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Subject: Town Council Update from Cheryl - October 2020 Edition
Date: October 26, 2020 at 11:21 AM
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Cheryl Stallings

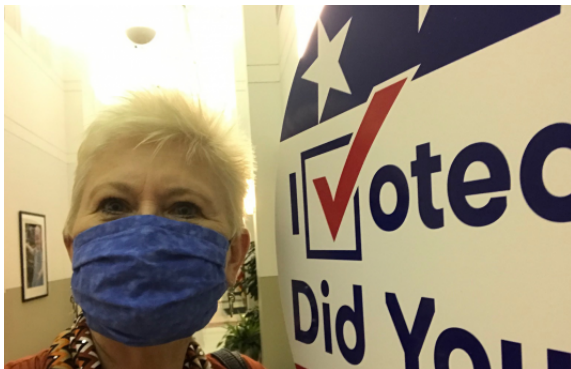
Apex Town Council
Improving Quality of Life for Our Community

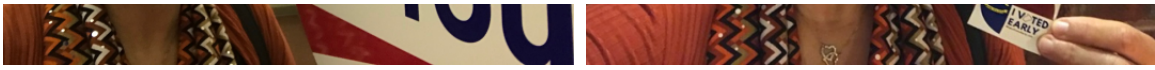


Hello Neighbors and Friends -

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well. Much is happening in and around our community, and I hope you have voted or are making your plans to vote in this important upcoming election! As you may know, early voting goes through October 31st, and Election Day is November 3rd. If you need election information, you can find

it [here](#).





Town Council Meeting News

At our September 15th meeting, Long Range Planning Manager Shannon Cox and consultants from HR&A Advisors, Inc. provided an update regarding the development of the Town's Affordable Housing Plan. A survey was conducted this summer on the topic of housing affordability in Apex with 1200 respondents. Of those participating, 81% reported that they believe residents face housing affordability challenges, and 58% agreed that the Town should try to address this need. Individuals or families that spend more than 30% of their annual income on their home and utilities are considered to be "cost-burdened". Currently in Apex, about 35% of households have an annual income less than \$75,000. The majority of these households are "cost-burdened". Addressing housing affordability in Apex will require us to provide more diverse housing options for people with different incomes at different life stages. The recent [survey results](#) will help inform recommendations for the Town's Affordable Housing Plan.

In other matters, Council extended the Parking-to-Dining Program which was adopted in mid-August. This decision allowed for extended outdoor dining and alcohol consumption in an effort to support our downtown restaurants and small businesses who are challenged by the COVID pandemic.

Additionally, Council voted to remove the age limit for Trick or Treating in Apex (which used to be up to age 12). The ending time for Trick or Treating continues to be 9 pm. Given the continuation of the pandemic, families and residents are encouraged to use their best judgement in planning their Halloween activities this year within the context of public health and safety.

Our October 6th meeting was filled with a number of presentations and public hearings. We had 5 Mayoral Proclamations: [National Wildlife](#)

[Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge](#); [Indigenous Peoples' Day](#) ; [Energy Efficient Day](#); [Fire Prevention Week](#); and [Cyber Security Awareness Month](#).

A special thank you goes to Mrs. Katie Thompson and her 4th grade students from Holly Springs who attended the meeting and informed us a few months ago about the Mayors' Monarch program.



In our ongoing efforts to address equity, diversity, and inclusion, Council also adopted an Ordinance amending various sections of the Town Code to make wording gender neutral. Language matters, and it is important that our language acknowledge and include all people in our community.

With public hearings, Council approved a rezoning for additional property to be added to the upcoming Friendship Elementary School. This land will now allow the school to be built at full capacity, which will help address our school crowding needs. Additionally, our planning department and Wake County Public Schools are working together more collaboratively with

development projects. School information is being integrated on residential rezoning applications so Council can make informed decisions based on the potential impact of a development project on our school capacity needs for our children and families.



After a good amount of discussion, a second rezoning application approved was the [Heelan Planned Unit Development](#). This project consists of approximately 140 acres that will have about 520 homes (about ½ single family and ½ townhomes). In meeting with these developers, we discussed a variety of needs that I have been hearing from the Apex community. A number of conditions were offered to address these needs: approximately 8 acres are being dedicated for a conservation easement; single-family homes are being pre-wired for solar; 2 model homes will have functioning solar panels; the primary amenity building will have solar PV systems; there will be 2 electric vehicle charging stations at the amenity building; tree canopy will be preserved as much as possible with lost trees either being replanted on the property or a financial donation of \$19,000 will be made to a local tree preservation/replacement nonprofit; and 15 townhomes will be sold to Habitat for Humanity for individuals or families with housing affordability needs. After additional discussion with the developer, I appreciate them increasing the affordable housing condition from 10 townhomes to 15.



A third rezoning case that approved was the [Kobra Tracts Planned Unit Development](#). This project contains approximately 25 total acres with plans for 70 townhomes on the north section and commercial development on the south section. After meetings with this developer, conditions were offered to improve mobility and connectivity (roadways, side paths, sidewalks, a signalized crosswalk); provide tree replacements of a certain size; and make a donation of \$15,000 to the Town's affordable housing fund.



The October 20th meeting was briefer but still had several important

proclamations and business items. We had 2 mayoral proclamations, one for [Arbor Day](#) and one for [Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#).

At the request of residents, Council voted to extend our summer park operating hours through February 28, 2021. This will allow residents the opportunity to enjoy our parks and lighted courts/fields somewhat longer in the winter months as we continue to cope with the COVID pandemic. (We usually close our parks 2 hours early during these months.)

In an effort to further support our downtown businesses, Council voted to extend the Parking-to-Dining program a bit longer through November 8th. We will re-evaluate the program again at the November 4th meeting (note that we are not meeting on Election Day, Nov 3rd).

With other items, Council approved the [Town of Apex Living Wage resolution](#); amended an Ordinance (Section 4.3) to allow dwarf/pygmy goats within the town limits (2 per household); and approved the implementation of the “Apex Cares Housing Rehabilitation Program”. We allocated \$250,000 from the Town’s Affordable Housing Fund that will be used to assist lower income homeowners with needed repairs to their existing homes. This will allow homeowners to “age in place” and the program will be managed by the nonprofit, [Rebuilding Together of the Triangle](#).

And finally, I brought up an item from our October 6th meeting that I asked my Council colleagues to re-visit. The item involved proposed amendments to the Thoroughfare and Collector Street Plan map for the Town, which is a [long range plan](#). Council had consensus on three of the amendments: the first one we rejected (the plan would have impacted a church on Holland Road); the second one we approved (realignment of Richardson Road); and the fourth we approved (update Ten Ten to six lanes with a median). The third and fifth amendments were also approved, but the decision was not particularly easy (an upgrade to New Hill Olive Chapel Road to a four lane with a median, and an upgrade to North Salem between IIS 64 and the

with a median, and an upgrade to North Salem between US 04 and the Peakway to a four lane with a median). After additional thought, I decided I wanted to get more public comment on these two amendments and I wanted to better understand the potential impact of these widenings on the homes (some historic), faith communities, businesses, and a school that are along these roadways. The majority of my colleagues agreed, and this item will go through the public hearing process again in an effort to give residents an additional opportunity to comment. Feel free to let us know your thoughts on this matter at AllCouncil@apexnc.org, or offer public comment during the hearing when it is re-scheduled (to be determined).

Other Meetings, Community Events, and Outreach

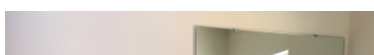
On September 22nd, I attended a public meeting about our police body camera program. This meeting provided an overview of the program and allowed opportunity for questions and comment. Council approved full funding of body cameras for all of our police officers in this year's budget.

I visited the Simple Gifts Community Garden off of S. Hughes Street on September 24th. This community garden began in 2009 and is managed by the Apex United Methodist Church. All are welcome at the garden to work and enjoy the organic produce that is grown. Additionally, the garden provides hundreds of pounds of produce to the Western Wake Crisis Ministry food pantry each year!





On October 3rd, I visited Habitat for Humanity homes in Garner that were part of the Parade of Homes event. I really enjoyed visiting with the staff and learning more about this reputable organization and the quality homes they build with those who have housing affordability needs.

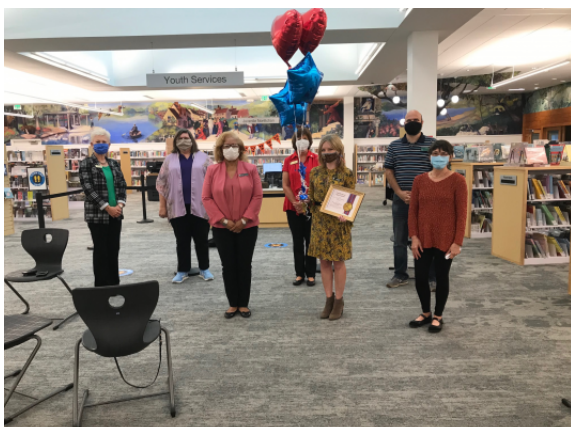




I joined the public virtual event “Faith and Blue Community Forum” on October 9th hosted by Calvary Chapel Church. The church hosted officers from the Apex Police Department and provided an opportunity for them to discuss their roles in the community and take questions from listeners.

On October 20th, I attended the virtual gathering of the Service Groups and Faith Alliance. This group is hosted and organized by Shield North Carolina and the Apex Police Department. Guest speaker Bryana Clover of 1619 Consulting spoke about Racial Equity and Equality.

I also enjoyed the invitation to our newly renovated Eva Perry Library on October 21st! A number of patrons are enjoying their “Books on the Go” service currently. In early November, they hope to open the doors for an “Express Experience”, where you can visit for 15-30 minutes with a capacity of about 75 people at a time.





As you can see from this newsletter, life is full of opportunities and action items by serving on your Apex Town Council! I am enjoying this work, and trust you will reach out to me if you have questions or if I can be of assistance to you (cheryl.stallings@apexnc.org). Feel free to share my newsletter with others, or have your friends send me a request to be on the distribution list. I hope you and yours will stay safe and well over the coming weeks ahead.

Take care and best wishes - Cheryl

[Our Vision](#)

- A community unified in the stewardship of our small town charm, natural environment, and a future where all succeed.

[Our Mission](#)

- Provide exceptional public service that cultivates opportunity for the individual and community to live, thrive, and reach their peak.

Strategic Goals

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