

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

October 2022

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for October 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 provided the top 20 prioritized projects as scored by the Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) to the Town Council for funding consideration. These are a part of the 53 ARPA applications that were submitted valued at over \$7 million. Full application submittals were posted on the GreaterGroton website. Additional information was also provided to the Town Council to assist with final award determinations.
- GreaterGroton.com Public Engagement Tool: Staff has worked with the new Sustainability and Resilience Manager, Megan Granato, to update and promote the Downtown Mystic Sustainability and Resiliency Plan page and was also contacted by Parks and Recreation for them to utilize the tool for the Recreations Master Plan page they are working on. Registration and participation are strongly welcomed for polls and surveys at www.greatergroton.com to help promote this important tool.
- CT Communities Challenge Grant: Staff completed a proposal and applied for a \$9.8 million “Communities Challenge Grant” from the CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). Poquonnock Bridge Village is the project area. Groton Housing Authority, Rodgers Development Company, and The Barn are involved as well as some public projects. Awardees should be notified by the end of the year. https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/05_Funding_Opportunities/CT-Communities-Challenge-Grant
- Groton Business Roundtable: The monthly “Business Roundtable” event was cancelled for Thursday, October 27th. The Commission is looking to reframe the event over the next two months and relaunch in January.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Staff successfully completed CDBG training and certification. Staff continued coordinating with the state (CTDOH) on final details specific to our request for \$2 million in grant funds for the Groton Housing Authority Grasso Gardens Rehabilitation Project. In addition, staff is working with the state (CHFA) on an additional \$3 million request for the same project. The CDBG funding is being used as leverage for the additional grant funding. A \$5 million total award is possible for the project.
- CT Community Investment Fund: Staff has been discussing the best opportunities for the upcoming Community Investment Fund (CIF) program. One superior Town/City partnership project would be improvements and redevelopment on Thames Street. This state program requires municipalities to submit grant applications. https://portal.ct.gov/CommunityInvestmentFund?language=en_US
- Naval & Maritime Consortium (NMC) Annual Meeting: Staff attended the NMC annual meeting on October 24th held at Latitude 41 Restaurant. Rep. Joe Courtney was the keynote speaker.

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- Offshore Wind Update: Staff attended an Eastern CT Chamber “Offshore Wind Update” event on October 28th with presentations from Orsted, Eversource, CT Port Authority, Equinor, and others.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): The State of CT (DECD) advised that they have terminated the Purchase and Sales Agreement with Respler Homes, LLC. Regarding the Local Development Agreement, the Town Council provided direction to its staff and attorneys to continue the mediation process required by the existing Development Agreement between Respler Homes and the Town of Groton. Additionally, they authorized the Town Manager, in consultation with the Town Attorney, upon completion of mediation, to take any appropriate measures that are allowed by the agreement, up to including termination of the agreement. The next mediation is scheduled for November 16. The current property today has over 160,000 square feet of existing building space including a 40,000 indoor recreation facility. Also, the site holds environmentally contaminated land.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): No change in October. ThayerMahan has been completing final internal review and they determined the project faces significant environmental remediation costs. 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): A.R. Builders has withdrawn their intent to develop the property. The project had envisioned about 324 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://ctexaminer.com/2022/05/11/groton-council-greenlights-324-unit-apartment-complex-on-former-town-land/>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): No change in October. The project awaits final resolution on the zoning approval appeal. The 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 is finalizing development plans for City of Groton Planning & Zoning Commission review. The detailed plans include a total of 65 residential units (multi-family). The 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): No change in October. Staff is anticipating future discussion with the Town Council. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated

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by the development community.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 7 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 881 Facebook followers, a 1% increase from September.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 105 LinkedIn page followers, negligible change from September.
** 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 (Sep 28-Oct 27) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 877 (767 new/110 returning), 27 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.67, 10 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,465, 34 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 42 sec, 36 pct. below 12-month avg.
- There are 616 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, negligible change from September. 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>
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Aug 31-Sept 30, 2022) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 466
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 23
 - New Registrations 2
 - Engaged Visitors 13
 - Informed Visitors 170
 - Aware Visitors 307
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
Short Term Rentals in Groton	7	62	105
Downtown Mystic Resiliency & Sustainability Plan	1	40	72
ARPA Application	0	30	55
Parking in Mystic	2	26	51
Cannabis in Groton	0	12	24

Unemployment Data (Percent %)

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	Groton	Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
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
March 2022	4.2	4.7	4.3
April 2022	3.6	4.0	3.7
May 2022	3.7	4.2	4.0
June 2022	4.0	4.4	4.1
July 2022	4.0	4.5	4.3
August 2022	3.6	4.5	4.3
September 2022	3.8	4.1	3.9

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>