



Town of Awendaw Planning Commission Meeting *Minutes*

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

6:00 PM, Awendaw Town Hall

6971 Doar Road, Awendaw, SC 29429

A. Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance & Reading of the Civility Pledge

At 6:00 pm, Chairman John Osguthorpe, began the Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Jeff Hardee, read the Serenity Prayer, recited the Pledge of Allegiance & led the Civility Pledge.

B. Call to Order and Roll Call [Time Stamp 1:08]

Chairman Osguthorpe called the meeting to order. Mr. Jeff Hardee, Ms. Kelly Cousino (confirming a quorum), Town Administrator, Mrs. Katharine Watkins, Town Attorney, Mac McQuillin, Town Planning Manager, Mr. Daniel O'Hara, and Town Planning Clerk Takeya White were all present. Mr. Jay Reigart joined at 6:04 pm & James Gardner joined at 6:16 pm.

C. Approval of Minutes – December 2025

Chairman Osguthorpe then moved to agenda item C, "Approval of Minutes" and asked Planning Clerk, Takeya White, for clarification around the inclusion of the November 2025 meeting minutes. She explained that they were included to show the final amendment requests made by Commissioner Cousino. He asked the rest of the board if they had any amendments to the December 2025 Meeting Minutes. Hearing none, Chairman Osguthorpe then made a motion.

Motion: Motion to approve December 2025 meeting minutes.

Posed By: Dr. John Osguthorpe

Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee

Vote: Unanimous Approval

Chairman Osguthorpe moved on to agenda item D, by prefacing "Public Comments," and asked Town Planner, Mr. Dan O'Hara to take on Public Comment procedures. Mr. O'Hara made the chairman aware that there ~~are a few written comments that were submitted in writing~~ *were a few written comments submitted*. He asked the chairman if he would like to take the right to recognize them or if he would like for them to be submitted to be included in the meeting minutes.

Chairman Osguthorpe then asked the audience if anyone who submitted written comments were

present. One member of the audience said they had not submitted their comments. He then asked the audience if they would be okay with their comments being submitted with the meeting minutes. The collective answer was yes. Chairman Osguthorpe then entertained those present who wanted to speak.

D. Public Comments – [Time Stamp 4:25]

The public comment period will be limited to a total of 25 minutes. Each speaker will have up to 2 minutes. No individual may speak more than once until all others wishing to comment have had an opportunity.

1 member of the public wished to speak:

Mr. Gary Freeman of 7928 Pelican Bay Drive who spoke against the Shell Ring Crossing PD.

After hearing no other requests for public comment, Chairman Osguthorpe then moved on to New Business item, E(a) the review of the Preliminary Plat Application for the Shell Ring Crossing Planned Development, and asked Mr. O'Hara to start with his presentation.

E. New Business –

Mr. O'Hara presented his staff report and gave a brief synopsis around his findings in reference to the Shell Ring Crossing PUD. He also noted that he has talked with town water consultant, Mr. Ron Bycroft, to verify water infrastructure and spoke through safety concerns with the Awendaw-McClellanville Fire Department.

a. Preliminary Plat Application – Action Item

Mr. O'Hara continued his presentation and passed the meeting back to the Chairman. Chairman Osguthorpe then asked if the applicant wanted to give their presentation.

Mr. Danny **Cruze Cruz** – Stillwater Civil Engineer [1104 Hitchfield Lane, Cedar Plantation] – he also noted that he is also a resident of town

Mr. Cruz thanked the Planning Staff for working with them, and to the Planning Commission for hearing their application. He stated that he has been working closely with planning staff, and even more so with Mr. Bycroft to appease the town. He then opened himself to questions from the Commission.

i. Shell Ring Crossing (PD) TMS 661-00-00-025

Chairman Osguthorpe went on to discuss the application. Mr. O'Hara then called a point of Correction and noted to the chair that if he was moving on with discussion, they would need to make a motion. **[Time Stamp 21:58]**

**Motion: To open discussion on the Shell Ring PD
Posed By: Dr. John Osguthorpe**

Second: Mr. James Gardner
Vote: Unanimous Approval

The Commission continued its discussion with the applicant, the Planning Manager, and the Town Attorney. Near the conclusion of the discussion, Commissioner Reigart asked clarifying questions regarding the validity of the Planned Development (PD), noting that it did not include a mixed-use component. Town Attorney Mac McQuillin responded that the citizen's concern was valid and stated that the absence of a mixed-use element presents an issue under Town Code §153.031. He referenced relevant case law, cited page 26 of 86 of the Planning Commission packet, and advised the Commission that, in his opinion, the application conflicts with the 1994 Planning Enabling Act, raising a legal concern. Following the Town Attorney's guidance and additional discussion among the Commission, Chairman Osguthorpe entertained a motion. **[Time Stamp: 52.10]**

Motion: To deny the Shell Ring Crossing PD based on the attorney's recommendation and because it does not meet the requirements of the PD Ordinance.

Posed By: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Second: Mr. James Gardner
Vote: Unanimous Approval

Chairman Osguthorpe then moved on to agenda item E(b), prefaced the town moratorium and noted that he googled the "longest moratorium in South Carolina," and the results showed 3 cities, Mt. Pleasant, Charleston *County* and Awendaw. **[Time Stamp: 53.33]**

- b. ***Ordinance 2026-01* – An ordinance to amend Chapter 153, Zoning Code, Section 153.010 of the Code of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, imposing a temporary moratorium on the issuance of all residential and commercial zone change proposals (rezonings) and subdivisions of residentially zoned land (subdivision plat approvals) comprising more than five parcels of land for the purpose of providing town council to implement any necessary changes to the Zoning Ordinance, Land Use Regulations, and/or Comprehensive Plan now under review.**

After a brief introduction, the Chairman and the planning commission discussed the town moratorium.

Motion: To send a positive recommendation for approval with consideration of adding a building permit allocation system.

Posed By: Dr. John Osguthorpe
Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Vote: Unanimous Approval

[Time Stamp: 1:01:49]

After the vote, Chairman Osguthorpe moved on to agenda item E(c), around significant tree protection.

- c. **Ordinance 2026-04 – An ordinance to amend Chapter 153, Zoning Code, Tree Preservation Requirements Division, Subsection 153.195 and 153.196, to restructure the review, mitigation, and site restoration process for the removal of protected trees.**

Town Planner Mr. O'Hara opened discussion on the proposed amendments to Ordinance 2026-04 and summarized his staff findings. Mr. O'Hara explained that Section 153.195 had previously been reviewed and amended by the Planning Commission and was incorporated into the current amendments, along with revisions to Section 153.196, which had formerly applied only to office, commercial, and industrial sites. He further noted that, based on discussions with community members and Town Council, there was interest in expanding the retention and replanting requirements beyond those limited uses to apply more broadly across all uses and sites. Following his overview, the Commission began its discussion. Town Administrator Katharine Watkins then called a point of order and requested that a motion be made to formally open discussion on the application before the body. **[Time Stamp: 1:05:56]**

Motion: To open discussion.

Posed By: Mr. Jeff Hardee

Second: Mr. James Gardner

Vote: Unanimous Approval

Chairman Osguthorpe wanted clarification around where the amended language used came from. Commissioner Gardner requested clarification regarding the revised language of the tree ordinance. Mr. O'Hara noted that the change from "20 trees per acre", to "160 caliper inches", was at the recommendation of members of the community and town council, so staff proposed those edits as provided. He indicated within his staff report that perhaps there should be consideration in discussing with a professional. He also noted the same concern as Chairman Osguthorpe and felt that the definition of caliper inches would need to be refined and identified within our zoning code so it can be appropriately applied.

Commissioner Gardner expressed concern regarding the applicability of Section 153.196 of the Zoning Code. Commissioner Hardee asked for clarification as to the origin of the proposed amended language in that section. Commissioner Cousino stated that she believed the "160 caliper inch" requirement outlined in subsection (A) should also apply to subdivisions, while Commissioner Gardner maintained that the requirement should remain limited to office, commercial, and industrial uses only. The Town Attorney confirmed that the proposed amendments were suggested by Town Council.

The Planning Commission continued its discussion of the ordinance amendments with staff and the Town Attorney. Staff recommended that the Town—whether through Council, the Planning Commission, or staff—consult with a master naturalist, licensed arborist, landscape architect, or similar professional for technical guidance before advancing further revisions. Commissioner Cousino further noted that, given the current moratorium, she would prefer a more deliberate and comprehensive approach to amending the ordinance rather than continuing with piecemeal revisions. The Town Attorney stated that under the Planning Act, if the commission doesn't take action within 30 days, technically council can still take up the ordinance and it's deemed recommended. After a few more minutes of discussion, Chairman Osguthorpe then made a motion.

Motion: To request that Town Council defer Ordinance 2026-04, to allow the Planning Commission more time to study the ordinance and speak to a tree professional(s).

Posed By: Dr. John Osguthorpe

Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee

Vote: Unanimous Approval

H. Closing Remarks – *There were none.*

I. Adjournment

Motion: To Adjourn

Posed By: Mr. James Gardner

Second: Dr. John Osguthorpe

Vote: Unanimous Approval

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM

Next Meeting – (VIRTUAL - January 27th, 2026)

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT, THE PRINT MEDIA WERE DULY NOTIFIED, ALONG WITH A HARD COPY POSTED AT CITY HALL.
• SHOULD YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, PLEASE CONTACT PLANNING AT (843) 931-8125.

DRAFT Minutes Respectfully submitted on Wednesday, February 11th, 2026, by Takeya White

FINAL AMENDMENTS TO THE MINUTES, *NOTED IN GREEN*, SUBMITTED, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH, 2026

Note: These meeting minutes are not verbatim. To watch the full meeting video, please visit the town's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@TownOfAwendaw>

ADDENDUM – JANUARY 20TH, 2026th

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

**To include: board exhibits and public comments*

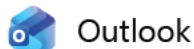
EXHIBIT A: PUBLIC COMMENTS – LYNNE VICARY, 8470 DOAR ROAD, AWENDAW, SC 29429

EXHIBIT B: PUBLIC COMMENTS – LYNN HODAPP,

EXHIBIT C: PUBLIC COMMENTS – ANDREA FRAZIER, 7864 GULL BAY DRIVE, AWENDAW,
SC 29429

EXHIBIT D: PUBLIC COMMENTS - DANNY CRUZ, CEA CONTRACTORS

EXHIBIT A



Shell Ring Crossing

From Lynne Vicary [REDACTED]

Date Mon 1/19/2026 4:42 PM

To Planning Manager <planningmanager@townofawendawsc.org>; Town Administrator <townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org>

Hi Dan and Katharine,

Please enter my comments into the record for Planning Committee Meeting January 20, 2026, and share hard copy with board.

Thank you,

Lynne

I have concerns about the 13 lot subdivision known as Shell Ring Crossing on TMS# 661-00-00-025 that I wish to share.

It is situated close to the intersection of Hwy 17 N and the south end of Doar Road and the confluence of Maxville and Seewee Roads.

This area is under densely approved residential development and already places stress on the community with heavy construction trucking and on site workers' vehicles.

The lots today would not be considered to be of a workable size for aesthetic and environmental reasons.

The renderings show homes constructed over parking. This practice best sustains water flow between buildings in Lowcountry regions, but renderings show these areas built in and enclosed and are essentially 3 story buildings on slab, with further potential for outbuildings. This is not in the best interest for a septic dense development. Given the homes are 2500 to 2800 sq ft, they will most likely have at least 4 bedrooms. Bedrooms determine septic size requirements, and these will be a significant component of the lot site plans.

There is no recreation space or common play area, the retention ponds meeting that open space requirement.

Once again, with no turn lane, drivers must go from 60 to 0 to turn in at 90 degrees. This is becoming more and more prevalent, with no indication that there is any thought to take the safest and least expensive action, REDUCE THE SPEED LIMIT.

I would like to think that the fire department and emergency services are satisfied that residents and emergency responders will be able to safely and effectively service Shell Ring Crossing residents and all other residents since the town within 2 years will likely more than double the current population.

We all, legacy residents and newcomers, deserve a well thought out community with quality of life and safety prioritized for every one, for every day, and in the very real event of the need to evacuate.

Please make Awendaw a model community that others strive to emulate, not use as a cautionary warning.


Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Vicary

Doar Road

Sent from my iPad

EXHIBIT B

 Outlook

Shell Ring Circle

From Lynn Hodapp [REDACTED]

Date Mon 1/19/2026 2:01 PM

To Planning Manager <planningmanager@townofawendawsc.org>

Cc Town Administrator <townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org>

Please share with Planning Commission and please read into the record

*Interior Sidewalks - more concrete that is not needed - careful with permeable surfaces

*Turning right and doing a U turn at Doar and hwy 17 will be problematic as this intersection is getting more & more dangerous everyday. This PD would add many more trips per day onto Hwy 17 and this intersection. Do not forget about the development that has begun on Doar Rd.- White Doar- Hwy 17 & Doar looks to be worse than Hwy 17 and Seewee due to the slight hump / hill on the Hwy 17

*I do not see any green space in the PD

*is it 13 or 14 lots?

*Does not comply with Comp plan - I understand this was approved prior to comp plan, but it should play a part in the design

*Very small lots for the size of the homes - since septic size is determined by # of bedrooms

*Concern if resident decides to "close" off their garage space which many do, therefore not allowing water to flow thru if there is a flood

*something to consider - Could Awendaw make new developments sign into a septic maintenance agreement then Awendaw contract with a 3rd party to maintain septic systems. Awendaw would be able to make money on this and also make sure septics are being maintained on a yearly basis. I will also send this thought to Chris.

Thank you for your time!

Lynn Hodapp

Sent from my iPad

EXHIBIT C



Outlook

Fw: Shell Ring Residential PUD

From Town Administrator <townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org>

Date Tue 1/20/2026 9:13 AM

To Takeya White <planningclerk@townofawendawsc.org>

 1 attachment (16 KB)

Shell Ring TMS 661 00 00 025.docx;

Katharine Watkins, MPA
Town Administrator
6971 Doar Road
Awendaw, SC 29429
Email: townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org
Office: (843) 928-3100
www.townofawendawsc.org

From: Andrea Frazier [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, January 19, 2026 5:16:23 PM

To: Planning Manager <planningmanager@townofawendawsc.org>; Town Administrator <townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org>

Subject: Shell Ring Residential PUD

Dan and Katharine,

I have attached my public comments for tomorrow's Planning meeting. I plan on attending and reading during my allotted time. In the event I am not able to attend I would like my comments to be read and entered into the record as read.

Thank you and stay warm!
Andrea Frazier

Shell Ring – Residential PUD

Applicant – Stillwater Development, Agent

Tax Parcel Number: 661-00-00-25

Approved March 2, 2023

Public Comments: These will be brief bullet points that I hope will be addressed by the Planning Commission.

- Unsure how a decision can be made with two different plans for layout of the development. One has a Cul de sac, one has a triangular turn around encircling a stormwater pond.
- Dangerous entering and exiting for this site. It does not appear to have any projected SCDOT deceleration lane for entrance. Exiting will be challenging. Drivers will exit north, immediately merge to the left lane for a U-turn at Doar Road to proceed southbound on Hwy 17. There will be an average of 130 trips/day. This calculation is based on 10 trips/day/household.
- Has this been reviewed by the Fire Chief and or Fire Marshall? Would like verification that the road can support the turn around of any vehicles in the event of emergency services. Awendaw has just recently obtained a larger vehicle.
- I recommend that the lighting is compliant with the potential for a Dark Sky Designation.
- Referencing page 42 it appears the stand-alone structures protrude into the shared combined setbacks. I encourage Planning to NOT allow any variance on setback requirements. The town is experiencing the on-site of approved developments. These developers must adhere to the standards set by Charleston County and the Town of Awendaw. Not forcing compliance sets a terrible precedent.
- Perhaps I may be not understanding correctly, if the presented drawing with the road with the Cul de sac (page 20) shows a radius of 28 ft. According to the Rural Road Standards (page 60) states for radius should be 35 ft. Please provide clarification.

I am well aware there are multiple PUD's floating out there for approval. I strongly encourage Planning to continue with their due diligence in carefully scrutinizing plans presented.

Thank you all for your service to our town.

Andrea Frazier



Awendaw ★ Mount Pleasant

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██████████
Veteran Owned & Operated

To: Awendaw Planning Commission

January 19, 2026

Town of Awendaw
6971 Doar Road, PO Box 520
Awendaw, SC 29429
Phone: (843) 928-3100

Re: Comments and Recommendations on Proposed Tree Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2026-04)

Members of the Planning Commission,

My name is Danny Cruz, a civil engineer living and practicing in Awendaw, South Carolina, with nearly 15 years of experience in site design and land development. I write as a concerned citizen and design professional to express support for Ordinance No. 2026-04 and the Town's effort to strengthen tree preservation.

While the proposed ordinance is a solid starting point, in its current form it contains significant gray areas that may unintentionally undermine its stated goals. In particular, Section 153.195(E) presents a broad set of hardship exemptions that, from a professional standpoint, are easily circumvented during site design at the request of aggressive land developers and home builders. Nearly every line item in this section can be satisfied with minor plan adjustments or subjective interpretations of what is "reasonable." As written, this creates an ordinance that appears strong on paper but is difficult to enforce consistently and predictably in practice.

To meaningfully protect Awendaw's most valuable natural assets, I recommend the ordinance explicitly recognize and regulate "Grand Trees." These trees provide disproportionate ecological, aesthetic, and cultural value and should be treated differently than standard protected trees.

I respectfully recommend the following additions and clarifications:

1. **Establish a Grand Tree classification** defined as hardwood trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 24 inches or greater, excluding water oaks and gums.
2. **Create a mandatory Tree Protection Zone (TPZ)** for Grand Trees equal to 0.5 feet (half a foot or 6 inches) of radius per inch of DBH, measured from the trunk.
3. **Require Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) review** for:
 - Any proposed removal of a Grand Tree, regardless of hardship claims.
 - Any proposed encroachment into a Grand Tree's TPZ of 33 percent or greater.

4. **Clarify that administrative approvals alone are insufficient** for Grand Tree impacts, ensuring that discretionary review occurs in a public forum with clear findings.

These recommendations reduce ambiguity, improve enforceability, and provide clear thresholds that designers, property owners, and staff can consistently apply. From a civil engineering and site planning perspective, this approach encourages thoughtful design early in the process rather than reactive mitigation after trees are already lost.

Awendaw's tree canopy is a defining feature of the Town. By closing loopholes and clearly elevating the protection of Grand Trees, the ordinance can better align with the community's long-term vision while still allowing reasonable and responsible development.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to the Town of Awendaw. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional technical input if helpful.

Respectfully,



Danny Cruz, P.E.

Civil Engineer

Principal / Owner CEA LLC

United States Air Force, KC-135 Pilot

