

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

November 2021

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for November 2021.

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: Following the October public forums, staff focused on using the public online community engagement platform “Greater Groton” www.greatergroton.com to solicit additional public input. This tool assists with vetting project ideas including those associated with American Recovery Plan funding. A budget simulator named “Balancing Act” will be released shortly asking the public for input on potential funding allocations. Additionally, project applications are anticipated to be released soon. Also, candidate interest has been received for the approved ARPA Coordinator position.
- DECD Brownfield Grant Proposal: DECD communicating back to staff demonstrating interest in the initial grant proposal, but they required more staff feedback on detailed questions. This pertains to a \$650,000 brownfield grant proposal for the town-owned 1208 Poquonnock Road adjacent to the former massage school. Assuming funding, the town-owned property will be properly remediated.
- CT Challenge Grant Program: Staff has been targeting a future CT Challenge Grant proposal through DECD. Staff believes the best opportunity will be the second grant round anticipated during summer of 2022. Time is required to develop stronger partnerships and for refine a project.

https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/05_Funding_Opportunities/CT-Communities-Challenge-Grant

- SeCTer Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Annual Meeting: Staff participated in the CEDS kickoff meeting on November 29th. The CEDS is a federally mandated document serving the southeastern CT region to identify economic development needs and priorities. Also, staff attended the SeCTer annual meeting on November 30th.
- Wayfinding Sign Program: Staff finalized ordering the signs for the Route 117 implementation phase of the project. They are being fabricated and will arrive within 6-8 weeks. Public Works will be installing the signage including a new Gateway Sign at the intersection of Routes 1 and 117.
- Bank & Bridge Ribbon Cutting: Staff attended the large ribbon-cutting event at Bank & Bridge in downtown Mystic on November 10th. There was a large crowd at the successful event.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): Ongoing correspondence continues between town and developer legal teams focused on formal mediation. There has been minimal project activity since the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZ&C) has signaled to staff there is no interest in the larger mixed-use vision. The property today has 160,000 square feet of existing building space including a 40,000 indoor recreation facility plus the site holds environmentally

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contaminated land. Any future redevelopment will preserve half of the 80+ acres as public open space. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquiries about its progress. See the following for the project history, timeline, and process. [https://cms9files.revize.com/grotonct/document_center/Departments/Planning%20&%20development/Excess%20Property%20Development/Mystic%20Ed%20Center/Town%20Reports/MEC%20project%20history%20and%20timeline%2010%2029%202021%20\(003\).pdf](https://cms9files.revize.com/grotonct/document_center/Departments/Planning%20&%20development/Excess%20Property%20Development/Mystic%20Ed%20Center/Town%20Reports/MEC%20project%20history%20and%20timeline%2010%2029%202021%20(003).pdf)

- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff and Town Attorney met with ThayerMahan in November to finalize the legal agreement. The final agreement is anticipated to the Town Council in January. 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 has selected a regional housing developer to work with them on the four parcels. This project will advance back to the Town Council by February. The project envisions approximately 300 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://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): The proposed site plan for multi-family housing has been submitted and will be addressed by the Planning & Zoning Commission in December. Construction is anticipated for a 280-unit multi-family apartment development in 2022. 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 has been active in completing plans and inspections for this property. A site plan will be submitted to the City for consideration and approval prior to any work. Phase I will modify the existing school building into between 14-20 apartments. Phase II will include new buildings and apartments (less than 60 apartments) on the rear of the site. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): Staff will be modifying the draft RFP prior to reissuance for solicitations. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated by the development community.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 0 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 802 Facebook followers, negligible change
- ** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>

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- 86 LinkedIn page followers, negligible change from October.
 ** 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 (October 25 – Nov. 23) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 1,236 (1,097 new/139 returning), 13% below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.58, 10% below 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,953, 21% below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 58 seconds, 25 pct. below 12-month avg.
- There are 577 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, minimal change from October. Email addresses collected from meetings and events are being added to the mailing list.
<https://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>

Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
January 2020	3.7	4.5	4.4
February 2020	3.6	4.4	4.4
March 2020	3.0	3.8	3.6
April 2020	11.1	13.8	8.0
May 2020	12.6	15.0	9.4
June 2020	11.8	13.3	10.2
July 2020	10.9	12.4	10.3
August 2020	8.6	10.2	8.2
September 2020	8.0	9.1	7.5
October 2020	6.0	6.9	5.8
November 2020	8.0	8.7	7.7
December 2020	7.5	8.5	7.5
January 2021	9.1	9.5	8.5
February 2021	8.7	9.4	8.3
March 2021	8.8	9.4	8.3
April 2021	8.2	8.7	7.6
May 2021	6.6	6.8	6.0
June 2021	6.9	7.5	6.9
July 2021	6.8	7.3	6.9
August 2021	5.9	6.6	6.1
September 2021	5.4	6.0	5.4
October 2021	4.9	5.9	5.3

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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>