
(EXTERNAL MESSAGE)Comments for Firearms Safety/Home Shooting Range Study Committee

From William Glenney <wglenney@aol.com>

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To Feedback <feedback@coventry-ct.gov>; Jana Roberson <jroberson@coventry-ct.gov>; James Drumm <jdrumm@coventry-ct.gov>; Lisa Thomas <lthomas@coventry-ct.gov>

Cc William Glenney (CVC) <wglenney@aol.com>

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Good evening.

I am Bill Glenney, 664 Silver Street – retired Captain, U.S. Navy and town resident for some 35 years.

First, I thank the members of the Committee for their time and energy over the past year working on their tasking from the Town Council to address a matter of potential safety and well-being for the residents of our town.

More importantly, I am here tonight **strongly against the proposed ordinance** and against any further efforts by the Committee or the Town Council. As you all know, this problem really started when two neighbors could not get along. Rather than letting the disagreement play out in the courts, the Town Council sought a solution, and the Committee produced **a solution in search of a real problem to solve**. And, in so doing, generated a proposed ordinance that places the Coventry Police Department (CPD) front and center in applying that solution – a position in which CPD has no business being. Furthermore, the proposed ordinance potentially turns law abiding, gun owners exercising their 2nd Amendment rights **into criminals**.

For example:

- a. Section 66-76b - Commercial Shooting Range/Private Gun Club – Definitions - **does nothing to provide safety or well-being for residents**. Furthermore, it potentially places liability upon the CPD and the Town of Coventry should something untoward occur if a shooting range is not in compliance with ill-defined requirements.
- b. Section 66-77c requires a standoff of at least 350 feet from a property line or a neighboring building. That means anyone with less than about 11 acres of land cannot conduct recreational shooting (700 ft by 700 ft = 490,000 sq ft = 11.2 acres). UNLESS the gun owner obtains written permission from any adjacent landowners to do said shooting. If you ask why 350 feet standoff and not 250 feet or something smaller, the June 19th Committee discussions indicate “Because the Chief feels more comfortable with 350 feet than 250 feet.” So again, the Police Department is the decider for safe standoff and doing so in an arbitrary manner.
- c. Section 66-78a - Time Requirements – Start time not earlier than 9:00am - **does nothing to provide safety or well-being for residents**. The start time of 9:00am is arbitrary with no apparent relationship to safety.
- d. Section 66-78b - Time Requirements – Notification of CPD and four-hour limit - **does nothing to provide safety or well-being for residents**. Requiring prior notification to the Coventry Police Department (CPD) 15 minutes before shooting has no basis in safety or well being. Furthermore, limiting recreational shooting to four hours per calendar day also has no apparent basis in safety or well-being.
- e. Any notion regarding 1) permitting of a shooting range, or 2) requiring inspection of ranges by the CPD should be avoided. Again, there is no basis in terms of safety or well-being served by permitting or CPD inspections. Chief Peterson indicated that he was not an expert on home ranges but would use common sense. This approach would not be a consistent or enforceable approach.

f. This proposed ordinance confuses hunting and target shooting, and not in a manner that enhances safety or resident well-being. Under Connecticut statutes, I can hunt during hunting season from one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset without calling CPD or limiting any hunting to four hours or less. Yes, under most conditions there is a 500-foot standoff.

g. If a law-abiding gun owner runs afoul of this proposed ordinance, they might well find on their next trip to Cabela's they fail the national background check because they have violated Coventry gun control ordinances.

2. In closing, thank you for your time and energy. **But, this proposed ordinance must be stopped.** There is no reason for CPD to be central to this matter. While there is questionable need to do so, if the Town Council insists on action regarding home shooting ranges, maybe it is better handled by the Zoning Board and Coventry zoning regulations outside the purview of this Committee and the Coventry Police Department. If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you.

Bill Glenney