

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

April 2023

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for April 2023.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>

Economic Development Activities:

- Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA): Staff received applications from Community of Hope, Saint Mark's Episcopal Church, Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc., Sacred Heart School, and MALTA by the March 31st deadline. Staff processed them and forwarded to the COW in April. A public hearing will be held in May followed by a vote in June. The submittals will then be sent to the state for final approval by the July 1st deadline.
- Community Investment Fund (CIF): Staff participated in a state webinar advising of the Round 3 notice of availability for grant funding released on May 1st. Staff is targeting ideas for the next CIF funding round this summer. A likely candidate will be a planning grant (up to \$250,000) used to refine a project to better position it for future implementation financing.
- Community Challenge Grant: Staff continues to coordinate with the state regarding the awarded \$8.4 million grant for various projects in the Poquonnock neighborhood. Legal agreements will be drafted by DECD for review and approval by the project partners. A final agreement will be provided to the Town Council for approval.
- State of Mystic, Stonington, & Groton: Staff attended the event on April 28th with speakers Danielle Chesebrough of Stonington, John Burt of the Town of Groton, and Keith Hedrick of City of Groton who each gave updates on the economic activity in their areas.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): There was no activity in April. 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): Staff is awaiting the conclusion of the Town Council's Excess Property Review process. Once completed, staff seeks direction on the timely release of an RFP for Groton Heights. Since ThayerMahan has retreated from the project, numerous investors and developers have expressed interest in developing this property.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): No change in April. PJ&A, holder of the option agreement, continues to seek quality developers. The Town Council granted an 18 month extension to the option agreement for 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/>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

April 2023

- Triton Square (former Seely School): No change in March. 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 submitted plans to the City of Groton’s Planning & Zoning Commission for consideration. The detailed plans include a total of 64 residential units (multi-family). 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 April. Town Council continues to address the property reuse process changes prior to releasing this project for RFP. Staff received notice from DECD that the Community Investment Fund (CIF) grant proposal was not awarded for building removal and land preparation. Interest in the property by the development community is strong.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 6 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 924 Facebook followers, 1.7% increase from March.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 112 followers to our LinkedIn page, minimal change from March.
** 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 (April 1-30) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Not available this time period.
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Jan 24-Feb 23) www.greatergroton.com

○ Total Visits	557
○ Max. Visitors Per Day	35
○ New Registrations	8
○ Engaged Visitors	21
○ Informed Visitors	180
○ Aware Visitors	402
- Top Projects

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Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
Short Term Rentals in Groton	14	76	146
Downtown Mystic Resiliency & Sustainability Plan	0	24	60
American Rescue Plan	0	31	39
Visioning Claude Chester School	2	18	44
Parking in Mystic	1	13	41
Inspiring and Envisioning Parks and Recreation	1	4	23

- Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London-Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
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
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

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>