

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

November 2018

The following summarizes economic development division activities for November 2018.

Economic Development Activities:

- Marketing: Staff has been preparing for the ICSC conference to be held 12/4 – 12/6th in New York City. Groton will have a promotional table to market the community and key opportunities. New materials have been developed including Groton postcards, EB information, and planned meetings with investors, real estate brokers, and businesses have been scheduled.
- Thames River Innovation Place (TRIP): Staff participated in the public formal launch November 8th at UConn Avery Point. Staff also was involved in the Entrepreneur Session held at Pfizer on November 28th. Redevelopment Placemaking effort involving Thames Street and Hodges Square is advancing.
- Groton Economic Development Strategy: Staff continues to work with Camoin to address findings from the October meeting and also draft the strategies document. In light of the multiple ongoing initiatives, the document's goal is to offer a tool that illustrates various priorities and how they should best be implemented.
- Tax Abatement Program: Staff has completed the tax abatement program draft. It has now been forwarded to the Town Manager for comment. Soon it will be sent to the Town Solicitor for formatting and legal refinement. The program will ultimately be presented to the Town Council for approval. It contains a tiered tax benefit structure based upon project size and benefit to Groton.
- Opportunity Zone: Staff met with the CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), attended a statewide OZ training session, and participated in a webinar to understand and prepare for the federal OZ implementation located between Route 184 and Route 12.
- Wayfinding Sign Master Plan: Staff coordinated with BETA Group to prepare for the Town Council (COW) presentation that was held on November 27th. The COW was supportive of the effort and sought partnerships for helping fund the effort's implementation. Budget requests for the implementation are being developed, but total project cost is estimated at about \$250,000.
- EDC Candidate Interviews: Staff conducted interviews of EDC member candidates and made recommendations to the Town Manager for appointment.
- Wind Forum and CT Ports Authority: Staff attended a CT Wind Forum held at BioCT (formerly CURE). Staff also met with the CT Ports Authority staff to discuss ongoing economic development initiatives and their focus on this region/port.

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- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): Staff and the state have been coordinating closely on the project. A public overview followed by an executive session was conducted with the Town Council (COW) on Tuesday, November 27th. The process was discussed as well as the proposal from the “preferred developer.” Deputy Commissioner David Kooris participated to address the partnership formed between the town, state, and the developer. Discussions with the developer will be ongoing into 2019.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Interviews were conducted for the redevelopment project. A public overview followed by an executive session was conducted with the Town Council (COW) on Tuesday, November 27th. The process was discussed as well as the proposal from the “preferred developer.” Staff was advised by DECD that our submitted Brownfield Grant proposal scored highly. We are optimistic that funding will be forthcoming to assist in offsetting building remediation costs. Discussions with the developer will be ongoing into 2019.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Staff has been involved in detailed discussions focused on project logistics. A public overview followed by an executive session was conducted with the Town Council (COW) on Tuesday, November 27th. The process was discussed as well as the proposal from the “preferred developer.” Discussions with the developer will be ongoing into 2019.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Seely School): Staff has been coordinating development interests with Goman and York and addressing property logistics. Formal developer interests are anticipated in early 2019. Goman and York will also be at the ICSC NYC conference to market the property.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

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

Social Media Metrics:

- 192 Facebook followers, up 16% from last month. **
- 12 Twitter followers

** Note increase in Facebook followers and newsletter sign ups. Thanks to the efforts of Rachael Franco and Conrad Heede for posting information about the website, Facebook page, and newsletter on Facebook.

Website Metrics: (Oct. 30 – Nov. 28)) www.exploremoregroton.com

- Total Sessions: 742 (529 new/213 returning), up 9 pct.
- Pages per session: 2.3, down 40 pct.
- Total Page Views: 1,707, down 34 pct.
- Average Time Duration: 2 min 26 secs, down 22 pct.
- 222 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, up 20 pct.
- Email addresses collected from meetings and events are now being added to the mailing list. (<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)

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- Please follow our LinkedIn page and then as you see posts, share them to your network:
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/groton-economic-development/>

Construction Highlights:

- Chelsea Groton - major renovation of their Headquarters on Poquonnock Road and 3rd floor offices being added
- Seaport Dermatology - submitted permits for outfitting at 34 Water Street
- Cross Fit – Inguz on Leonard Drive – permits have been issued and work will begin
- A Hair Salon will open at 21 Fort Hill Rd at the former Pequot Appliance location
- The Sandbox - Interior work continues on Route 184

Upcoming Meetings of Interest and Key Dates:

- 12/1 Holiday Kick Off 5-7:00 p.m. - Indoor/Outdoor Activities at the Senior Center
- 12/3 Beautification Committee 5:30 p.m. @ the Senior Center
- 12/5 Zoning Commission at 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Annex – (topic is Mixed Use Districts)
- 12/11 SCHOOL REFERENDUM (GO VOTE!)
- 12/17 Beautification Committee 5:30 p.m. @ the Groton Public Library