

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

September 2022

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for September 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: The 53 ARPA applications were summarized and distributed with scoring sheets to the LTRC. Additionally, the full submittals were posted on the GreaterGroton website. The Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) completed their evaluations and staff tabulated the responses to find consensus. The LTRC met on September 28th and agreed to send the top 20 scoring projects to the Town Council for review as well as information for all of the submittals. Staff was asked to seek some additional information and provide to the Town Council to assist with final award determinations.
- GreaterGroton.com Public Engagement Tool: Staff continues to add projects and promote the community engagement tool. Staff met with Cierra Patrick, City of Groton Economic Development Specialist, who will begin to add projects and utilize the site. Staff has committed to at least two more years of using this tool to engage our community. 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 is applying for a “Communities Challenge Grant” from the CT 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. The single grant application is due October 2022. https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/05_Funding_Opportunities/CT-Communities-Challenge-Grant
- Groton Business Roundtable: The monthly “Business Roundtable” event was held on Thursday, September 22nd at Bio CT Commons from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. The final event for this year will be held on October 27th from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Bio CT Commons. Please forward the information to your business contacts. The Economic Development Commission is in the process of revamping this event for 2023.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Staff has been 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 total \$5 million award is possible for the project.
- Mystic Parking Management: Staff has been coordinating with the parking consultant, John Burke, to advance select implementation strategies from the approved Mystic Parking Plan. Increased parking management will assist in ensuring that parking efficiency is maximized. It is anticipated that the first phase will be implemented in the 2023 season.
- CT Community Investment Fund: Staff has been discussing the best opportunities for the upcoming Community Investment Fund (CIF) program. One superior Town/City partnership

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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

- Groton Square Open House: Staff attended an open house hosted by Brixmor Property Group, the leasing agent for the plaza. The event was attended by local real estate brokers. Staff attended to gain some insight on leasing for the plaza. Staff was able to provide information to both the leasing agent and the realtors regarding what is going on in Groton.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): The State of CT (DECD) has advised they intend to close on their property in line with their approved Purchase and Sales Agreement with Respler Homes, LLC. Also, it is believed that the Blue Lotus Group will own Respler Homes, LLC. <https://www.bluelotusmystic.com/> 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. Any future redevelopment will preserve half of the 80+ acre land area as public open space (lower half of the existing land).
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): No change in September. 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): A.R. Builders submitted development plans for Planning & Zoning Commission review. Plans will be on the PZC agenda this fall. A.R. is both a national builder with a strong regional focus in Connecticut and Rhode Island. The project envisions 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 September. 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>

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- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): No change in September. Staff is anticipating future discussion with the Town Council. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated 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:

- 873 Facebook followers, no change from August.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 103 LinkedIn page followers, no change from August.
** 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 (Aug 31-Sep 29) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 933 (803 new/130 returning), 23 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.68, 9 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,567, 30 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 45 sec, 32 pct. below 12-month avg.
- There are 611 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, negligible change from August. 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 469
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 24
 - New Registrations 0
 - Engaged Visitors 19
 - Informed Visitors 157
 - Aware Visitors 323
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
Short Term Rentals in Groton	15	75	135
Parking in Mystic	0	36	69
ARPA Application	0	23	48
Downtown Mystic Resiliency	0	7	27
Cannabis in Groton	1	8	23

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Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	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

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>