

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 September 20, 2018 – October 19, 2018

Date: October 17, 2018

1. **Project Review:**

There were no public hearings for new Planning Board applications over the last month. I have been in communication with the engineer drafting the Site Plan application for the Ayer Family Pharmacy, which is anticipated for Public Hearing in November. There are two Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) subdivisions which were reviewed by the Land-Use Committee earlier in the summer which could be submitted to the Planning Board at any time.

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 three months I have worked with Building Commissioner Charlie Shultz and the Planning Board on developing several amendments to the newly adopted Ayer Zoning Bylaw that will help to clarify the intent of several sections. The Planning Board held a Public Hearing on October 9, 2018 at which it was decided to withdraw two of the proposed amendments, including Accessory Apartments, in order to provide the Planning Board more time in which to consider these amendments. The remaining articles will be on the warrant for the October 22, 2018 Special Town Meeting.

I also developed a PowerPoint presentation both for the Public Hearing and the Town Meeting itself, which I ran by the Land-Use Committee and the Board of Selectmen on October 16.

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 was submitted before 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. **To that end I am working with two potential presenters to meet with the Planning Board starting in November, 2018.** Several members of the Planning Board and I will be attending upcoming Citizen Planner Training Collaborative workshops on Subdivision and Site Plan approval this fall.

The goal is to develop a Planning Board conversant in Massachusetts Planning law and best practices, which will help to raise the standards for planning and project review in Ayer.

6. Zoning Bylaw Amendments Working Group:

I am thinking through a process for addressing more significant Zoning Bylaw amendments for the Spring, 2019 Town Meeting. I believe it is important to bring representatives of the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health, as well as the Building Commissioner and Town Planner, together to address such issues as Zoning for Recreational Marijuana facilities, the Petapawag Overlay District that will help to protect the natural resources and promote wise development in Ayers’ ‘wild frontier’ in the northeastern part of town near the Groton town line (*a high priority project in the recently adopted Master Plan*), as well as Accessory Apartments, which was postponed from the Fall, 2018 STM.