

# Town of Ayer

## Office of the Town Planner



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Town of Ayer | Ayer Town Hall | 1 Main Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor | Ayer, MA 01432 | 978-772-8218 | [www.ayer.ma.us](http://www.ayer.ma.us)

### Monthly Staff Report

To: Robert Pontbriand, Town Manager

From: Mark Archambault, Ayer Town Planner

Re: Monthly report for the period March 21 – April 19, 2019

Date: April 19, 2019

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#### 1. Project Review:

The Planning Board approved a Site Plan application for a large-scale solar array proposed for the capped landfill at the Transfer Station. An application for a combined Site Plan and Special Permit application for the new Highway Garage at the DPW's headquarters was received and will be heard by the Planning Board on April 23.

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

The draft revised Subdivision Regulations are in the process of being properly formatted, while undergoing simultaneous review by the Superintendent of Public Works. Following these two steps, the Subdivision Regulations may be shared with several independent civil engineers for their review and comment in order to ensure that the new Regulations are easy to use and effective as possible. Adoption of these Regulations is now anticipated for June or early-July, following the Special Town Meeting.

#### 3. Consideration of Major Zoning Amendments for the Spring, 2019:

The Planning Board held a public hearing on the proposed Recreational Marijuana Zoning Bylaw (*along with the Form-Based Code Bylaw*) on April 9, 2019. There were only a handful of attendees at this public hearing, though my earlier public information session presentation has been broadcast on a regular basis by APAC. In order to allow for any changes and additional public comments, the hearings for both Zoning Bylaw amendments was continued to April 23, 2019. Once the Public Hearing is closed, the Planning Board will be forwarding the Zoning Bylaw amendments for inclusion on the warrant for the June 10, 2019 Special Town Meeting.

#### 4. Misc. and Upcoming Projects:

I have begun research in connection with the planned **Petapawag Overlay District** which would develop special standards for any development in the currently forested part of Ayer in the A-1 Residential zoning district. These standards could involve protecting additional open space in subdivisions, transfer of development rights and other planning techniques that would better guide development in a more environmentally sensitive manner.

#### 5. Citizen's Petition Warrant Article:

A citizen's petition warrant article was submitted by Kevin Horgan to the Town Clerk for inclusion on warrant of the May 13, 2019 Annual Town Meeting. The Planning Board will be holding a public hearing on this article on May 7 in order to be able to make a recommendation in regards to this article.

The Citizen's Petition article proposes to increase the setbacks for all structures associated with large-scale, ground-mounted solar energy systems from those listed for the underlying zoning districts in Section 6.2, Schedule of Dimensional Requirements, to 150 feet from any adjacent lot wherever such large-scale, ground-mounted solar energy systems are located in or abut a residential zoning district. Section 8.5.6.4.1 of the Ayer Zoning Bylaw, which references the Schedule of Dimensional Requirements, would also need to be amended accordingly. The setbacks for such solar energy systems would remain the same where such facilities are not located in or abut residential zoning districts.