

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

December 2022

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for December 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 requested additional information from the ARPA applicants as requested by the Town Council. Applicant responses were provided to the ARPA Coordinator and will be provided to the Town Council in time for the January 17th COW meeting. The Town Council will address the supplemental information at this meeting. The ARPA requests totaled over \$7 million.
- CT “Communities Challenge” Grant: Staff was advised by DECD of an \$8.4 million funding award through the CT “Communities Challenge Grant.” This funding will facilitate construction of much-needed housing in Groton, both market-rate and affordable, while making better use of key parcels in the Poquonnock Bridge Village neighborhood. The grant will also fund infrastructure for better pedestrian connectivity. For details on the announcement, go to:
<https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2022/12-2022/Governor-Lamont-Announces-State-Grants-for-Eight-Projects-That-Will-Boost-Community-Vibrancy>
- Marketing: Staff attended the International Council for Shopping Center (ICSC) “Deal Making” NYC event at the Javits Center in Manhattan from 12/6 – 12/8. Groton had a promotional table at which materials and videos were displayed. Groton staff was active in networking and in describing opportunities to developers and retailers.
- Shoreline East Rail Feasibility Study: Staff attended a public hearing on December 15th held by CTDOT presenting the findings of their feasibility study for the extension of the Shoreline East Rail Line. If feasible, the project will connect the line at New London and carry it to the Rhode Island border. Preliminary findings to date are positive. <https://www.theday.com/local-news/20221215/residents-officials-voice-support-for-commuter-rail-expansion/>
- Naviretail Hotel Analysis: Staff has been working with Naviretail on a hotel feasibility analysis. There are numerous hotel rooms in Groton, however they are dated and many have not been upgraded. The preliminary study has determined that there is significant demand especially for extended stay and moderate price range products. The report is being finalized and will be released to the public soon.
- CT “Community Investment Fund” (CIF) Grant: Staff has been coordinating with several projects targeting the submittal of grant proposals to DECD by January 6th. Staff has been coordinating with the Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) to support their direct submittal for funding the construction of an early childhood facility. Staff is directly applying for funds for demolition and site preparation at the former Pleasant Valley School. Only select CT municipalities can submit grant applications.
https://portal.ct.gov/CommunityInvestmentFund?language=en_US

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Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): There was no activity in December since the State of CT (DECD) terminated the Purchase and Sales Agreement with Respler Homes, LLC. The Town has also taken steps to terminate the local development agreement. 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 December. 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): PJ&A, holder of the option agreement, continues to seek quality developers since A.R. Builders withdrew their project interest. 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 December. 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 continues to coordinate plan modifications for City of Groton including their Wetland Commission and Planning & Zoning Commission. 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 December. 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 4 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

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Social Media Metrics:

- 881 Facebook followers, no change from November.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 108 followers to our LinkedIn page, minimal change from November.
** 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 (Nov 30-Dec 29) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 697 (612 new/85 returning), 40 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.61, 11 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,122, 48 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 56 sec, 8 pct. below 12-month avg.
- There are 618 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, minimal change from November.
(<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Nov. 30-Dec. 29, 2022) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 387
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 38
 - New Registrations 3
 - Engaged Visitors 16
 - Informed Visitors 155
 - Aware Visitors 250
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
Short Term Rentals in Groton	4	54	86
Downtown Mystic Resiliency & Sustainability Plan	2	38	63
American Rescue Plan Act	0	31	55
Parking in Mystic	0	22	47
Cannabis in Groton	0	8	31

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

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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

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>