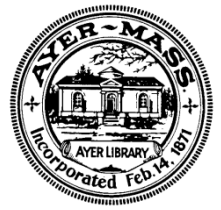


Town of Ayer

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 Manager

From: Mark Archambault, Ayer Town Planner

Re: Monthly report for April 2022

Date: May 20, 2022

1. **Project Review and Planning Board meetings:**

The Planning Board (PB) met in person on **Tuesday, April 12 and 26, 2022.**

Development Review:

ANRs: There were no ANR (lot line adjustments, lot splits or lot consolidations) in April, 2022.

Site Plan: At its April 2022 meetings, the PB considered an application for a ‘mobile food establishment’ / i.e., ‘Food Truck’ proposed to be operated by Elizabeth Hamilton at 51 Littleton Road, in a large parking lot owned by Gervais Ford. Her operation consists of a converted camper trailer that will prepare hot dogs and similar foods for purchase on the premises. This operation also requires permitting through the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health.

The Ayer Zoning Bylaw does not currently have any provisions for the regulation of mobile food establishments, requiring the Planning Board to review the application in terms of its general Site Plan review provisions. The Planning Board continued review of the application to its May 9, 2022 meeting.

Ongoing Projects continuing into April 2022:

Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Working Group and Regulations:

In late-April, the Town Planner, with valuable assistance from the OSRD Working Group, **completed** the draft regulations and design guidelines to assist in review of open space residential subdivisions (OSRDs). The Town Planner had reconvened the “OSRD Regulations and Design Guidelines Working Group” in January, which worked for several months to complete the draft. The Working Group consists of two members of the Ayer Planning Board, two members of the Ayer Conservation Commission and the DPW Director. Now the draft is being reviewed by the Conservation Commission and Planning Board, with adoption to occur following a public hearing to be held by the Planning Board, hopefully in June.

2. Land-Use Meetings in April 2022:

The March Land-Use meeting was held on April 7. Current and potential future projects under review by the Land-Use Boards and related concerns were discussed.

3. MBTA Communities Act:

The Ayer Planning Department is gearing up to meet the requirements of a new law in Massachusetts that aims to provide much needed multi-family housing in communities served by or adjacent to MBTA Commuter Rail, Subway and other transit.

Enacted as part of the [economic development bill](#) in January 2021, new Section 3A of M.G.L. c. 40A (the Zoning Act) requires that an MBTA community shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute:

- Minimum gross density of 15 units per acre
- Not more than ½ miles from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal or bus station, if applicable.
- No age restrictions
- Suitable for families with children.

At first glance, it appears that Ayer is likely close to meeting these requirements under its current zoning, including the two Form-Based Code districts in combination with its General Residence district.

In order to be sure that Ayer can meet the requirements of the Act, the Town Planner applied for a technical assistance grant from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) through the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. The Town of Ayer was awarded this grant in March, with the effort to start later this spring.

Based on the findings of this study the Town Planner will lead an effort to see what Ayer might need to do in order to meet the requirements of the MBTA Communities Act and whether any amendments to the Ayer Zoning Bylaw are needed. This project will begin in earnest in May.