

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

September 2023

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for September 2023.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

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

Economic Development Activities:

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): Staff has completed nearly all of the ARPA legal agreements with award recipients. Funding is being made available to non-municipal recipients on a reimbursement basis. The program operates on a reimbursement basis including payments when attained milestones are met.
- Small Business Pivot Grant: Funded by the ARPA grant, this local program will provide one-time reimbursable awards to help Groton's small businesses adapt in response to ever-changing and fragile economic conditions. Examples of eligible uses of the funds include adding a new revenue stream, increasing capacity to provide goods and services, adopting an updated business model or creating a contingency plan. A microgrant for façade improvements will also be available. An announcement about the opening of the application window is expected in October.
- Community Challenge Grant: Staff is finalizing details with the state for the Community Challenge Grant (\$6.4 million) for various projects in the Poquonnock neighborhood. Such agreements included budget, scheduling, and implementation details. Final information requested from the state pertain to administrative program detail for each of the components within the overall project scope. Legal agreements will be drafted by DECD for review and approval by the project partners.
- Enterprise Zone (EZ) Final Documentation: Staff provided Electric Boat Corporation Enterprise Zone final documentation to the CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) in August. In September, DECD requested additional information from the town and Electric Boat. Final approval is anticipated by early October in time for Groton's grand list certification.
- Shoreline East Rail Feasibility Study: Staff attended the September 14th CTDOT public hearing regarding this study. There were representatives from the region including Westerly, RI. The project offers significant economic and transportation benefits to Groton and the region. CTDOT and the report advised that it will require decades to fully implement the Shore Line East connection to Westerly. Capital costs were approximately \$250 million to system upgrades. Operating costs were estimated at over \$200,000 per day. Funding is not yet allocated for further required studies or implementation.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): The Town Council voted to approve an excess property process. Developers were notified that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Groton Heights will soon be issued. Additionally, they were advised that property tours are being scheduled. Several tours were completed in September. Numerous investors and developers have expressed interest in developing this property. Staff has progressed on the draft RFP.

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- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): There has been no official change in September. 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/>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): Don Mar Development is constructing a 305 unit residential 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): The town and Bellsite, LLC completed the sale for the property effective September 14th. The project will include 64 residential units (multi-family) within close proximity to Electric Boat. 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.theday.com/local-news/20230623/plans-for-apartments-at-former-groton-city-school-approved/>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): The Town Council voted to approve an excess property process. Developers were notified that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Pleasant Valley will soon be issued. Additionally, they were advised that property tours are being scheduled. Several tours were completed in September. Numerous investors and developers have expressed interest in developing this property. Staff has progressed on the draft RFP.

An article with an update on all town owned properties ran in The Day on May 27, 2023.

<https://www.theday.com/local-news/20230527/a-look-at-grotons-unused-town-owned-properties/>

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

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

Social Media Metrics:

- 953 Facebook followers, 2% increase from August.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 118 followers to our LinkedIn page, minimal change from August.
** 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 www.exploremoregroton.com – Not available this time period.

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- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Aug. 6-Sep. 4) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 1,328
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 244
 - New Registrations 10
 - Engaged Visitors 58
 - Informed Visitors 568
 - Aware Visitors 1,084

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
Sutton Park Redevelopment	53	215	455
American Rescue Plan	0	111	119
Bridge Street Gateway Complete Street Demonstration	1	70	116
Short Term Rentals	1	53	103
Parking in Mystic	0	21	40

- Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London-Westerly Labor Market	Connecticut
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
April 2023	2.8	2.9	3.0
May 2023	3.3	3.6	3.7
June 2023	3.3	3.7	4.0
July 2023	3.2	3.6	3.9
August 2023	2.9	3.2	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>