

Ayer Office of Community & Economic Development

Monthly Report: June 2020

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

Historic (1934) Ayer Central Fire Station Redevelopment - CDBG Grant

Application Production & Scheduled Submission: The AOCED completed and submitted a strong grant application on March 6th for a highly-competitive \$800,000 US Dept. of HUD CDBG Grant which would provide partial (public-sector) funding - for an estimated \$1.5 million affordable-housing redevelopment project in the long-vacant historic (1934) Ayer Central Fire Station Building in Downtown Ayer. The project applicant went before the Ayer Planning Board on June 23rd to request the modification of on-site parking requirements, and to present a modified site plan. And as reported by Ayer Town Planner – “Continued the Public Hearing (parking-related Special Permits) and Public Meeting (Site Plan) for redevelopment of the historic Ayer Fire Station at 14 Washington Street. GPR, Inc. submitted a revised plan set to the Planning Board but not in time for consideration at the June 23 meeting. Therefore, the PB continued the case to the July 14 meeting.” Notification of successful grant awards will be announced by Mass DHCD & Gov. Baker in July 2020.

Ayer Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition/Action Plan Grant

Application & Production Process: On June 16th the AOCED was notified that the Town of Ayer has been successfully awarded an official extension, to June 21, 2021, to produce the updated Ayer ADA Plan. The Office of the Town Manager in coordination with the AOCED has reviewed, and TM has executed contractual agreement between the Town of Ayer & MRPC for professional services in the formulation, production & delivery of Ayer's new municipal ADA Action/Transition Plan with a total cost of \$50,000. The AOCED has contacted, organized, and re-launched the ADA Project Group/Consultants. The on-site municipal ADA inspections (by MRPC staff consultants) with Dir. of Building & Facilities are proposed to begin in mid-July. The AOCED proposes a new ADA Plan Production deadline of September 30, 2020.

FY19 CDBG-CV (COVID19 Impact) Grant Application:

The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the FY19 CDBG-CV, issued by the Mass Dept. of Housing & Community Development, was posted on May 15th. The AOCED immediately engaged to pursue a substantial grant application for the Town of Ayer. The AOCED worked quickly and effectively to outreach to the Ayer Community – organizing, advertising & conducting a required Public

Hearing to determine the needs of the community for the CDBG-CV Grant. The Public Hearing (ZOOM Meeting) was conducted on June 1st with great participation by Ayer residents. The AOCED formulated a grant application that requested \$343,900 to fund a \$200,000 Micro-Enterprise (Small Business) loan pool for businesses financially impacted by COVID19 emergency, and substantial funding for Ayer's Public/Social Service Providers, including, Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, Ayer Public Library, Ayer Council on Aging, and Stone Soup Kitchen Ministries. The grant application was submitted on June 12th, and the AOCED will be notified of the results by mid-July.

\$4 Million MassWorks Grant – West Main Street Corridor: On June 8th the AOCED was informed of the opening of the 2020-21 MassWorks Grant Program cycle. The Dir. of AOCED immediately engaged our MassWorks Grant Team from last's years grant application submission, with the intent of re-applying for the \$4 Million grant for "West Ayer Village"/West Main Street Corridor. Our MassWorks Grant Team includes a partnership between the Town of Ayer, Devens Enterprise Commission & MassDevelopment. The Team will next outreach to MassWorks Program Officials, Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development Officials, and Ayer's State Legislative Delegation to organize, schedule & conduct an important Pre-Application/Guidance Meeting between all parties. The \$4 Million MassWorks Grant Application submission is due by August 28th.

3-5 Park Street New Building Development: As reported by the Ayer Town Planner, the applicants went before the Planning Board on June 23rd with the following results: "Opened the Public Hearing for parking-related Special Permits and waivers / modifications for 3-5 Park Street. The public hearing was continued to the next PB meeting on July 14. It is anticipated that the applicant (Robert and Tom Gardner) will submit a Site Plan application under the Form-Based Code for construction of a 4 story, 17-unit residential / mixed-use building on the site."

Prospective Multi-Family Residential Development on Fitchburg Rd.: The AOCED has been in communication with prospective buyer/developer of 65 Fitchburg Rd. (Old Flagg Property), as well as, with commercial property broker. The prospective buyer/developer is proposing a potential "friendly 40B" residential development at the subject site. Meetings will take place in July.

Restoration of the Historic (1907) Depot Sq. Fountain: The Dir. of AOCED finalized the scope of services, restoration approach, and design integration at the future Depot Square Park at the Commuter Rail Station – The AOCED will provide \$8,400 in funding from the AOCED budget for the complete & appropriate historic restoration of the landmark heritage (1907) Depot Sq. Fountain for the future Depot Square Park.

Production of the “Guide to Locating & Doing Business in Ayer”:

In June, the Dir. of AOCED continues formulation, design & production work on the Comprehensive Guide to “Locating & Doing Business in the Town of Ayer, MA”. This is a program goal for the 2020-21 year – and it will be completed for review & comment by late-June 2020.

CDBG FY 18 Grant

The CDBG FY 18 Grant is in its final quarter. The Town's Housing Rehabilitation Program under this grant has started work on the final 2 housing units. Contracts were signed for the rehabilitation of these units on June 12th. We anticipate completion by September 30th.

Ayer Affordable Housing Committee (AAHC)

The Ayer Affordable Housing Committee did not meet in June. The Committee supported Chair-Janet Providakes and the CPC at the Annual Town Meeting on their successful warrant proposal of increasing the Town's CPA surcharge to 3% from 1%. Information regarding Emergency Rental Assistance was posted to the Town website.

Ayer Downtown Flower Program

The Office of Community & Economic Development with the help of Jo-Anne Crystoff of the Conservation Commission designed a flower treatment for the “Welcome to Ayer Sign”. The DPW helped in the procuring of the planters. Installation is anticipated for the first half of July.

Subordinations & Releases

The AOCED Department processed 1 subordination and 4 mortgage releases in the month of July.