

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

*November 2016*

The following summarizes economic development division activities for November 2016.

### **Economic Development Activities:**

- Airport Development Zone (ADZ): DECD informed staff that their evaluation review is nearly complete. ADZ approval is anticipated in 2016.
- Great Blue Research Survey: Staff distributed the reports for the two surveys (residential/consumer and business) to the Town Council, RTM, EDC and other boards. Presentation of the findings was made by Great Blue Research to the Town Council on Tuesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> with many EDC members present.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Discussions with development teams are ongoing.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Oral School): Staff met with DECD regarding final documents. Agreements are being prepared by attorneys for final signature. Staff continues to market and promote the property including fielding responses to inquiries. Staff also met with Groton Open Space Association (GOSA) on November 10<sup>th</sup> specific to the property.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff met with the City Planner to discuss the future zoning for the property. A zoning amendment will be required prior to issuance of the RFP in 2017.
- Marketing/Website: Staff has coordinated with Camoin in drafting the RFP for the new economic development web. The RFP will be distributed in early December. The new website will be an attractive stand-alone web with key features including video, social media, mapping and a brand for Groton. In addition, Groton will partner with GBA to conduct a community image/branding competition. The winning brand will be integrated into the website and PR materials.
- CT Next – Innovation Places: Groton has been working with SPARK, CURE, New London and City of Groton on a Thames River Innovation Project (TRIP) effort. \$50,000 in grant funding was provided by CT Next. A consultant was hired with funds to begin a regional innovation place program with a goal of targeting additional implementation grants.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Staff coordinated with Camoin regarding a scope of work for a future Groton TIF plan. The SOW was presented to the Town Council for discussion on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Council is supportive of the effort to first create an overall plan, identify future TIF districts, and establish a comprehensive TIF program.
- Incentives: Staff completed a draft “Business Incentives and Assistance” brochure that will be used to simply explain existing state and local programs to the business community. This document will be released by year-end.
- Community Wayfinding Signage: Staff has completed a draft RFP for the development of a community wayfinding sign plan. This RFP will be released in early December.

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- Economic Assistance Fund: Staff met with the EDC Economic Assistance Fund Task Force on November 16<sup>th</sup> to review the draft revisions to the program guidelines. The Task Force was generally supportive of the proposed changes.
- Growing in Groton Resource Guide: A draft resource guide to assist new Groton business interests has been developed. Staff is conducting a final review of the document prior to production.
- LEAN Process Improvements: OPDS staff participated in an ongoing process improvement for the department focused on streamlining procedure and efficiency. This effort will continue for the next several weeks targeting permitting and zoning improvements.

### **Meetings/Outreach:**

- Staff participated in meetings with partner agencies including CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), seCTer, Greater Mystic Chamber, and Groton Business Association.
- Staff presented an Economic Overview to the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) on November 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff interaction with businesses included communication with prospects and existing businesses. There were about 36 recorded inquiries and communications with businesses in November.