

Ayer Office of Community & Economic Development

Monthly Report: July 2022

Respectfully submitted by Alan S. Manolian, Dir. AOCED

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

Choice Capital Grant: The Park Street Downtown Ayer traditional/walkable street and new housing development design project - funded by a (2021) \$108,000 MA Housing Choice Capital Grant award has been successfully completed as of June 30, 2022. Administrative “close-out” of the contractual grant agreement between the Town of Ayer and Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development/Housing Choice Program was finalized June 30, 2022 with submission of Final Report and project deliverables. Deliverables by project design/engineering firm Green International Associates include the 50% Design Level Engineering Plans for Park Street Re-Construction, the 50% Design Level Basis Memorandum, and the 50% Park Street Design/Construction Cost Estimate. The next Phase of the “Park Street Transformation” will be the identification of the optimal federal/state public infrastructure improvement grant program, including the MassWorks Grant Program. The Dir. of AOCED will identify the grant source and pursue award of multi-million dollar grant to deliver the transformation of Park Street as a livable, all-inclusive, high-quality, traditional New England downtown street.

Proposed Movie Filming in Ayer: On June 6th the Dir. of AOCED was contacted by Location Scout for Passenger Productions Inc. informing AOCED that they are seeking/scouting several locations in the Town of Ayer for filming scenes of upcoming major motion picture. The AOCED (aka the Town of Ayer Filming Office) forwarded Town of Ayer Filming Application Form to Location Scout. The proposed filming location has been selected and secured. On July 27th the Dir. of AOCED scheduled and conducted a municipal Film Application Review team ZOOM meeting for the proposed film. Following review and discussion the application was approved subject to various minor conditions/confirmations by the filming company. The proposed filming date as submitted on the application has been re-scheduled and is still subject to finalization, which is often the case with local filming production coordination. Filming is currently proposed for late August.

Newton Street Folk & Arts Festival in Downtown Ayer: The 2nd Annual Newton Street Folk & Arts Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 1st. The Dir. of AOCED was in full event management/production-mode during the month of July. Festival Work Group meeting schedule was issued on July 5th. Communications/event participation applications were sent out to all local artists-artisans-craftspeople, to all local restaurants & eateries that participated last year, and to all local organizations-clubs-committees-etc. that participated last year. The Dir. of AOCED began contacting and booking heritage/folk musical performers & dance performers. Also, reservations/orders for event staging, tents, seating, etc. were secured by AOCED. The Dir. began finalizing

festival corporate sponsorship agreements and structuring festival budget. Sound system contract was also secured. The Festival Working Group met on Tuesday, July 19th to review and advise on the status of festival production. The 2nd Annual Newton Street Folk & Arts Festival is most anticipated for the Fall Season by the entire Ayer community.

\$3.1 Million MassWorks Grant – West Main Street Corridor Public Infrastructure Improvement Project: During the month of July, new water line construction on both West Main Street & Sculley Rd., storm-water drainage infrastructure, and sewer line improvements along the entire West Main Street progressed as scheduled. Weekly Construction Project Status Meetings are conducted via ZOOM by the Dir. of Public Works. Construction work in the proximity of the intersection at Devens Verbeck Gate will become more active into August/September. The Project is contractually required to be 100% completed by May 2023; 75% project completion is scheduled for October 2022.

Ayer New “All-Inclusive” Playground/Kiddie Junction Design – “Kids With Disabilities” Public Design Input Events: On July 25th the Dir. of AOCED in coordination with the Ayer Disabilities Commission sent out communication and public announcement for the Ayer New “All-Inclusive” Playground “Kids With Disabilities” Public Design Input Happenings scheduled for Thursday Night, August 11th 6:00PM & Saturday Morning, August 13th 11:00AM. The Dir. of AOCED/Ayer Disabilities Commission proposed the “All-Inclusive” Public Design events in order to assure that families of children with disabilities (including physical disabilities, levels of autism, and more) have direct input on how the new playground could be better designed to provide for the needs of all Ayer children of current and future generations.

Tour of former Ayer Federated Church Site – Ayer Senior Center Site Investigation Process: Following outreach and discussions with Pastor Susan Gaeta of the Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (located at the former Ayer Federated Church Building on Washington St.), the Dir. of AOCED scheduled and in coordination with the Ayer Council on Aging Board of Directors, the Dir. of the Ayer Council on Aging, and the Office of the Town Manager conducted a group tour of the former Federated Church Building & Parcel on Tuesday, July 12th. His along with several others are prospects for possible locations for the design/development of a new Ayer Center for Active Living. This site will be considered along with several others through the ongoing process.

Ayer/Shirley Regional High School New Athletic Field Complex Corporate Sponsor Fundraising Support: Following a meeting with Dan Gleason of the ASRHS New Athletic Field Group & Town Manager the Dir. of AOCED scheduled and participated in a site tour of the new ASRHS Athletic Field Complex with Dan Gleason on July 5th so Dir. of AOCED could get a strong sense of the excitement and quality of the new complex when prospecting for corporate sponsor funding. The Dir. of AOCED proceeded to make calls to prospective corporate sponsors. On July 21st Dir. of AOCED

sent communication to Dan Gleason & Office of Town Manager informing that AOCED had secured corporate prospects (American Superconductor & AllTown Fresh/Global Montello) ready to discuss corporate sponsorship opportunities & levels. Dir. of AOCED will follow-up with 1-2 additional corporate sponsorship prospects.

Ayer Affordable Housing Trust (AAHT): The AAHT's Rental Assistance Program Phase I is up and running, we have four (4) families receiving rental assistance. In the upcoming months the Affordable Housing Trust is looking to evaluate the first phase of this program prior to launching Phase II of our program.

Proposed Ayer Commons – 40B Project : Ayer Affordable Housing Committee (AAHC) and the Ayer Affordable Housing Trust (AAHT) met with NOAH (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) regarding their proposed application to the Ayer CPC requesting funds to support the development of local affordable housing. The AOCED, along with the members of the AAHT and AAHC attended the initial ZBA public hearing for NOAH's (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) 40B project on Fitchburg Road. Both the Ayer Affordable Housing Trust and Committee support NOAH's proposed development of 106 units of affordable housing.

CDBG-CV Grant: The CDBG-CV grant concluded on June 30th. AOCED is in the process of closing out this grant. In recap the CDBG-CV grant supported five successful grant programs through the Ayer community, including four social service programs, Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, Stone Soup Kitchen Food Pantry, the Library Internet Access program, and the Council on Aging Meal Delivery Program. A Micro Enterprise Small business grant program was the fifth program supported by this grant. The COA and Library have chosen to incorporate their CDBG-CV grant programs into their regularly programming.

Ayer Emergency Housing Rehabilitation Program – Ayer Program Income: The Emergency Housing Rehabilitation program currently has \$5000 of Program Income in its budget. Overall Program Income currently has a total budget of \$15,000.