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When I first was assigned my project, designing a climate communication strategy for the town of Groton, I was incredibly nervous that I was not going to be up for the task. Academically, I was prepared, but there was this nagging feeling that I just wasn't ready to actually contribute to an entire town's climate action efforts. Approximately three months later and writing this reflection now, I can say that not only am I proud of our final project, but I am proud of how far I have come as a student.

The goal of our project was to create a climate communication strategy that represented the diversity in Groton with a special emphasis on transparency and inclusivity. The core of our project was to find ways that town officials working on climate resiliency, mitigation, and action could communicate their efforts and needs to the citizens of Groton. This communication needed to be transparent and inclusive of all stakeholders as climate change does not discriminate. Most importantly however, we had to find ways to engage these stakeholders and make a point of the urgent need for action. Groton is one of the several coastal towns in Connecticut and therefore has even less time to prepare for the impending climate impacts brought on by the anthropocene.

After weeks of brainstorming, we were finally able to visit Groton to get a better understanding of how our strategy could fit into the town. Upon speaking with our community

contact, concerned citizens, and touring Groton it became clear that Groton is in a vulnerable location and in serious need for adaptation and mitigation efforts. Groton's climate action is in its infancy and as we soon discovered, being on the forefront of a movement can be one of the most challenging places to be. While a blank slate allows for endless possibilities, the multitude of directions soon becomes overwhelming. Another challenging aspect of this project was the sheer size of Groton and the myriad of people who call Groton home. Groton is at the epicenter of large companies such as Pfizer, nicknamed the Submarine Capital of the World, and has an interesting and political history with the City of Groton. Finding ways to engage and appeal to everyone in an equal way seemed almost impossible. The third biggest challenge we faced was that we wouldn't be able to see if our communication strategy was actually working. Creating a strategy is only half the battle, and as we are not residents of Groton there is a disconnect between us and the citizens. What we may see as helpful, may actually be harmful to climate action efforts. Communication strategies are in themselves unique as there is no blanket strategy, especially when it comes to interdisciplinary issues such as climate change.

Working on this project with my partner Sydney and our community contact Megan, has allowed me to become confident in my abilities as a contributor to climate action. The best part of this project has been seeing how my impact and presence can affect real-world situations. It's easy for us to put ourselves in this bubble of being young and experienced and that what we say and do doesn't matter. My greatest takeaway has been that every individual's voice matters and that if we are going to make change happen we must all be assertive and ambitious in the fight for our futures.

