
(EXTERNAL MESSAGE)Firearms safety ordinance hearing/forum for feedback - Jen's comments at the table

From Jen B <jnbeaus221@gmail.com>

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To Feedback <feedback@coventry-ct.gov>

Cc Laura Stone <lstone@coventry-ct.gov>; Alex Taylor <ataylor@coventry-ct.gov>

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Greetings,

Recently I attended the 9/18/25 firearms safety ordinance hearing/forum that was held to gather feedback on the draft ordinance.

First, thank you for providing the opportunity. Second, thank you for trying to keep the discussions under control and appropriate.

There was a lot of noise, and I forgot to leave my printed comment for the clerk. Not sure if it is ok to provide it after the meeting or not. If it is ok, my comments are at the end of this email. If not, please accept them and this email as feedback to the committee/commission for consideration in their development of the ordinance.

Thank you,

- *Jen Beausoleil*
Coventry, CT

Comments read by Jennifer Beausoleil at 9/18 meeting...

"Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the ordinance regarding recreational shooting of firearms for non-hunting purposes in Coventry.

I appreciate the work of the volunteers on the committee to evaluate a large number of varied sources for their work on this draft.

In 1998, there was a fatal shooting of a man walking his dog on a Sunday morning in my neighborhood. Our neighborhood and community learned a lot about hunting laws, safety recommendations from gun owners and hunters, and their organizations. These include hours of the day restrictions, safe colors for clothing, public vs private land, distance setback from buildings and property lines, and much more.

When the topic of this ordinance and committee came up, I didn't realize that the state laws regarding gun safety for hunting do not apply to discharge of a gun in non-hunting uses. This was a

surprise to me that hunting safety laws didn't apply to target shooting. I, like many people, thought those guidelines for time of day and distance from buildings applied to target shooting as well.

My understanding of hunting laws doesn't come from being a hunter, though I have several friends that hunt or own guns. And I support the right of people to own guns, and to bear arms. It comes from the 1998 shooting deal of Ron Eckert in my Coventry neighborhood one Sunday morning. Everyone in my neighborhood had a sudden and tragic education in hunting laws and gun safety.

My feedback to the committee regarding the draft ordinance comes from that experience, knowledge, and includes a general preference for mirroring or paralleling existing, established hunting laws.

So, thank you for including setback language related to buildings. It is similar to language in hunting laws. It is 350ft which is shorter than hunting laws which are 500ft.

The hours of the day section also seems similar to the hunting regulations related to end of day or sunset.

Some adjustments that I would ask the committee to consider include:

- Referencing a setback distance from public lands such as parks, fields, playgrounds, and school property, etc. These are areas where open land is regularly used by people, and there are no buildings within 350ft of the property line or usage areas.
- Location of the backstop be outside of the 20ft or 50ft setbacks in current zoning regulations for things built near the property line. As lines are not always obvious, zoning regulations prevent accidental misunderstandings of property lines, especially since the 350ft is shorter than the 500ft for hunting.
- Consider term recommending as opposed to requiring for the police dept notification language

As someone who has watched LifeStar land on her street for the victim of a shooting, I believe finding a good balance between the right to bear arms and common sense safety guidelines is valuable.

As a mom who watched the emotions of my children and those in my neighborhood after a shooting death on our street, I appreciate the committee's work in providing common sense safety guidelines consistent or that parallel long standing, existing hunting regulations, and for listening to recommendations and feedback."