

Ayer Office of Community & Economic Development

Monthly Report: February-March 2017

Respectfully submitted by Alan S. Manóian, Director of Community & Economic Development

1. **1934 Historic Ayer Central Fire Station:** The deadline for proposal submissions for the Request For Proposals (RFP) issued on 2/16/2017 is scheduled for 3/24/2017. The AOCED is pleased to report that no less than four (4) interested parties have requested proposal applications, have met with Dir. of AOCED, have toured the historic Fire Station Building, and have communicated that they will be submitting proposals for acquisition and redevelopment of the historic downtown property. The AOCED is cautiously optimistic that one of the four possible proposal submissions will move the long-anticipated project forward to successful redevelopment and preservation. The AOCED looks forward to reviewing and submitting our proposal recommendations with the Office of the Ayer Town Administrator and Ayer Board of Selectmen for thorough review, discussion and action.
2. **Town of Ayer Master Plan Process:** The Ayer Master Plan process is now moving past the “Mid-Game” point. Substantial information, data, profiles have been compiled; interviews, dialogues, sessions, etc. have taken place over the past 10-months with numerous individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, forums, etc. The month of April will focus on Work Groups tasked with Transportation, Community Facilities and Open Space & Resource Protection issues and opportunities. The Ayer Business & Industrial Survey will be launched on 3/21/2017 by the AOCED. Monthly meetings of the Ayer Master Plan Steering Committee will continue to take place in Ayer’s various neighborhoods and districts; and with the coming of Spring, the Steering Committee will actively engage in a series of Public Neighborhood Walking Tours & Visitations to better understand and plan the future of Ayer’s fine-grained neighborhoods, corridors and districts, and most importantly to energetically engage the residents, neighbors, families, businesses, commuters and visitors of Ayer.
3. **Downtown Ayer Commuter Parking Facility & Depot Square Design & Development:** The AOCED has actively engaged in the inter-departmental/inter-agency/inter-consulting firm Parking Deck & Parking Surface Lot Concept Options Review Sessions; in the compilation of Design & Development Case Studies; in the analysis of Fiscal Impact of Traditional Building Types & Patterns; in facilitating and conducting public forums and presentations; in meeting with various members of ATSAC (Ayer Train Station Advisory Comm.), with local business & property owners, with members of various Town boards & commissions, and with members of the general public in order to benefit from their

input and perspective, and to share and advance a viable approach to the successful launch of this long-awaited Downtown Ayer construction project.

4. **Islands of Ayer/Ayer Adopt-A-Spot Beautification Project:** The AOCED has worked over the winter months to re-invigorate, re-establish and re-brand the launch of the “Islands of Ayer” Beautification Program begun several years ago. AOCED has conducted new program design & input sessions with businesses and organizations currently active in the past program. New signage treatment (which visually projects a more unified and civically-based program purpose) has been designed and is ready for fabrication. Current beautification sites (at the Carlton Circle) the Rotary have been monitored and inspected during the winter months, and are new planting compositions are being readied for a new and improved design treatment. The AOCED will be advertising the “Islands of Ayer” Beautification Program through the Nashoba Valley Voice, the Town of Ayer Facebook Page & Website, targeted email notifications, through various public speaking opportunities, and through network meeting with various Ayer businesses, civic organizations, groups , families and individuals over the next 3-4 weeks.
5. **Railroad Main St. Corridor Public Space Design Improvement:** The AOCED is in preparation to launch a targeted Public Space Design & Improvement project for the street frontage along the MBTA Rail Corridor across from Ayer Town Hall. The old and unsightly chain link fence will be removed, with a historically appropriate and exceedingly durable black wrought iron fence treatment being installed (Summer 2017). The brick “Waiting Station” will be re-painted and historic & heritage visual/photographic displays will be installed to provide our downtown customers & visitors with an interesting spot to learn more about Ayer’s fascinating Railroad Heritage. The old and damaged shrubs and trees will be removed, or pruned, and new plantings will be introduced to properly “frame” the Waiting Station and the Railroad Corridor. The AOCED will work directly with our MBTA partners to completely clean-up the unsightly and unhealthy piles of asphalt, discarded rail tracks, general debris and litter, and to agree upon a continual maintenance program between the Town and MBTA for this high-profile area across from our magnificent historic 1876 Town Hall.
6. **Cains Plant Disposition:** The AOCED has established ongoing working communications with the commercial broker firm of Stubblebine Co. of Lexington, MA, who are managing the disposition of the long-time Ayer food production/processing plant. The Director of AOCED & MassDevelopment/Devens Enterprise Commission official will be meeting with the Stubblebine Co. and the prospective new owners of the Cains Plant during the week of March 27th to assure a strong collaborative effort, and the most beneficial outcome (possible) for the local Ayer community, and our industrial tax base as the property is redeveloped for its new life after Cains departure. The Dir. of AOCED

will provide status report to Town Administrator subsequent to upcoming meeting at Stubblebine Co. offices.