

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 May 2022
Date: June 21, 2022

1. Project Review and Planning Board meetings:

The Planning Board (PB) met in person on **Tuesday, May 10** and remotely on **May 24, 2022**. The May 24 meeting was a joint meeting with the Ayer Conservation Commission.

Development Review:

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

Site Plan: At its May 9, 2022 meeting, the Planning Board approved the Site Plan for a mobile food establishment to be run by Elizabeth Hamilton at '0 Littleton Road', one of the Gervais Ford parking lots on Littleton Road. The Planning Board placed several conditions on the approval which should help to ensure that this operation runs smoothly.

Ongoing Projects continuing into May 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 Planning Board held a remote joint session meeting with the Conservation Commission on May 24 to review the completed draft, at which several additional minor tweaks were made. The Planning Board then scheduled a public hearing on the proposed OSRD Regulations for June 14.

2. Land-Use Meetings in May 2022:

The May Land-Use meeting was held on May 19. 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.

During May, the Town Planner met with several Planners from the MRPC to discuss the area and development calculations that are at the heart of this effort. A follow-up meeting will occur in June.