with numerous investors seeking to meet with Groton at the ICSC – NYC conference in early December.
- 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. X
- Pfizer: Staff is aware of Pfizer’s plan for staff reduction. The official number or any impacts to Groton’s facility is unknown. An article that ran in The Day can be found here: <https://www.theday.com/local/20231130/pfizer-confirms-layoffs-coming-in-groton/>

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (former Groton Heights School): Staff coordinated the

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completion of an updated appraisal. A TOPE meeting was held on October 18th recommending 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. Staff has completed the draft RFP.

- 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. 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): Don Mar Development continues with the construction of a 305 unit residential development. Structural walls are now visible. 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 is now preparing for construction. 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 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 coordinated the completion of an updated appraisal. A TOPE meeting was held on October 18th recommending 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. Staff has completed the draft RFP.
- Public Property Redevelopment (former S.B. Butler School): 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.

An article with an update on all town owned properties ran in The Day on May 27, 2023.

<https://www.theday.com/local-news/20230527/a-look-at-grotons-unused-town-owned-properties/>

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Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There was four trade name certificate received this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 974 Facebook followers, 1% increase from October.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network: <https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 117 followers to our LinkedIn page, minimal change from October.
** 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 (Nov. 4-Dec. 3) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 959
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 184
 - New Registrations 12
 - Engaged Visitors 43
 - Informed Visitors 355
 - Aware Visitors 705

| Project | Engaged Participants | Informed Participants | Aware Participants |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| American Rescue Plan | 0 | 93 | 109 |
| Small Business Pivot Grant | 8 | 45 | 136 |
| Short Term Rentals | 4 | 54 | 107 |
| Community Tree Inventory | 16 | 26 | 67 |
| Main Street Noank Road Recon. | 2 | 26 | 50 |
| Sutton Park Redevelopment | 2 | 26 | 48 |

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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 |

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>