

Town of Ayer

Office of the Town Planner



Town of Ayer | Ayer Town Hall | 1 Main Street, 3rd Floor | Ayer, MA 01432 | 978-772-8218 | www.ayer.ma.us

Monthly Staff Report

To: Robert Pontbriand, Town Administrator

From: Mark Archambault, Ayer Town Planner

Re: Monthly report for the period August 20, 2018 – September 19, 2018

Date: September 20, 2018

1. **Project Review:**

- a. **Global Montello: Site Plan on Harvard Road:** The Planning Board continued its review of the Global Montello case, granting approval with conditions for all but the issue of determining the criteria for construction of a left-turn lane into the site. I asked the Town's Consulting Engineering Firm, Nitsch Engineering, to work towards a quantitative, measureable and enforceable criteria for this condition, which at the time of writing has been agreed to by Nitsch and the applicant's Engineering Firm, GPI. This condition will require a "Traffic Monitoring Study" to be performed at peak traffic hours in September (the highest traffic month) after the facility opens, which can be witnessed by the Town and/or a consultant of our choosing.
- b. **Ayer Family Pharmacy, Park Street:** I have been working with the applicant's engineer and Alan Manoian to make sure that the Site Plan for the proposed pharmacy both meets the standards of the Zoning Bylaw and Site Plan Regulations, and is in keeping with Form-Based Code standards that will be developed in the near future. This will help to insure that the project blends into the planned transformation of Park Street from an automobile-oriented commercial district into a more attractive mixed-use district as envisioned in the Form-Based Code approach. It is anticipated that the applicant will be submitting their Site Plan application in time for one of the October 2018 Planning Board meetings.

2. Continued work on **Subdivision Regulations**:

I have continued to work with Town Engineer Dan Van Schalkwyk and Planning Board member Ken Diskin on developing new Subdivision Regulations. Of all the Land Use related codes, the existing Ayer Subdivision Regulations are most in need of revision. Work will continue on these Regulations through the fall of 2018, with adoption by the Planning Board anticipated for late-fall.

3. Complete **Zoning Amendments** for the October 22 STM:

Over the last two months I have worked with Building Commissioner Charlie Shultz on developing several amendments to the newly adopted Ayer Zoning Bylaw that will help to clarify the intent of several provisions, as well as to clarify the standards and review process for Open Space Residential Developments, which will be the default method of subdivisions with new roads going forward. These Zoning Bylaw amendments will be the subject of a Planning Board Public Hearing on October 9, 2018. They will be on the warrant for the October 22, 2018 Special Town Meeting.

4. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Working Group:

Town Manager Robert Pontbriand has recently formed an ADA Working Group for the purpose of submitting a “Planning Grant” which would seek to obtain funds to enable the Town to complete the “Self-Evaluation” and eventual Transition Plan to bring the Town into compliance with the requirements of the ADA. The Planning Grant application will be submitted during the week of September 24 – 28, meeting the October 1, 2018 deadline for submission of the application. The Committee consists of Robert Pontbriand, Carly Antonellis, Alan Manoian and Alicia Hersey.

5. Planning Board Training:

I have begun to research ways to enhance the knowledge and capability of the Planning Board in regards to their jurisdiction and powers relating to plan review, public hearings, and planning in general. In addition to making the Planning Board aware of workshops and other training opportunities available to them, I am researching ways to bring such training to them. This could entail a mix of my own presentations and the assistance of outside planning consultants on such topics as off-site improvements and negotiating for the best land use outcomes. The goal is to develop a Planning Board conversant in Massachusetts Planning law and best practices, which will help to raise the standards for projects in Ayer.

