

Ayer Office of Community & Economic Development
Monthly Report: July 2021

Respectfully submitted by Alan S. Manolian, Dir. AOCED

Park Street (FBC/Traditional Downtown Street) Transformation Project/Housing

Choice Capital Grant: The AOCED & DPW Project Team scheduled and conducted the Kick-Off Design Meeting with representatives of Green International Affiliates on Thursday, July 22nd at Ayer DPW. The contractual agreement between the Town of Ayer & Green International Affiliates was executed on July 21st. The municipal team engaged in a detailed review of the Park Street Corridor with Green International Affiliates, including adopted Downtown Ayer/Park Street Form-Based Zoning Code regulations, proposed new private-sector developments on Park Street, public utility infrastructure, traffic patterns, multi-modal transportation connectivity & potential for new multi-unit residential development. A Park Street Transformation Project mobile/walking workshop will be scheduled and conducted in mid-August.

22 Pleasant Street New Residential In-Fill Downtown Ayer Form-Based Code

District: The Dir. of AOCED has been working directly with the owners, builder & architect of 22 Pleasant Street to assure new infill residential development is in accordance with the recently adopted Downtown Ayer/Park Street Form-Based Zoning Code. The owners propose the construction of a new 4-unit, 2.5 story residential building. If the owners proceed, this would be the first new development under the recently adopted Form-Based Zoning Code.

The Downtown Ayer “Heart of Hometown” Festival: The Dir. of AOCED has developed and launched a process to create and conduct the 1st Annual Downtown Ayer “Heart of Hometown” Festival scheduled for Saturday, October 2nd on Newton Street from 11:00AM-4:00PM. The “Heart of Hometown” Festival Committee will conduct its first meeting in early August. Main Street Bank has joined the event as our Festival Gold Sponsor, and Nashoba Valley Medical Center has joined as our Festival Silver Sponsor. The landmark downtown event will feature live musical, live dance, live theatrical performances, as well as a “Taste of Ayer Restaurants”, fine art exhibitions, artisan & craft displays, and more!

\$3.1 Million MassWorks Grant – West Main Street Corridor: The 60% design/engineering plans have been completed and delivered by GPR, Inc. & Ayer DPW. The Dir. of AOCED scheduled and conducted a full MassWorks Project Team Project Status meeting on July 28th at Ayer Town Hall. Ayer DPW is now preparing RFPs & Bid Documents to be ready for issuance on August 23rd with Bid openings scheduled for early September. A West Main Street MassWorks Project Public Information Session will be scheduled and conducted by Dir. AOCED in late August.

Ayer Affordable Housing Committee (AAHC): The Ayer Affordable Housing Committee (AAHC) and the Ayer Affordable Housing Trust (AAHT) held a joint monthly meeting on July 28th. Four residents from Devenscrest Apartments were present at the meeting, these citizens spoke during public input regarding the sale of Devenscrest Apartments and the subsequent evictions. The Committee and the Trust heard their concerns, explaining that the Town would be hosting an information session the following evening on the July 29th, explaining that representatives from RCAP Solutions would be there to speak on rental assistance, in addition, a lawyer from Northeast Legal Aid would also be there to answer legal questions. A detailed discussion on the housing needs of both the Town of Ayer and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was conducted by the Committee and Trust that evening.

FY19 CDBG-CV Grant: FY19-CDBG-CV social service grant programs completed their fourth quarter, and the quarterly report was submitted to DHCD. The Ayer Library Internet Access program currently has internet hot spots and laptops available for loan. The Stone Soup Kitchen Food Pantry has used the balance of their grant funds. Loaves and Fishes was reimbursed for expenses from April through June, these grant funds were used to offset costs of food to stock the pantry. The other two social service programs, Ayer COA Meals Delivery Program and Nashoba Associated Boards of Health have not yet started using their grant funds. The Ayer Microenterprise Business Grant program has been closed out. A total of seven Ayer-based small businesses received grants through this program. For these owners, this program was essential in helping them through the difficult period of pandemic shut down. A fiscal year end draw down was submitted to DHCD and the fourth quarter was closed out.

Downtown Flower Program: The Town of Ayer Downtown Main Street Hanging Flower program is going strong and has weathered the rainy month of July very well. Our Senior Work Off team is excellent, with their help the downtown looks great.

Ayer ADA Grant Accounting: The Town's ADA Self Evaluation and Transition was completed. The AOCED has submitted a reimbursement draw down request to Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD).

End of Fiscal Year Accounting: The AOCED completed fiscal reconciliation for FY21 on their grants and accounts, drawing down any outstanding monies.