

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

October 2016

The following summarizes economic development division activities for October 2016.

### Economic Development Activities:

- Airport Development Zone (ADZ): Staff provided additional information to DECD as requested. Staff held a meeting with GOSA to explain the program upon their request. ADZ approval is anticipated in 2016.
- Great Blue Research Survey: The report has been finalized for the two surveys (residential/consumer and business). Distribution of the report will first be to the Town Council and RTM and then to the Boards/Commissions and public.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Proposals were received on October 17<sup>th</sup> and meetings have been held involving internal review plus Executive Session with Town Council.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Oral School): Staff continues to market and promote the property including fielding responses to inquiries. Scheduled meeting with DECD to tour property and finalize program. Property showings from the exterior are occurring.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff has gained access to the building and has completed a walk-through. Discussions and showings with potential developers is ongoing. Meeting scheduled with the City to address zoning.
- Marketing/Website: Staff has coordinated with Camoin in drafting the RFP for the new economic development web. Camoin will assist with this effort. This will be released 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.
- CT Next – Innovation Places: Groton has been working with SPARK, CURE, New London and City of Groton on a project targeting grant funding from CT Next. \$50,000 in state grant funds was just awarded to the effort. Internal meetings occur weekly.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Staff continued working on the TIF initiative focusing on a plan for Groton and also a specific development to be located at the intersection of 117/184. Staff addressed the need to first educate Groton regarding TIF and target key growth areas such as 117/184 as well as Downtown Groton and Groton's Thames Street Waterfront. Next steps are to further refine the future TIF districts then work with the developer in moving his mixed used project forward including nearly 400 housing units, retail and office.
- Incentives: Staff continues to develop an easy-to-use document to help with business inquiries. Content has been in the works and a format has been finalized.
- Community Wayfinding Signage: Staff has developed a listing of sign plan contractors, researched quality RFPs, and began drafting the Groton RFP. It will be issued in December.

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- Economic Assistance Fund: Draft revisions to the program guidelines will be presented to the EDC Economic Assistance Fund Task Force in October.
- Northeast Corridor EIS: Staff addressed the Town Council twice on this project specific to the federal process specific to the alternatives and maps presented by the Federal Rail Authority (FRA).

### **Meetings/Outreach:**

- Staff participated meetings/conversations with partner agencies including CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), seCTer, CERC, Eastern CT Chamber, Greater Mystic Chamber, Groton Business Association, U.S. Senator Chris Murphy's Office (Emily Borshee). Also, staff attended the Southern New England American Planning Association Conference from October 20-21.
- Staff participated in a SEC TV event "Mystic Matters" on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEPdL7FJ33U>

- Staff interaction with businesses included positive communications with prospects and existing businesses. There were about 36 recorded inquiries and communications with businesses in September. The most notable includes working with the Argia Cruises to relocate the business to Groton at Steamboat Wharf.