

## **Ayer Train Station Advisory Committee Selects Three Representatives and Alternates.**

FOR RELEASE AT WILL

The Ayer Train Station Advisory Committee (ATSAC) has selected three representatives to meet with the government agencies, and state and local government officials who are approving and implementing the parking facility planned for the Ayer commuter rail station.

The representatives are: Jeremy Callahan, Patrick Hughes and Kathleen O'Connor. Carolyn McCreary and Harry Zane are alternates. All five are residents. O'Connor is also a daily rail commuter from Ayer.

In Mid-June, the Ayer Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted to authorize three representatives of ATSAC to attend planning and implementation meetings for the planned commuter rail project, which has received \$3.2 million in federal and state construction funds. ATSAC will strive to expedite the implementation process and serve as a conduit among the BOS, the residents of Ayer and commuters. The group will provide updates on the status of the project and work to ensure that the facility is compatible with the character of the surrounding community, and meets resident and commuter expectations.

Planning and Implementation meetings for the project may include representatives of the Montachusett Area Regional Transit Authority (MART), the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and the BOS, as well as relevant federal and state officials. ATSAC will report to the BOS on a regular basis.

The project was one of the recommendations in the Town of Ayer's 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update. Planning for the facility moved forward again as the focus of a 2007 town-wide workshop (called a "Charette"), which was organized by a BOS-appointed parking task force and attended by some 80 residents. Four different citizen teams presented design and location

scenarios. Following the consensus of the Charette, the task force made recommendations for a downtown commuter parking facility to the BOS, which approved them in May of 2007, as did residents at Ayer's Annual Town Meeting.

McCreary, a former selectman, was the task force chair. Hughes and Zane were also members of the task force; Callahan is a current member of the Ayer Planning Board with a degree in urban planning; and O'Connor is a daily commuter into Boston, and a former congressional aide who holds a degree in urban and environmental policy.

The formation of ATSAC followed recent complaints by commuters and residents about a lack of transparency, and lengthy implementation delays on the project.

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