

Council Work Session October 27, 2020

The Altavista Town Council's October 2020 Work Session was held in Council Chambers at the J.R. Burgess Municipal Building, 510 Seventh Street, on October 27, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Agenda

1. Mayor Mike Mattox called the meeting to order and presided.

Council members

Present:

Mayor Michael Mattox
Vice-Mayor Beverley Dalton
Mr. Reginald Bennett
Mr. Tracy Emerson – arrived at 5:50PM
Mr. Timothy George
Mr. Wayne Mitchell

Absent:

Mr. Jay Higginbotham

Also Present:

Mr. J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Town Manager
Ms. Amanda Owens, Assistant Town Manager
Mrs. Tobie Shelton, Treasurer/Finance Director
Mr. Thomas Merricks, Altavista Police Chief
Mr. Tom Fore, Altavista Public Utilities Director
Mr. David Garrett, Altavista Public Works Director
Ms. Sharon Williams, Community Development Director
Mr. George Sandridge, Community Development Intern
Mr. John Eller, Town Attorney
Mrs. Crystal Hailey, Town Administration

2. Agenda Adoption

Mayor Mattox informed Council there was an amendment to the October Work Session Agenda:

- Addition #9 Eagle Trail Overlook (English Park) – Handrail Quote Consideration

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the proposed October 27, 2020 Council Work Session Agenda, to which there were none.

Councilman Mitchell made a motion, seconded by Councilman George, to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes

Vice-Mayor Dalton arrived at the meeting at this time, 5:03PM.

3. Recognitions and Presentations

- a. Makerspace Concept Presentation

Mayor Mattox thanked Councilman Bennett for suggesting this item be brought to Council for consideration.

Mr. Coggsdale informed Council that Mr. Bobby Hull, of 1200 5th Street, Altavista, would be sharing a presentation with them in regard to the “makerspace” concept.

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Mr. Hull addressed Council at that time. He stated he had a multi-generation family history of “makers”, as his family enjoyed making/building things by hand. He stated he had an entire workshop full of tools previously owned and used by his father.

Mr. Hull referenced the town’s plans for an Innovative Center / Co-worker Space to be located in the old fire station building on 7th Street. He stated he felt the project was a great idea and a “makerspace” would be a really good extension of that concept.

Mr. Hull shared with Council a brief description and potential guidelines in regard to how to develop a successful makerspace. The presentation included eight categories:

- 1) What is a Makerspace?
 - A physical place for people interested in science, technology, engineering, art, and math to collaborate, invent, discover, and “make” and/or build the things that interest them.
 - A place where students, hobbyists, & professionals hone their craft, share their knowledge, and learn new things.
 - A place where lifelong learners can come to expand their knowledge and explore their interests through hands-on projects.
- 2) Who is a “maker”?
 - Makers believe that if you can imagine it, you can make it.
 - Makers seek out opportunities to learn to do new things, especially through hands-on DIY.
 - Examples: 3D Printing, Landscaping, Blacksmith forging, Metal Fabrication, CAD Design, Robotics, Ceramics, Pottery, Sewing, Computer Programing, Electronics, Traditional and CNC Machining, Gardening, Welding, Woodworking, Knitting, Food preparation and preservation, and many more.
- 3) Community Impact
 - Inspiration:
Inviting everyone to participate in a creative economy and potentially enabling them to direct their own future.
 - Innovation:
Serving as a catalyst for grassroots invention and offering a creative space that may not be available otherwise.
 - Education:
Building a connection between learners, educators, and the community.
- 4) Opportunity
 - Opportunity for the town to offer “local” and unique access to resources.
 - There are currently only two sites available within 25-50 miles of Altavista.
- 5) Examples
 - There are multiple possibilities of what the town could potentially offer in a Makerspace: woodworking, metal shop, textiles, electronics, canning (vegetables/produce), etc.
- 6) Resources
 - Retired equipment from local industries and possibly citizens.
 - Local/regional economic development authorities
 - Corporations / Universities for discarded technology & other equipment
 - Retirees &/or independent living facilities
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Local robotics, quilting, sewing, knitting, crocheting, woodworking, pottery, or other arts & crafts groups
 - University programs & student groups
 - Grants such as MEEMIC Foundation Grants for Educators, Kickstarter.com, TechSoup, etc.

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7) Preliminary Work (First Steps)

- Unlike other business ventures, there is no template or formula for creating a Makerspace
- Tour **Vector Space** in Lynchburg (a local makerspace/community workshop)
- Survey Altavista citizens and the surrounding community to determine interest
- Investigate available funding/resource opportunities and grant possibilities.

8) Conclusion

- Creating a local Makerspace aligns well with Altavista's goal to redefine and redevelop itself as an innovative and "meaningful unique" community.

Mr. Hull informed Council he was a BGF retiree from a 42 year career and a background in quality assurance, manufacturing, and innovation engineering. He offered his expertise and assistance to the town if they decided to move forward with developing a makerspace.

Mr. Hull stated he also had an entire workshop full of woodworking tools, previously owned by his father, but unused by him, that he would donate to the town for that purpose.

Mr. Hull thanked Council for their time and stated he would be glad to answer any questions Council may have pertaining to his presentation or the makerspace concept.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to this item.

Councilman Mitchell thanked Mr. Hull for putting together this presentation with information for Council's consideration.

Mr. Mitchell stated the makerspace concept was similar to what the town was planning for their new Innovation Center/Co-worker Space, but with limited space, the town could only focus on "technology". He stated some of the other "dirty arts" (such as woodworking, machine shop, etc.) required a much larger space to be successful.

Mr. Mitchell stated he felt the makerspace concept was a wonderful idea for the Town of Altavista and hoped the town had the opportunity to offer locals such a space in the future.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Hull to contact him on a later date to discuss the idea further and Mr. Hull agreed to do so.

Councilman Bennett also thanked Mr. Hull for his time and his presentation in regard to the concept of a makerspace in Altavista.

Councilman George stated he felt there were a few building possibilities that could be used for a makerspace in Altavista.

Mr. Hull suggested, if the town was interested in developing a makerspace, to investigate the availability of the old (unused) BGF building adjacent to the old Lane Company property. He stated the building had sufficient square footage and was already set up with the electrical capacity/capability needed for a makerspace.

Mr. George asked the Town Manager who currently owned the fore-mentioned building, to which Town Manager Waverly Cogsdale answered the investment company, Schwartz.

Mayor Mattox shared with Mr. Hull, up until the recent COVID-19 pandemic began, he was involved with a group of individuals, along with VTI in Altavista, trying to develop a program similar to the proposed makerspace.

Mayor Mattox stated the group was trying to create a "pipeline" for future employee candidates to potentially enter the town's manufacturing companies, such as BGF and Abbott, for training. He stated, in doing so, the group felt the process would produce valuable, long term, employees for the companies.

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Mayor Mattox stated the group also felt having a program for youth, as early as 6th grade, could be an exciting learning experience and, if interested, develop an important connection between a young person and the town's multiple industrial possibilities, such as advanced manufacturing and industrial engineering.

Mayor Mattox stated VTI (Virginia Technical Institute) had a wonderful facility and would be a great possibility to consider developing such a program.

Mayor Mattox stated, once COVID-19 regulations allowed, the group would be continuing its efforts. He asked Mr. Hull to consider sharing his expertise with the group and invited him to be involved with developing the fore-mentioned program(s).

Mr. Hull shared his interest in doing so.

There were no other comments from Council in regard to this item.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Hull for his time and the makerspace presentation.

b. FY2020 Audit - Financial Statement Presentation

At that time, David Foley with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates presented Council with a summary of the Town of Altavista's FY2020 Financial Report (audit).

Mr. Foley stated, as part of the audit process, his firm was required to issue the town two items at the audit's completion, 1) a "Financial Report" outlining the town's financial statements, and 2) a "Communication Letter for Those Charged with Governance".

Mr. Foley referenced the first few pages of the Financial Report, which included three key items:

- **Management's Responsibility (Town of Altavista)**
"Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the town's financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; including the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, fraud, or error."
- **Auditor's Responsibility (Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates)**
"The responsibility to express opinions on the town's financial statements based on an audit. To conduct an audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and standards applicable to financial audits contained in "Government Auditing Standards", issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. To plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the town's financial statements are free from material misstatement."
- **Auditor's Opinion (audit conclusion)**
Mr. Foley informed Council, in his firm's "opinion", the Town of Altavista's financial statements, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the remaining fund information for the Town of Altavista, Virginia, as of June 30, 2020, where applicable and cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Mr. Foley stated the Town of Altavista received an "unmodified opinion" on their financial statements for FY2020, which was the highest award a locality could receive from an audit.

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Mr. Foley referenced page seven of the Financial (Audit) Report: the “balance sheet” for the town’s main operating fund (General Fund). He stated, after consideration of the town’s assets, liabilities, deferred inflows of resources and fund balance, the Town of Altavista had a fund balance of \$17,922,109, with a \$9,954,658 unassigned fund balance.

Mr. Foley then referenced page nine of the Financial (Audit) Report: the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance for the town’s General Fund. He stated this page itemizes the town’s revenues, \$7,023,244, and expenditures, \$7,946,039, for FY2020, which ended in a fund balance of \$17,231,695.

Mr. Foley continued and referenced page eleven of the Financial (Audit) Report: Proprietary Fund Statement of Net Position (Enterprise/Utility Fund). He stated the financial statement shows this fund with total assets of \$25,477, 432, liabilities \$13,352,763, and an ending net position of \$12,301,240.

At that time, Mr. Foley concluded his presentation by referencing the “Communication Letter for Those Charged with Governance”. He stated his firm was required by law to “communicate” the finding of their audit to Council and the Town of Altavista through this letter and the information given in the Financial (Audit) Report.

Mr. Foley stated the Communication Letter indicated the Town of Altavista’s financial statement disclosures were neutral, consistent, and clear. He stated his firm encountered no difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing their audit.

Mr. Foley concluded his presentation and stated he would be happy to answer any questions Council may have in regard to the FY2020 Audit and/or Financial Report.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or concerns pertaining to this item.

Councilman Bennett thanked Mr. Foley for his presentation and the Financial Report.

Councilman George also thanked Mr. Foley for his time and his presentation.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated she appreciated the quality of work Mr. Foley and his firm, Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates, does for the Town of Altavista year after year.

Mrs. Dalton stated the “good report” the town received from the annual audit was a direct reflection on Altavista’s Finance Director, Tobie Shelton, and her staff. She stated her appreciation for the continued quality of work by the Town Manager, Finance Director, and Town Staff.

Councilman Mitchell thanked Mr. Foley for his presentation. He also thank the Town Manager and Finance Director for their contribution to the outstanding Financial Report.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Foley if there was anything Town Council or the Town of Altavista could do differently or better to improve the results of the town’s annual audit.

Mr. Foley stated the Town of Altavista does a great job at managing their financial statements. He stated the town’s financial stability was “healthy” and he did not know of anything the town needed to do differently moving forward than they already do.

There were no additional comments from Council on this item.

Mayor Mattox thanked Mr. Foley and his firm for the work they do for the Town of Altavista. He also thanked Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale and Finance Director Tobie Shelton for the work they do to keep the Town of Altavista “financially sound”.

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Public Comments - Agenda Items Only

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any citizen(s) attending the meeting that wished to address Council regarding a work session agenda item, to which there were none.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager if there had been any phone calls or emails received from citizens with questions or concerns, to which there were none.

Mayor Mattox encouraged town citizens to reach out to Town Council or Town Staff anytime they have questions or concerns regarding the town.

Items Referred from Previous Meetings

4. Community Development and Housing Analysis Discussion

Background:

Town Staff previously provided Council with a draft copy of a “Community Development & Housing Analysis” created by Sharon Williams, Altavista’s Director of Community Development. Council asked that the item be placed on a future Work Session Agenda, allowing Council additional time to review the analysis document. Community Development and Housing were part of the town’s newly refocused Economic Development Strategy, spearheaded by Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens.

On this evening, Ms. Williams went through a brief overview of the Community Development and Housing Analysis, in order to continue the analysis discussion with Council. She asked that, after the discussion, Council provide feedback and direction to staff on how they wished to move forward.

Ms. Williams stated, while creating a marketing/branding plan for Altavista’s new Innovative Center / Co-worker Space, she realized the importance of a locality being able to “tell their own (unique) story”.

Ms. Williams quoted the Habitat for Humanity’s Mission Statement:

“No matter who we are, or where we come from, we all deserve to have a decent life. We deserve to feel strength and stability on a daily basis. We deserve to know that we have the power to take care of ourselves and build our own futures. And “everyone” deserves a decent place to live.”

Ms. Williams stated she felt this statement summed up Altavista’s overall outlook and reason for having “housing development” in the town’s Economic Development Strategy.

Ms. Williams stated the Town of Altavista had some “hurdles” to overcome in regard to increasing the town’s housing availability, and also improving its standard of housing for renters, but she felt the town was well equipped to achieve the task at hand.

Ms. Williams stated, as a service to renters, the town needed to increase its efforts in holding landlords accountable for sub-standard housing.

Ms. Williams stated Altavista had the capability to pursue “quality developers” that would produce quality work (in terms of housing development) and would meet the town’s ever growing housing needs.

Ms. Williams stated the Town of Altavista could become a “leader” by educating its citizens with the resources that are available to them in regard to housing options, and more specifically, the possibility of home ownership.

Ms. Williams stated the Town of Altavista also needed to ensure there were no town ordinances or processes in place that would serve as a “barrier” to potential housing developers/housing development.

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Ms. Williams continued her presentation by referencing the town's issue with "derelict" structures. She informed Council the Altavista Planning Commission would be holding a Public Hearing on the matter at their November 2nd meeting.

Ms. Williams informed Council there was a provision in the Virginia State Code that allows a locality to send any homeowner with a derelict/nuisance issue a letter stating they had ninety days from the receipt of the letter to submit a plan to the town for repairing or renovating the derelict structure. She stated, in addition, the code states the town had the right to fine the homeowner for each month a renovation plan was not submitted.

Ms. Williams referenced the "Landlord List" given to citizens searching for a rental property in Altavista. She stated, if a landlord/property owner was a "repeat offender" for nuisance issues on their property/properties, or offered sub-standard housing for renters, that landlord would no longer be a part of the fore-mentioned list for citizens to reference.

Ms. Williams continued her presentation by referencing the younger generation of Altavista citizens (Millennials born 1981-1996 and Generation Z born 1997-2010). She stated the Town of Altavista needed to find out what the younger generations want and/or need in order to keep them housed in their hometown, and not moving elsewhere.

Ms. Williams then referenced Altavista's need for additional "senior housing", such as one-level town homes. She stated the town should also consider educating its senior citizens on how to "age in place", and the options available for renovating their existing homes in town, and not having to move elsewhere to accommodate their new needs as they grow older, such as handicap rails in their bathrooms and hallways.

Ms. Williams went on to reference the town's market rate and "workforce housing" affordability. She stated it was important for the town to be competitive with their housing rates, in order for everyone that wanted to own a home had the opportunity and resources they needed to do so.

Ms. Williams stated, one way the town could achieve this task was to offer "mixed-use/mixed-income" housing. She shared with Council pictures of such accommodations.

Ms. Williams stated this option was not related to Virginia Housing Section 8, but an alternative for the low income workforce.

Ms. Williams stated a mix-use/mixed-income development was usually built on large parcels of land. She stated this was a challenge for Altavista to conquer, as most of its available larger parcels were zoned R1 (residential only), which did not allow mix-use.

Ms. Williams stated anyone interested in developing mixed-use accommodations in Altavista would have a large amount of time and money invested in re-zoning requirements. She stated the town may want to consider "waiving" the rezoning cost for such a project, in order to attract developers to the area.

Ms. Williams stated, as the town continues its discussions regarding community development and housing, and potential incentives to draw developers into the Town of Altavista, Council may want to consider directing the Planning Commission work with staff to review Altavista's Zoning Map and Future Land Use Map for any changes that may need to occur that would be "friendlier" to potential housing developers.

Ms. Williams suggested the town also consider absorbing the cost of traffic studies, required by VDOT, for housing or economic development projects.

Ms. Williams referenced the Frazier Farm property located at the north end of 7th Street. She stated this property would be an example of VDOT requiring a traffic study if being developed as multi-use residential.

Ms. Williams reminded Council that rezoning a property could take two to three months, and a traffic study could take up to nine months to complete.

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Ms. Williams stated the process for both could cost a developer approximately \$40,000 for a parcel the size of Frazier Farm.

Ms. Williams stated, as the town discusses future community and housing development, the items she spoke of that evening were just a few of the things Council could consider as they direct staff on how they wished to move forward.

Ms. Williams stated she would be glad to answer any questions Council may have.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions for Ms. Williams, or in regard to the Community Development and Housing Analysis presented for Council's consideration.

Councilman Bennett stated the Community Development and Housing Analysis had been very informative, and he thanked Ms. Williams for her presentation.

Mr. Bennett referenced the Frazier Farm property and asked, other than a VDOT required traffic study, what other items would be on a list of "first steps" to develop the property into multi-use residential.

Ms. Williams stated the town would need to find out from the Frazier family what their future intentions were for the property, and if they had considered marketing the property.

Mr. Bennett stated, if the owner(s) of a property needed direction on how to market their property, he knew that Ms. Williams, Altavista's Community Development Director, was available to offer that assistance, but was unsure the citizens of Altavista were aware that she could help in that way.

Mr. Bennett also stated, as Ms. Williams was a certified AICP, and the first point of contact for zoning needs in the Town of Altavista, he felt the town should communicate/advertise to its citizens that Ms. Williams could help them figure out the "next steps" when wanting to improve or market their property for investors/developers.

Ms. Williams stated Council could consider directing the Town Manager to create a "Development Review Team". She stated there were several localities that had such a team, which consisted of multiple staff members, usually at least one from each department, in order to have input from each area of expertise.

Mr. Bennett asked if a Development Review Team would be relevant to the town's needs and "worthwhile" for the town to consider.

Ms. Williams stated she felt the effort was worthwhile to any locality to make each department's resources available to its citizens and business community.

Councilman George stated he did not feel that Altavista was a "poverty" town. He stated, in a previous feasibility study, the town found an estimated 85% of the people that worked in higher paying jobs in Altavista, did not live in town.

Mr. George stated he felt Council had been making wonderful improvements to the Town of Altavista over the past several years, such as the new Innovative Center and Co-worker Space, Dalton's Landing, and multiple improvements to the town's parks, in order to attract more people to the area.

Mr. George stated the town seemed to be on the right track with community development, with such improvements as "Downtown Revitalization", but seemed to be missing a key point/ingredient for getting housing developers to invest in Altavista.

Ms. Williams stated, while Altavista was not where they want to be with community development, she had seen significant improvements in the short time she had been with the town.

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Ms. Williams stated, in the past the town had relied on “planners” that were merely consultants. She stated she was an “active planner” and her intentions were to help the Town of Altavista move forward with their desired community and housing growth.

Vice-Mayor Dalton thanked Ms. Williams for the Community Development and Housing Analysis she presented to Council. She stated the detailed document helped Council have a better understanding of Ms. Williams’ knowledge and skillset of the subject matter.

Mrs. Dalton stated the document also helped educate her on matters in Altavista that she was intellectually aware of, but not necessarily aware of their conceptual relevance to the town’s future plans for community and housing development.

Mrs. Dalton referenced Councilman George’s dislike of Altavista having a majority of its citizens with low median incomes. She stated the State of Virginia’s median income was also lower than in past years, which was one of the main reasons the initiative program Go Virginia was formed, to help combat the issue.

Mrs. Dalton stated the low median income was an issue Altavista would have to work with, but with community and housing development, the town could improve their statistics and overcome that hurdle.

Mrs. Dalton stated the analysis was a good “realization” of what the town has to work with in terms of attracting developers to the Town of Altavista.

Mrs. Dalton suggested Council consider Ms. Williams’ suggestion to help developers through the first one or two steps of the development process (such as rezoning and traffic studies), which would help speed up the initial process. She stated the effort by the town would also help a project seem less of a financial burden to a developer for investment.

Councilman Emerson stated he believed the Town of Altavista had a great community “niche” and felt Altavista should market the town as such to Lynchburg and the surrounding area as a great place to live.

Mr. Emerson stated there was no easy way to make changes happen “overnight”, but he felt the improvements the town had made over the past few years was a step in the right direction for offering, not only its existing citizens, but also potential future citizens and developers/investors a quality community and way of life.

Mr. Emerson stated he agreed with the town’s desire for housing growth, but he would also like to see the town address structural and esthetic issues with some of the existing homes and businesses in town.

Mr. Emerson referenced the Claire Parker Foundation and their recent project of collaborating with local businesses to renovate/remodel an existing old and derelict home for resale. He stated he felt this was a great idea that could be repeated in multiple areas of the town.

Mr. Emerson stated he felt the only way to achieve that task was for the town to work “collectively” with homeowners and business owners to address the issue.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated developers move on numbers and demographics. She suggested Ms. Williams quantify the town’s statistics with its many assets and amenities into a marketing plan for the town to use with potential developers.

Councilman Mitchell applauded Ms. Williams for her enthusiasm and the Community Development and Housing Analysis. He stated he was happy to see how the analysis mirrored the town’s Economic Development Strategy and how the two plans could work together.

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Mr. Mitchell referenced the Virginia Tobacco Commission. He informed Council the commission encouraged college graduates to move back to their hometowns and offered them incentives to do so.

Mr. Mitchell suggested the Town of Altavista develop a program that would also incentivize hometown living to graduates and students. He stated if a student or graduate wanted to purchase an older home in Altavista, the town could offer a low, or no interest loan for them to renovate/remodel the home.

Mr. Mitchell stated, whether the individual stayed at the home for a few years, or for their entire life, the improvements to the property would be well worth the town's investment and good for the community as a whole.

Mr. Mitchell stated the Community Development and Housing Analysis presented by Ms. Williams held a lot of information for consideration. He encouraged Council to re-read each category in the analysis and email Ms. Williams and Mr. Coggsdale (Town Manager) their input, possibly before the next meeting the subject would be discussed.

Mr. Mitchell stated, by sharing their input, Council would give Mr. Coggsdale and Ms. Williams an idea of how Council wished to move forward.

Mayor Mattox stated, during his time on Council and as Mayor, Council had been working hard to achieve great things to improve the quality of life in the Town of Altavista.

Mayor Mattox referenced the new splash pad in English Park and the Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch to open in spring 2021. He stated, while some projects move slower than others, it was the town's intent to create a family environment.

Mayor Mattox referenced the previous mention of potential home ownership. He asked Community Development Director Sharon Williams what she felt was the most important thing an individual needed to know, and what the main setback was for individuals wanting to own a home.

Ms. Williams stated, in some cases, an individual does not have enough financial information, or either the right information to make smart financial decisions. She stated basic financing was no longer taught in our school systems, therefore individuals learn from their parents, or not at all.

Ms. Williams stated some individuals were not aware of the many opportunities available to them. She stated she felt it was important for localities to offer such information, so individuals realize that homeownership could potentially be an achievable goal.

Mayor Mattox referenced Altavista's low median income statistic mentioned early in this discussion. He stated younger generation also had to be willing to work and hold down a good paying job in order to afford homeownership.

Mayor Mattox referenced BGF and Abbott Laboratories in Altavista. He stated there were multiple local industries that offered well paid positions/salaries.

Mayor Mattox suggested the town develop a program to educate young individuals with manufacturing and industrial training.

Councilman Bennett referenced his thirty-seven year career at Abbott Laboratories. He informed Council that he went to work for Abbott three days after he graduated high school. He stated he would not have had the opportunity to do so without the prior training he received through ICT (Industrial Cooperative Training).

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Mr. Bennett stated ICT was a program previously offered by the Campbell County School System, but was no longer available. He stated DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) was another program no longer offered by the school system. He stated the program prepared emerging high school and college students into leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management.

Mr. Bennett shared his favor with Mayor Mattox's suggestion of the town developing such a program for the town's young people. He suggested the town collaborate with industries such as Abbott to create the program.

Mayor Mattox asked Altavista Community Development Director Sharon Williams to create a "brag sheet" on Altavista's. He stated the document should include items such as the town's low real estate rates, low utility rates, quick response times of emergency services (police and fire departments), the new splash pad and park amenities, etc.

Mayor Mattox stated, with the Town Manager's approval, for Ms. Williams to send the document to potential (housing) developers, in hopes it would spark interest in Altavista.

There were no additional questions or comments from Council pertaining to this item.

Mayor Mattox thanked Ms. Williams for her presentation and stated he looked forward to future updates and the town moving forward towards community and housing growth.

New Items for Discussion

5. Altavista Police Department (APD) - Budget Amendment Request

At that time, APD Chief Tommy Merricks addressed Council in regard to this item.

Chief Merricks asked Council to consider allowing him to utilize "seizure money" (State Forfeiture Funds), in the amount of \$925, to purchase vest carriers for the Altavista Police Department. He stated the carriers would allow officers to get items off their waist belt and onto the vest, which was lighter and more comfortable.

Chief Merricks stated the magazine pouches, cuff cases, and flashlight holders for the vests would be an additional \$698 cost. He stated there was currently enough in the State Forfeiture Fund to purchase all of the items needed to supply every APD Officer with a vest carrier.

Chief Merricks also requested Council's approval to utilize \$650 from "federal seizure money" (Federal Forfeiture Funds) to purchase badges for the APD Officer's dress hats. He stated, when the hats were initially ordered, the department could not find an economically priced hat badge.

Chief Merricks stated the badges he was recommending were reasonably priced, were voted upon by the APD Officers, and he felt would add to the professionalism of the APD dress uniform.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to this item/request, to which there were none.

Councilman Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Bennett, to approve the Altavista Police Department's request for the purchase of vest covers and accessory holders for the vests; the motion also included approval of badges for the APD dress hats.

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The approval included a budget amendment that would allocate State (\$1,623.25) and Federal (\$646.75) Forfeiture funds to cover both requests.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes

6. Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch Project – Change Order

Assistant Town Manager Amie Owens addressed Council in regard to this item.

Ms. Owens gave Council a brief update on the Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch Project stating the construction crew broke ground at the site on October 8, 2020. She stated, however, during the preliminary site grading, contractors discovered an issue with the soil's stability.

Ms. Owens stated, on October 15th, Troy Williams, Senior Project Engineer with ECS Mid-Atlantic, provided the town with a report related to the need to utilize an undercut and geo matting fabric with stone overlay on almost the entirety of the site.

Ms. Owens stated, based on ECS's recommendations, Brent Whorley, with Counts & Dobyns, provided a change order to the project in the amount of \$54,047.27. She stated the change order was broken down by labor, equipment and materials.

Ms. Owens informed Council, due to the need to visit the site, ECS Mid-Atlantic indicated there would be additional fees for their services, which would cover three days of remediation work. She stated the increase in fees should not exceed \$3,000.

Ms. Owens stated, following a discussion with Tim Guthrie, Engineer with Gay & Neel, on October 22, every effort was being made to find ways to adequately serve the site, while minimizing the cost of the change order.

Ms. Owens also informed Council there had been a slight change in the design of the "boat trailer" parking area. She stated the two trailer parking spaces near the end of the lot had been changed to be "pull through" spaces.

Ms. Owens stated there would be no additional charge for the change to the parking plans, as the area was minimal and balanced, and would not affect county regulations or permits. She stated, therefore, the parking area change would be treated as a field change, and would be noted on the project's plans.

Ms. Owens stated, in the interest of due diligence, Brian Stokes, Campbell County Environmental Manager, was also asked whether or not there needed to be a change to the permit, and he indicated that it would not be necessary to do so.

Ms. Owens concluded her update by informing Council there was currently funding available within the project's budget to cover the cost of the fore-mentioned change order, as Council had previously earmarked funds for the project, in the event that grant funds were not available. She stated the earmarked funds had remained designated to the project.

Ms. Owens informed Council the current amount remaining, before the change order, was approximately \$139,500. She stated, if the change order was approved, there would be \$85,000 remaining. She stated the remaining funds would be used to provide amenities for Dalton's Landing, such as signage, trash cans, etc.

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Ms. Owens stated she would be glad to answer any questions Council may have in regard to the change order request.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions or concerns in regard to this item.

Councilman Mitchell asked if core drilling had been done at the Dalton's Landing site in order to confirm the change order would not exceed its \$54,047 cost.

Ms. Owens stated, when the project's contractor broke ground at the site on October 8th, soil stability issues were found. She stated the presented change order came as a recommendation from Troy Williams (senior project engineer), ECS Mid-Atlantic; and the \$54,047 would complete the engineer's recommended items to correct the soil issue.

Ms. Owens stated staff was currently working with the contractor and engineer to possibly lower the cost of the change order.

Mr. Mitchell stated the contractor should have known about the soil stability issue at the beginning of the project, which could have eliminated the need for the change order.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated, whether the soil issue was found sooner rather than later, the cost to fix the issue would still be a part of the project's overall cost.

Mr. Mitchell asked the Town Manager for a time when he could view the initial contractor of the Dalton's Landing project.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would gather all documentation related to the project for Councilman Mitchell to view at a later date.

Mayor Mattox stated he favored the fact that staff was looking at ways to lower the cost of the presented change order. He asked staff not to consider any cost savings that may potentially reduce the life expectancy of the project's asphalt/parking area.

Ms. Owens agreed with the Mayor's recommendation. She stated the main item of consideration would be the "grade" of rock that would be used, and staff would have the project's engineers consult on the matter.

Councilman Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman George, to accept the recommendation of Town Staff and ECS Mid-Atlantic and approve the presented change order in the amount of \$54,047 for the Dalton's Landing Canoe Launch Project.

Motion carried:

VOTE:	Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
	Mr. Timothy George	Yes
	Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
	Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Abstain
	Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
	Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes

At that time, Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale stated he wanted to take a moment to comment on a few items mentioned earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Coggsdale thanked Town Staff for their hard work during the annual (FY2020) audit. He stated Altavista was fortunate to have Tobie Shelton's leadership as the town's Finance Director.

Mr. Coggsdale thanked Town Council for the work they do and "town business" they conduct, which helps make it easier for staff to do their jobs.

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Mr. Coggsdale also thanked all of the town's Departmental Leaders/Directors, as they continue to do a great job at keeping town records in order, which helps make the audit process easier on staff and the auditors.

Mr. Coggsdale then referenced Community Development Director Sharon Williams and her presentation to Council earlier that evening.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he agreed with Councilman Mitchell's suggestion, for all Council members to send Ms. Williams any questions or comments they may have in regard to the Community Development and Housing Analysis.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, by doing so, staff would know if everyone was "on the same page", or if an item/items needed to be discussed further.

7. CY2021 Town Council Meeting Schedule

Background:

The Altavista Town Council currently meets twice a month, except in December. Based on past direction from Council, there are no Work Sessions scheduled in December. Town Council meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month for their Regular Meeting (6:00 p.m.); and on the 4th Tuesday of each month for their Work Session (5:00 p.m.). The meetings are conducted in the Council Chambers of the J.R. "Rudy" Burgess Building/Town Hall, located at 510 7th Street.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale shared with Council the draft 2021 Town Council Meeting Calendar. He stated, if Council agrees with the presented schedule, staff would place the item on the November 10th Consent Agenda.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any question, comments, or desired changes in regard to the draft calendar schedule, to which there were none.

All Council members were in consensus to place the adoption of the 2021 Town Council Meeting Calendar on the November Regular Meeting Consent Agenda as presented.

8. FY2022 Budget/CIP Calendar

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale shared with Council the draft FY2022 Budget/CIP Calendar for Town Council's review and consideration.

Mr. Coggsdale stated, as is the case each year, the Altavista Community Transit System (ACTS) proposed budget would be considered in December, in order for Town Staff to have ample time to prepare the grant application that was due in January 2021. He stated Town Staff would be providing the ACTS Draft Budget to Council in mid-November.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the FY2022 calendar was largely the same as last year's calendar, and it continued to feature an option for continued budget work sessions on the Wednesdays following Town Council Work Sessions in February and March.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the option to continue a work session allows Council ample time to consider the items related to the budget and the capital improvement plan.

Mr. Coggsdale stated the fore-mentioned "continued meetings" would only be utilized if Council felt they were necessary to complete the budget process.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt the town's annual budget process was one of the most important tasks that Town Council was responsible for.

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Mayor Mattox reminded Council that budget meetings and work sessions could be lengthy at times when discussing so many items. He suggested Council slow down the pace of the budget process by utilizing the additional days on the draft budget calendar. He stated, not “as needed”, but on the schedule as a work session date.

Mayor Mattox stated he felt it was important for each Council member to be present at every budget meeting. He stated, by officially recognizing the additional days as budget work sessions, each Council member had the opportunity to plan ahead for those dates.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to this item.

Councilman Emerson suggested breaking up the budget process by dividing meetings/work sessions into sections by town departments. He stated this would allow Council to focus on one or two departments at a time and not the entire budget at once.

Councilman Mitchell reminded Council the draft budget calendar presented that evening already had “continued work sessions” built into its schedule. He suggested approving the budget calendar as presented and not adding any additional days to the schedule.

Vice-Mayor Dalton stated, if any Council member had an independent question for just their clarification on an item in the draft budget, she suggested calling or emailing the Town Manager for clarification or information before coming to a budget work session.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would be happy to clarify any questions Council may have when pertaining to any budget or CIP item during the budget process.

All Council members were in consensus to place the adoption of the FY2022 Budget/CIP Calendar on the November Regular Meeting Consent Agenda as presented.

9. Eagle Trail Overlook (English Park) – Handrail

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale informed Council that David Garrett, Altavista Public Works Director, sought quotes from five sources for 74’ of 42” (VDOT style) powder coated railings for the area around the perimeter of the Overlook, as well as, a rail on each end of the steps.

Mr. Coggsdale stated two bids were received and staff recommended the town procure the hand rails from Willies Customized Iron Works (Amherst, VA) in the total amount of \$5,530, which was the lowest bid received.

Mr. Coggsdale reminded Council the FY2021 Budget included \$32,000 for this project.

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any questions in regard to this item, to which there were none.

Councilman Emerson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Mitchel, to approve Town Staff’s recommendation and award the Eagle Trail Overlook Handrail Project to Willie’s Customized Iron Works in the amount of \$5,530.

Motion carried:

VOTE:

Mr. Reggie Bennett	Yes
Mr. Timothy George	Yes
Mayor Mike Mattox	Yes
Mrs. Beverley Dalton	Yes
Mr. Tracy Emerson	Yes
Mr. Wayne Mitchell	Yes

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Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items)

There were no town citizens present at the October 27, 2020 Council Work Session.

Mayor Mattox asked the Town Manager if there had been any questions or concerns for Council by citizens submitted through phone calls or emails, to which there were none.

Matters from Council

Mayor Mattox asked Council if they had any additional items or concerns for discussion.

- Councilman Bennett referenced the neighborhood park located on Avondale Drive in Altavista, to be named after John Moseley at a dedication ceremony in March 2021.

Mr. Bennett informed Council that Avoca Director Mike Hudson had located some of Mr. Moseley's family members, living in Baltimore, Maryland. He asked the Town Manager to let Mr. Hudson know when an official date had been set for the park dedication, so Mr. Hudson could invite those family members to the dedication ceremony.

- Councilman Bennett also informed Council that John Moseley was born on April 15th, 1877. He suggested the town adopt a proclamation in honor of Mr. Moseley, stating the Sunday after April 15th be known as John Moseley Day in the Town of Altavista.

Vice-Mayor Dalton suggested placing this item on a future meeting agenda for Council's consideration.

Councilman Emerson asked when the new pavilion approved for placement at the Avondale Park would be complete.

Altavista Finance Director Tobie Shelton stated the new pavilion for Avondale Park was tentatively scheduled to be complete by mid-November.

Mr. Emerson suggested the park dedication and proposed proclamation (if approved) be scheduled for the same day.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale agreed with Councilman Emerson. He stated the park dedication had tentatively been proposed for March/Spring 2021, but there should be no problem in having both the park dedication and the proposed proclamation (if approved) scheduled for the same day.

Mr. Coggsdale stated he would place this item on a future Council agenda for further consideration.

- Councilman George referenced Altavista's Public Works (PW) Department. He stated it was often forgotten how multi-skilled the town's PW employees were.

Mr. George stated he visited English Park on a regular basis and on a recent visit he passed the "overlook project" in progress on Eagle Trail. He stated there were two PW employees preparing the overlook for a concrete overlay soon to be poured.

Mr. George thanked Altavista's Public Works Department for all the hard work they do for the Town of Altavista and community.

- Councilman Mitchell referenced the upcoming FY2022 Budget "season" (process). He asked that Council start considering how they wished to renovate/remodel the town's newly acquired theatre located on Main Street.
- Mr. Mitchell also suggested Council consider the budget amount they want to allocate to the AEDA (Altavista Economic Development Authority) Steering Committee for marketing purposes.

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Mayor Mattox suggested staff and the AEDA start investigating if there were grant funds available for the town to utilize on the theatre project.

Town Manager Waverly Coggsdale suggested Council place the item on a future work session and start the process of discussing/considering how they wished to renovate/remodel the theatre.

Councilman Emerson suggested staff communicate with nearby Gretna and Brookneal and gather any information they may have in regard to how they were able to renovate/revamp their town's theatres.

- Mayor Mattox asked Council and staff to join him in wishing Councilman Emerson a happy birthday.

There were no further comments from Council.

Closed Session

There was no Closed Session scheduled for the October Work Session.

Adjournment

Mayor Mattox asked if there were any additional comments or concerns from Town Council, to which there were none.

Mayor Mattox thanked the Town Manager and Town Staff for the hard work they continue to do for the Town of Altavista and the community.

Mayor Mattox adjourned the meeting at 6:57PM.

Michael E. Mattox, Mayor

J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Clerk