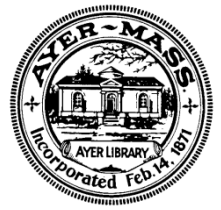


Town of Ayer

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 February 2023
Date: March 20, 2023

1. Project Review and Planning Board meetings:

The Planning Board met in person at the Ayer Town Hall on **February 14 and 28, 2023.**

Development Review:

ANRs: There were no ANR (*lot line adjustments, lot splits or lot consolidations*) in January, 2023.

Road Acceptances: There were no road acceptances in January, 2023.

Site Visits: The Planning Board conducted a site visit to 1 Bishop Road in preparation for a public hearing on a (use) Special Permit and Site Plan application for 'American True Merit', a fabrication and welding company proposing to move into existing industrial space at 1 Bishop Road.

Site Plans: By mutual agreement with the applicant, the Planning Board continued the public hearing for a major plant expansion at **Nasoya Foods USA** at 1 New England Way to its March 14, 2023 meeting. Bohler Engineering requires more time to revise the plans in order to address the recommendations of the Ayer Planning Board and DPW.

- **Ayer Solar II-B:** During February, the Town Planner began research for and writing of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for engineering review services of the forthcoming revised 'Site Plan Modification' for Ayer Solar II.. This course of action was agreed upon by consensus decision of relevant department heads and town officials. The Town Planner anticipates that the RFP will be ready for distribution in March.

In January, the Planning Board requested that the applicant submit a completely revised application for Site Plan Modification before any further permits can be issued for the project. It is anticipated that this Site Plan Modification application will be submitted in early-Spring.

- **1 Bishop Road, ‘American True Merit’:** The Planning Board approved both the (Use) Special Permit and the Site Plan application submitted by **American True Merit** for a change of use to ‘enclosed manufacturing, processing, assembly and fabrication’ (AZB section 6.2 in the Table of Use Regulations) to enable them to move into the building and property at 1 Bishop Road. No expansion, extension or alterations are proposed to the buildings other than installation of signage.
- **14 Washington Street, historic Central Fire Station:** The Planning Board continued review of the proposal to convert the historic Central Fire Station at 14 Washington Street to 5 apartment units and one unit of commercial office space. This project requires both a (use) Special Permit from the Planning Board as well as Site Plan Review. Both hearings were continued to the March Planning Board meetings.

Subdivisions:

- Stratton Hill, David Moulton, off of Wright Road:

At the end of the RPP solicitation process, the engineering firm ‘Green International Affiliates, Inc.’ was the sole respondent with a proposal for engineering review of the forthcoming Stratton Hill Definitive Subdivision Plan. The Planning Board is in the process of reviewing Green’s proposal and a decision is anticipated in March. The Planning Board desires an engineering firm to be in place to review the application materials and plans before the application is formally submitted.

Land-Use Meetings in February 2023:

The interdepartmental Land-Use Group met twice in February, on the 2nd and 16th, to review ongoing and anticipated projects before the Land-Use Boards (Planning Board, ZBA, Conservation Commission).

DLTA application for infrastructure demand study:

In February, the Town Planner prepared a District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant application, which was submitted to the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) for:

The Town of Ayer is seeking technical assistance with **identifying and assessing whether its existing public infrastructure capacity; namely water, sewer, and wastewater systems**, can accommodate the anticipated residential and non-residential growth in Ayer’s two Form-Based Code zoning districts over the next few decades. These include both the Downtown / Park Street Form-Based Code district (DPSFBC) and the West Ayer Village Form-Based Code district (WAVFBC).

The estimates of anticipated growth can come from the previous (2021) Build-Out Study for the DPSFBC district performed under a DLTA grant, as well as from the MBTA Communities model run recently undertaken to determine if Ayer is compliant with the provisions of the Act. That model estimated future residential and non-residential growth in both Form-Based Code districts, as well as in areas of Ayer’s General Residence district. However, this proposal is to estimate public infrastructure demand in the Form-Based Code districts only.

The next step in planning for Ayer’s transformation into a transit-oriented town with greater housing and commercial development opportunities is to determine if its infrastructure can handle this growth and determine what steps might be necessary to increase or enhance such infrastructure to help realize such growth. This technical assistance grant will be first step in this process.

