

**Town of Coventry
Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
Regular Meeting
Thursday September 18, 2025
6:30 PM
Town Hall Annex, 1712 Main Street
Zoom Meeting Link Below**

1. Call To Order, Roll Call

2. Approval Of Minutes

A. Minutes, August 21, 2025

Documents:

[FSHSRSC MEETING MINUTES, AUGUST 21.PDF](#)

3. Presentation On FS/HSRSC's Process

Documents:

[FIREARMS ORDINANCE DRAFT LANGUAGE 5.PDF](#)

4. Public Comment

(1 Hour - 5 minutes maximum per citizen - Feedback will not be taken over Zoom)

5. Review Of Email Feedback

Documents:

[PACE FEEDBACK EMAIL.PDF](#)
[SWIFT FEEDBACK EMAIL.PDF](#)

6. Other Business

7. Adjournment

Topic: FS/HSRSC Meeting

Time: Sep 18, 2025 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81573451775?pwd=olFm9gs5R9Su9KCHFbxKsrbVGllaSf.1>

Meeting ID: 815 7345 1775

Passcode: 400795

One tap mobile

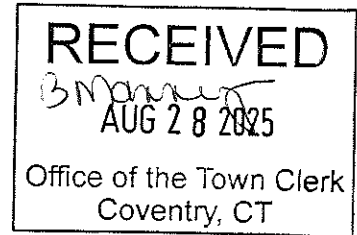
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Join instructions

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/81573451775?signature=M2pv-FV-YLEofSHMmCn9ui6ycQmp_O5Hn5Whr2RGzyU

Town of Coventry
Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday August 21, 2025



1. Call To Order, Roll Call:

By: Murray

Time: 6:32 p.m.

Place: Conference Room B & Zoom

		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	Brian Murray, Chairperson	X	
	Kenneth Stein, Vice Chairperson	X	
	Dudley Brand	X	
	Mike Mangiafico-Joined at 6:38 PM	X	
	Carolyn Batz		X
STAFF:	Jana Roberson, Director of Planning & Dev't.		X
	Chief of Police Eric Peterson		X

Also present: Special Projects Coordinator Alex Taylor

2. Approval Of Minutes:

A. Minutes, June 19, 2025:

Motion: I move to accept the June 19, 2025, Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee Meeting Minutes.

By: Brand

Second: Stein

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimously in favor

3. Extension Resolution:

Taylor explained that the Town Council approved an extension of this committee on 8/4/25. A copy of the resolution is attached to the agenda. This extension extends the committee's duration though December 1, 2025, allowing for 4 more regular meetings. However, special meetings can be called during this time frame if necessary.

The public comment meeting could take place as part of a regular meeting, or a special meeting. Scheduling this will take place later on the agenda.

Murray stated that they should notify Carolyn Batz about the extension, to ensure she is aware and able to continue attending meetings. Murray reminded that she serves on the commission as a member of the public and wants to make sure that position is represented. If Batz cannot attend further meetings, the committee will try to fill the seat if necessary, and if time allows.

4. Draft of Firearms Ordinance:

No changes have been made since the last meeting.

The draft has been reviewed by both the Steering Committee and the Town Council. Questions have come up regarding the distance that was included. It was explained why the 350 ft distance requirement was chosen, along with there being a stipulation that the distance could be shortened with written permission from the neighbor(s).

It was stated that ordinance is still a draft, which was recognized by the Town Councilors, and it is not expected to be finalized until the committee hears from the public and incorporates feedback as needed.

5. Public Feedback Planning:

It was discussed to hold the public presentation at the next regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, September 18th at 6:30 PM. In addition to in person comments received at the meeting, the committee will also be accepting email correspondence for review. It was suggested to have a separate email developed to take in comments. Locations were discussed, and it was ultimately decided to be held in the annex.

It was also suggested having a public feedback portion of the meeting at both the September and October meetings, should there be a need due to a large response and attendance at the September meeting. It was noted that having a public comment session at the October meeting would cause a tight turnaround for any edits to be made for the draft ordinance. However, it was reminded that a special meeting could be held in order wrap up the ordinance.

Residents attending the meeting will be given a timeframe in which to state their comments or give feedback. It will also allow for questions to be asked, and responses given in an orderly way. It was recommended to have a time limit for each comment/question of 5 minutes to allow everyone attending time to speak.

The September public comment meeting will be advertised on the Town Manager's Facebook page, Town website, and other outlets. It was suggested that a link to the draft ordinance be included in digital advertisements. The Town Council members will be invited as well, should they wish to attend.

The structure of the September meeting will consist of a public presentation, similar to the presentation given to the Steering Committee, to briefly educate on firearms safety and explain how this committee got to where they are today. Following the presentation, the meeting will open to an Audience of Citizens/Public Comment, before continuing on with the agenda. The committee suggested having print outs of the ordinance available for those in attendance.

It was reiterated that the need for an October public comment will be determined based on the demand.

6. Public Presentation:

The presentation will be brief but have key points to inform those in attendance of important firearms safety points, and regulations considered and reviewed when drafting the ordinance. This will be important to try and correct misinformation that has been spread on Facebook.

It will be explained that this committee was formed to research issues in town and find the best solution. It was stressed that it was never the goal or purpose to inhibit or restrict the rights of the town residents or establish any sort of gun control.

It will also be explained that this committee will be making a recommendation to the Town Council based on their research. If the Town Council votes to move forward with adopting the ordinance, there will be a public hearing as required. This will be another opportunity for residents to comment on the ordinance.

Stein suggested editing slide 6 of the presentation to clarify that the state law of a 500-foot restriction near dwellings/livestock applies only to hunting.

7. Other Business:

Murray commented that he has been looking into research on sound and gun noise travel. He noted that he will continue researching to bring information to the committee at the next meeting but wants to make sure the information he has found is accurate and peer reviewed.

Stein added that he wants to take readings with a decibel meter at the range he is a member of to see noise levels from different distances and see what impacts distance may have on firearms noise. He noted that he is going to try and do this soon if time allows to be able to present his findings to the committee.

It was questioned what items will be on the next meeting agenda after the public comment. Murray suggested that they should have a discussion of the public comments and do a review of the written correspondence submitted, if there is time. It was requested that email correspondence have a cutoff date in order for comments to be reviewed in a timely fashion.

8. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:29 PM.

Submitted by,

Nicole Archambault

Nicole Archambault

PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Committee at the next meeting. Please see the next Committee meeting minutes for approval or changes.

Chapter 66 – OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

ARTICLE III. – HOME SHOOTING RANGES

Sec. 66-75 Purpose

The purpose of this article is to establish regulations surrounding the discharge of firearms for target-shooting purposes on private property to provide for the safety and well-being of the residents of the Town of Coventry

Sec. 66-76 Definitions

Firearm

Any shotgun, pistol, rifle, revolver, muzzle-loading device or other such weapon which uses chemical propellant to expel a projectile capable of killing, injuring, or inflicting physical damage

Air gun

Any device which uses springs, air, compressed gas, or other non-explosive force to expel a projectile capable of killing, injuring, or inflicting physical damage

Backstop

A device, structure, or terrain designed to stop and contain projectiles fired on a range.

Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club

An organization of individuals which meets the following criteria:

- a) Maintains in good condition a shooting range in a fixed location with an adequate design to contain fired projectiles;
- b) Said shooting range is in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws;
- c) Individuals discharging firearms are adequately trained in firearms safety; and
- d) Has criteria for members or other range users to ensure the safe discharge of firearms.

Recreational Shooting

For the purposes of this chapter, recreational shooting is understood to be shooting a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** at an inanimate target

Sec. 66-77 Safety Requirements

The following restrictions apply within the Town of Coventry:

- a) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must be the owner of the property on which the discharge is to occur, be the spouse or lineal descendant of the owner of the property, have on their person the written permission from the owner of the property, or be an invited guest with the owner of the property present. The same requirements apply for the location of the backstop at which projectiles are being directed.

Commented [AT1]: This ordinance is a draft based on preferences expressed by the FS/HRSC. This is not finalized, and all language present within may be subject to change.

Commented [AT2]: A separate definition was given for the sake of clarity, and Air Guns were specifically included on restrictions based on safety but excluded from those where noise may be the central concern

- b) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must do so only with an adequate backstop capable of stopping all projectiles intended to be used. The backstop must be of sufficient depth and strength to contain any projectiles fired or intended to be fired at a range and must be of a sufficient height or size to stop projectiles at any position the shooter intends to use.
- c) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must do so at a distance of greater than 350ft from any structure or enclosed outdoor space occupied by people or domestic animals, or used for the storage of flammable materials unless they are the owner of such property, the spouse or lineal descendant of the owner of the property, or have on their person the written permission from the owner of the property to do so. A building is considered to be occupied for the purposes of this ordinance unless it appears from a reasonable inspection of the structure to be unoccupied.
- d) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must not shoot across any public roads or public trails.
- e) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** or **Air Guns** must do so at an inanimate target which does not possess any secondary reaction upon being hit by a projectile, including explosions, incineration, or expelling projectiles or shrapnel.
- f) Minors under 18 years of age wishing to shoot **Firearms** must be properly supervised by a parent or legal guardian of such minor, or another adult with the approval of their parent or legal guardian.

Sec. 66-78 Time Requirements

The following restrictions apply within the Town of Coventry:

- a) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must do so between the hours of 9:00 AM to sunset as defined in the current Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide.
- b) Persons wishing to engage in recreational shooting with **Firearms** must call the Coventry Police Department and give notice fifteen (15) minutes before the intended start of shooting. Once shooting begins, persons engaging in recreational shooting shall have a four (4) hour window in which to do so. One such window shall be granted per calendar day.

Sec. 66-79 Exceptions

The restrictions within this Sec. 66 Article III shall not be construed to apply in the following circumstances:

- a) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** by a police officer or animal control officer acting within the scope of their official duties;
- b) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of hunting as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 26-1;
- c) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of defending oneself or other persons from physical force in accordance with all federal, state and local laws;

- d) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** for the purposes of shooting wildlife actively causing property damage or posing an active threat to public safety in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes;
- e) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** at a range on the property of The Manchester Sportsmen's Association, Manchester Coon and Fox Club, or a Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club duly organized in accordance with Town zoning requirements;
- f) The use of a device designed and operated solely for the purposes of construction, such as a nail or staple gun, which by its design might otherwise fall under the definition of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun**;
- g) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** as a part of a memorial ceremony or parade by police officers, active duty members in military service of the United States or Connecticut National Guard, or by a nationally recognized veteran's organization; and
- h) The use of a **Firearm** or **Air Gun** as a part of an authorized historical reenactment.

Sec. 66-80 Penalty for violation of article

Any person who violates the regulations set out in this article shall be subject to a fine for such a violation pursuant to Sec. 1-10 of the Coventry Code of Ordinances

Secs. 66-81 – 66-96 Reserved

Commented [AT3]: Sec. 1-10 indicates fines shall be at most \$100 if not otherwise specified. Each day a violation continues may be counted as a separate offense.

(EXTERNAL MESSAGE)Comment(s) Chapter 66-Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions: Article III - Home Shooting Ranges

From Dan <danop@sbcglobal.net>

Date Mon 9/1/2025 9:12 AM

To Feedback <feedback@coventry-ct.gov>

[You don't often get email from danop@sbcglobal.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Hello,

I have been a resident of Coventry Connecticut for 25 years. The reason(s) my wife and I decided to move to Coventry was the reputation of this area being quiet, peaceful and laid back.

Unfortunately the above conditions are no longer true. The term of "The Quiet Corner" is non existent.

I along with many other Coventry residents are totally against any home shooting ranges in our town.

At a time when more noise is present with the discharge of illegal fireworks, loud cars and motorcycles with illegal exhaust systems, and the ever present violation of speeding vehicles we do not need to " Add more fuel to the fire ".

Additionally, these home shooting ranges will greatly affect the community and my following remarks must be taken seriously:

Those with PTSD will experience this condition more than ever.

Children playing outside will do so with background noise from gunfire throughout the day along with others who enjoy just being outside.

Then there are the parents who like to take a walk with their children, walk their dog(s), jog, spend time at the playground or enjoying the lakes in town.

Property values will decrease once the town will have approved home shooting ranges. Who will want to purchase a home in Coventry with a home shooting range down the road?

Who will respond to complaints and enforce the proposed rules?

Who will inspect these home shooting ranges to verify that they are in compliance with the ordinances regarding them?

What about the possibility of individuals using home shooting ranges while consuming alcohol or using marijuana or illegal drugs and possibly firing their weapons?

How will residents distinguish between the recreational shooting of firearms and unlawful discharge of firearms on private property.

In closing I want to share a story with you that occurred two years ago.

My seven year old grandson was visiting me and as we were in my backyard gunshot noise erupted a few streets over. He became very upset with the loud noises from the gunfire and visibility upset. He then asked me, " Poppy, is someone firing a gun and I replied, yes Andrew and he then asked "Are they killing people"

The next day I called the police department and they sent a officer to my house. I explained to her what had transpired and gave her the location of the home where the gunfire was coming from.

She returned to my house within ten minutes and explained to me that she talked to the party shooting the gun and told me because he was shooting it into the woods there was nothing she could do.

Coventry does not need home shooting ranges. Those people who support this idea are in the minority and not the majority of Coventry residents and I hope this initiative will become a thing of the past and not a reality.

Sincerely,

Daniel Pace
179 Windswept Way
Coventry, CT. 06238

(EXTERNAL MESSAGE)Comment on proposed ordinance

From Owen Swift <oswift@sent.com>

Date Mon 8/25/2025 5:54 PM

To Feedback <feedback@coventry-ct.gov>

You don't often get email from oswift@sent.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please include these comments as feedback on the Town of Coventry's Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Committee proposed ordinance for the Public Meeting scheduled for September 18, 2025.

The proposed ordinance is defective as written and requires revision before further action is taken upon it.

1. The broad definition of "Air gun" in Section 66-76 includes paintball guns and airsoft guns. Both types of guns are "capable" of "injuring" and "inflicting physical damage." An alternative definition for purposes of this ordinance should specify that an air gun includes only those devices with a projectile caliber less than or equal to 0.22 inches, or with muzzle velocity greater than 700 feet per second. Air guns that do not meet those definitions should not be subject to the stringent provisions of this ordinance. Excluding low-power devices in this ordinance does not mean that their misuse is not proscribed by other laws covering endangerment, property damage, or disorderly conduct.
2. Section 66-77(a) contains these flaws:
 1. Property owners are wrongly privileged over lessees. If a lease does not already prohibit a lessee from recreational shooting then the town should not do the work of the lessor in regulating the permitted property uses. For example, under this ordinance a lessee of a house could not fire a pellet gun in the basement of the house they rent.
 2. Makes no allowance for properties not owned by a natural person. For example, a property title could be held by a living trust, and the beneficiary of the trust would have no lawful ability to shoot an air gun on his or her property.
 3. "Have on their person the written permission" is not rationally related to public safety. A person could have received written permission, not have it on their person, and in all other respects be operating safely and within the bounds of the ordinance and still be criminalized by this ordinance.
3. Most of Section 66-78 (b) is not rationally related to public safety or noise control. A requirement to notify the police department in advance does nothing to reduce complaints or the activities of target shooters. Aggrieved people will always complain. Complainants cannot reliably tell the difference between a nail gun and an air gun. Complainants cannot reliably tell the difference between a ramset device and a pistol. Complainants cannot reliably tell the difference between hunting and target shooting. Pre-notification only serves to chill otherwise lawful activity by imposing bureaucracy. This section should be corrected to simply read "Persons engaged in recreational shooting shall have a four (4) hour window per calendar day in

which to do so" which would be a reasonable mitigation. Complainants remain free to gather evidence of ordinance violations and submit their complaints for enforcement.

4. Section 66-79 contains these flaws:

1. None of these activities in a, b, c, d, f, g, and h fit the ordinance's definition of "recreational shooting" and would be automatically excluded from the regulation even if not itemized. To include a few named exceptions is to suggest that anything not specifically named is suspect. Each of these lettered subsections should be struck.
2. Part (e): Any clubs or commercial shooting ranges should already be in compliance (and should want to be in compliance) with the safety-related parts of the ordinance. If a time window is included in the final ordinance, then clubs or shooting ranges can be specifically exempted from only the time window requirement.

Ordinances ought to be drafted narrowly to solve specific problems, with careful attention to the preservation of existing rights and privileges.

Sincerely,
Owen Swift
89 S River Rd