

Ayer Office of Community & Economic Development

Monthly Report: August-September 2018

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

Award of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Prospect & Oak St. Infrastructure Improvement Project:

On 8/2/2018 the Town of Ayer, MA through the efforts of the Ayer Office of Community & Economic Development (AOCED) & Ayer Public Works Dept. was awarded a \$750,000 CDBG Grant for public infrastructure improvements for Prospect St. & Oak St. in the historic Grove Pond Neighborhood. Over the past several weeks the (AOCED) has been actively engaged in the preparation & execution of the Contractual Agreement for the US Dept. of HUD funding in partnership with officials of the Mass Dept. of Housing & Community Development (DHCD). On 9/11/2018 Director of (AOCED) & Community Dev. Program Manager attended a mandatory 5.5 hour CDBG Grant Project Training/Review Session conducted by (DHCD) in Worcester MA. (AOCED) is now actively working with our colleagues at Ayer DPW to administer the project planning, scheduling, coordination, preparation of contractor bid packages, etc. for a proposed construction start date of early Spring 2019. In addition, we have outreached to the Ayer District Courthouse (with both) Clerk Magistrate & Judge Guzman to establish direct communications & design/construction coordination for the Prospect St. portion of the street infrastructure project; which will directly impact the daily operations of the District Courthouse property & parking areas. The (AOCED) is also preparing to schedule & conduct a series of Grove Pond Neighborhood Meetings to thoroughly review & generate public comment & coordination with the neighbors & residents of the Grove Pond Neighborhood; to this end Director of (AOCED) was the guest speaker at St. Andrews Episcopal Church on Sunday 9/9/2018 to provide project information & coordination with the members of the church located in the Grove Pond Neighborhood. The (AOCED) will be completely administering this grant & construction project, for the first-time without having to bring-in an outside consultant. The (AOCED) in partnership with the Ayer DPW are proud to report that we have the professional expertise & capacity to administer this complex process with municipal staff; saving substantial funding that will go directly to the neighborhood project and not to an outside consultant

PROPOSED Park Street Corridor & West Main St. Corridor Form-Based Code Formulation/Production Process Schedule:

Town of Ayer Form-Based Code Formulation/Production Process Schedule 2018-19

"FORM-FIRST"

Built-Form Comes First & Land-Use Comes Next

Understanding the Technical Integration of Proposed Form-Based Code/s into Ayer's Current Municipal Zoning Bylaw:

- Current (DB) Downtown Business Zone Bylaw Text Review & Comment Session (Park Street Corridor);
- Current (GB) General Business Zone Bylaw Text Review & Comment Session (West Main Street Corridor);

Weekly Municipal Land-Use Group Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 27th, 2:00PM

Park St. & West Main St. Form-Based Code Production Process Outline Presentation:

Ayer Board of Selectmen

Tuesday, Oct 2nd, 7:00PM

Fundamentals of Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Community Preservation Committee

Wednesday, Oct. 3rd, 7:00PM

Establishing Visual Street & Building Form Preference:

Park St. & Main St. "Street & Corridor Visual Preference & Selection Session
(Weekly Municipal Land- Use Group Meeting);

Thursday, Oct. 4th, 2:00PM

Park St. & Main St. "Street & Corridor Visual Preference & Selection Session" for (Ayer Planning Board); **TBA**

Park St. & Main St. Public "Street & Corridor Visual Preference & Selection Forum" for (General Public);

Thursday, Oct. 4th, 6:00PM

Public Forum in Great Hall

Fundamentals of Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Planning Board

Tuesday, Oct. 9th, 7:00PM

Fundamentals of Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Conservation Commission

Thursday, Oct. 11th, 7:00PM

Existing-Conditions Street Corridor Group Walking-Tour Survey:

Park Street Corridor

Saturday, Oct 13th, 10:00AM-11:00AM

West Main Street Corridor

Saturday, Oct 13th, 1:00PM-2:00PM

Fundamentals of Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Board of Health

Monday, Oct. 15th, 5:30PM

Form-Based Code 1st Public Visioning & Design Charrette (Park Street & West Main Street):

Thursday, Oct. 18th, 6:00PM – 8:00PM

Public Charrette in Great Hall

- The People Design the Park St. & West Main St. Development Pattern;
- Understanding the Basics of “Form First”;
- Why we need to Simplify Zoning in order to “Deliver High-Quality Place”;
- Learning the “Rural-to-Urban Transect (Development Pattern);
- Where is Downtown Ayer’s (Main Square) or “T-6”?

Design & Production of Park Street Corridor “Future-Building/Street Form Illustrative Renderings” & West Main Street Corridor “Future-Place Illustrative Renderings”:

Oct 22nd – Nov. 12th

Formulation Review & Comment Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Planning Board

Tuesday, Oct. 11th, 6:15PM

Park St. & West Main St. Form-Based Code Production Process Status Update Presentation:

Ayer Board of Selectmen

Tuesday, Nov. 6th, 7:00PM

Internal Form-Based Code Technical Formulation Begins:

Alan S. Manóian AICP/Form-Based Code Institute

Nov 26th – Dec 21st

Formulation Review & Comment Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Planning Board

Tuesday, January 8th, 6:15PM

Form-Based Code 2nd Public Visioning & Design Charrette (Park Street & West Main Street):

Thursday, January 10th, 6:00PM – 8:00PM

Public Charrette in Great Hall

Full public review & comment on proposed:

- Park St. & West Main St. Transect Pattern;
- Building Frontage –Types;
- Building Development Standards;

- Building Envelope Standards;
- Street-Types;
- Land-Use Requirements

1st DRAFT Production & Delivery Internal Code Formulation:

Alan S. Manoian AICP & Mark Archambault AICP

Jan 10th – Jan 28th

1st DRAFT Review & Comment Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Planning Board

Tuesday, January 22nd, 6:15PM

2nd DRAFT Code Production & Delivery Internal Code Formulation:

Alan S. Manoian AICP/Form-Based Code Institute

Tuesday, Feb. 5th

2nd DRAFT Review & Comment Form-Based Codes for Park St. & West Main St:

Ayer Planning Board

Tuesday, February 12th, 6:15PM

Final DRAFT Code Production & Delivery Internal Code Formulation:

Alan S. Manoian AICP/Form-Based Code Institute

Tuesday, Feb. 26th

Final DRAFT Code Technical Review & Comment Session:

Weekly Municipal Land-Use Group Meeting

Thursday, Feb 28th, 2:00PM

Final DRAFT Code Delivery to Ayer Planning Board for Vote on Approval:

Ayer Planning Board

Tuesday, Mar. 12th, 6:15PM

Park St. & West Main St. Corridor Form-Based Code Packaging, Submission & Delivery for 2019 Spring Town Meeting:

Monday, May 13th, 2019

Ayer Commuter Rail Station Public Space Design Improvement Effort:

The Director of (AOCED) has initiated a public space design improvement project for the Ayer Commuter Rail Station whereby a new Fencing Design Approach with an Artistic Fence Wrap (Graphic Illustration) Treatment would be advanced, approved, funded and installed so as to provide an attractive & appealing visual screen between the Commuter Rail Station Area & the unsightly, poorly-maintained and rough (Pan Am Railroad & MBTA) Working Railyard located directly behind the Station Area. To this end Dir. of (AOCED)

reached –out, contacted, scheduled and conducted a Site Design Walk with Ayer Town Manager, Ayer Assistant Town Manager & MBTA official Mr. Kevin Biggins on Friday, August 24th at the Ayer Commuter Rail Station. The Site Design Walk went very well with Mr. Biggins expressing support for the new Public Space Design Improvement concept. The Town of Ayer, through the Office of the Town Manager immediately follow-up with a Letter expressing the Town of Ayer's interest and serious concern regarding the poor & unacceptable condition and state of the Ayer Commuter Rail Station; this Letter was forwarded to State, Regional & Federal officials & legislative representatives requesting their support for renewed and robust cooperative efforts to immediately up-grade the condition of the Station Area for the benefit our valued Rail Commuters & for the critical needs of generating new high-quality private investment & revitalization in Downtown Ayer, and the Depot Sq. District in particular. Dir. of (AOCED) is currently preparing cost estimates, design plans, and project parameters to drive this project forward (and deliver it) in partnership with MBTA & Pan Am Railroads.

Ayer IDFA Commercial Lending Program New Products & Promotion:

The Dir. of (AOCED) scheduled and conducted a meeting of the Ayer Industrial Development Finance Authority to provide an update/status of the Ayer IDFA Loan Portfolio, and to discuss the disposition of several current commercial loans. In addition, the Ayer IDFA Board of Directors have concurred with Dir. of (AOCED) and directed him to develop and launch a new Ayer Commercial Building & Façade Lending Program & Promotional Platform. In addition, the Dir. of (AOCED) has recommended and has been directed to engage in a new Promotional Platform to generate more commercial lending prospects during this challenging time for municipal lending programs, in that, with private banking commercial lending rates still exceeding low, combined with an exceedingly strong local & regional economy – borrowers do not really need to seek lending beyond their local banking institutions. Municipal lending programs are most often at their strongest when the local banks have constrained their lending terms & when the economy is weak, unstable & unpredictable. The Ayer IDFA commercial lending program will continue to serve as a critical player providing “gap-lending”, and specialized lending products at exceedingly favorable terms.

AOCED Projects Proposed for the Upcoming Year:

- Ayer Master Plan (Implementation Plan) Program Management & Leadership
- Downtown Ayer Comprehensive Revitalization & Redevelopment Program
- Ayer Eco Development & Ayer-Shirley Regional School District Young Professional Development & Apprenticeship Program
- (AOCED) Webpage Maximization Project / Corporate Attraction Program
- Preparation for the upcoming Downtown Ayer Winter Holiday Candlelight Stroll & Holiday Tree Lighting Event.