

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

OCTOBER 2021

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for October 2021.

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 met with the Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) on October 6th to receive business representative input specific to COVID impacts. There were approximately 10 representatives offering input. Issues identified included: labor, supply chain (lack of availability and cost), operations, and child care. Staff also coordinated two in-person public forum events on October 19th at 1:00 p.m. (Groton City Municipal Building) and 6:30 p.m. (Groton Senior Center). Both were well received with Groton staff participating with poster boards to gain ideas on how to invest ARPA funding. Additionally, an ARPA Coordinator position was created, approved and posted for hire. This position will focus on the ARPA effort over the next three to four years.
- Marketing/Initiatives: Staff completed a soft launch of the online community engagement platform www.greatergroton.com on October 19th. This tool assists with vetting project ideas including those associated with American Recovery Plan funding. Community members who register will have all access to the site that will use tools such as voting, forums, Q&A, polling, mapping, and more to engage the public in their thoughts and opinions for Groton.
- EDC Restaurant Forum: The EDC held a virtual restaurant forum on October 18th. Speakers included representatives from the CT Restaurant Association and also Ledge Light Health District. EDC Commissioner Craig Melin planned and moderated the successful event. There was a substantial discussion balancing COVID health concerns (including mask mandate) with restaurant challenges. The recording can be found here: <https://youtu.be/G5Qvm6xgwDY>
- Groton Market Rate Housing: The Camoin 310 Market Rate Housing Study was presented by Camoin and staff at the October 12th COW meeting. The study illustrates demand for thousands more units over the next five years even after existing pipeline housing projects have been constructed.
https://cms9files.revize.com/grotonct/document_center/Departments/Planning%20&%20development/Housing%20Market%20Study/FINAL%20Report%20-%202021%20Housing%20Market%20Study%20-%20Town%20of%20Groton.pdf The report contains clear infographic illustrations to best depict findings.
- Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) Annual Meeting: Staff coordinated the October 20th CEDAS annual meeting at UConn – Avery Point Branford House. Electric Boat, Southeastern CT Enterprise Region (seCTer), and Avery Point presented. Approximately 50 statewide economic development guests attended. CEDAS had not held its meeting in southeastern CT for several years. This meeting showcased Groton to economic developers from across CT.
- DECD Brownfield Grant Proposal: Staff coordinated the development of a \$650,000 brownfield

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

OCTOBER 2021

grant proposal for the town-owned 1208 Poquonnock Road adjacent to the former massage school. Assuming funding, the town-owned property will be properly remediated.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): There has been communication between town and developer legal teams focused on formal mediation. There has been minimal project activity since the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZ&C) has signaled to staff there is no interest in the larger mixed-use vision. The Commission is focused on creating the appropriate zoning regulation for the 80+ acres of property with 160,000 square feet of existing building space and environmentally contaminated property. Half the total land area will be redeveloped and half will be protected as public open space. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquiries about its progress. <https://resplrhomes.com/mystic-river-bluffs/> is the developer's project website.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Since the presentation to the COW on August 24th, staff and ThayerMahan have been working to resolve the few remaining outstanding legal agreement details. The final agreement is anticipated to the Town Council this fall. ThayerMahan has grown from three to over 60 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 regional housing developer to work with them on the four parcels. The project envisions approximately 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): A site plan is in process of being approved for the construction of the new multi-family development. Construction will begin after approval of such plan for the 280-unit multi-family apartment development. Targeted future tenants are 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 has been active in completing plans and inspections for this property. A site plan will be submitted to the City for consideration and approval prior to any work. Phase I will modify the existing school building into between 14-20 apartments. Phase II will include new buildings and apartments (less than 60 apartments) on the rear of the site. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): Staff met with the COW on October 26th to discuss changes to the draft RFP prior to reissuance for solicitations. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated by the development community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE
OCTOBER 2021

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 3 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 796 Facebook followers, negligible change
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 83 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 (Sept. 29-Oct. 28) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 949 (780 new/169 returning), 36 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.95, 13 pct. above 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,851, 26 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 1 minute 27 sec, 31 pct. above 12-month avg.
- There are 572 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, no change from September. Email addresses collected from meetings and events are being added to the mailing list.
(<https://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)

Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
January 2020	3.7	4.5	4.4
February 2020	3.6	4.4	4.4
March 2020	3.0	3.8	3.6
April 2020	11.1	13.8	8.0
May 2020	12.6	15.0	9.4
June 2020	11.8	13.3	10.2
July 2020	10.9	12.4	10.3
August 2020	8.6	10.2	8.2
September 2020	8.0	9.1	7.5
October 2020	6.0	6.9	5.8
November 2020	8.0	8.7	7.7
December 2020	7.5	8.5	7.5
January 2021	9.1	9.5	8.5
February 2021	8.7	9.4	8.3
March 2021	8.8	9.4	8.3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

OCTOBER 2021

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

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>