TOWN OF AWENDAW

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Katharine Watkins | *Town Administrator*

Town Clerk | *Takeya White*

Town of Awendaw
South Carolina
SETTLED 1696

Chris Crolley | ***Mayor***

Town Council

Paul Brown | Wendy Helms

Grace Gasper | Rodney Porcher

Kent Prause | John Timmons

Town of Awendaw

Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, May 11th, 2026

6:00 PM

Awendaw Town Hall

APPROVED

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

At 6:00 pm, Vice-Chairman Jay Reigart, began the Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Jeff Hardee, read the Serenity Prayer, led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance & also led the recitation of the Civility Pledge.

B. Call to Order and Roll Call

Present:

- Jay Reigart - Vice-Chairman
- Commissioner Kelly Casino
- Commissioner Jeff Hardy

Absent:

- Chairman John Osguthorpe
- Commissioner James Gardner

Staff Present:

- Katharine Watkins, Town Administrator
- Daniel O'Hara, Planning Manager
- Town Attorney Matt McQuillin

C. Approval of the Minutes – [Time Stamp: 1:56/1:45:07]

Vice Chairman Reigart moved on to agenda item C, "Approval of the Minutes," and entertained a motion to approve.

a. **Special Called Planning Commission - March 31, 2026**

b. **Regular Planning Commission - April 21, 2026**

Motion: To approve the minutes of the March 31st & April 21st meetings.
Posed By: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Second: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous Approval

Vice Chairman Reigart then began to preface agenda item D, "Public Comments," and asked if there were members of the public who wished to speak and passed the meeting on to the Planning Manager, Mr. Daniel O'Hara. There were no online comments.

D. Public Comments – [Time Stamp: 3:05 /1:45:07]

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.

2 members of the public wished to speak:

1. *John Brubaker of 600 Flatfield Farm Road expressed his sentiments around the* Preserve at Seewee Sound and asked the Planning Commission to deny their Conditional Plat approval.

2. *2. Lynne Vicary 8470 Doar Road spoke about* Affordable housing initiatives, challenges associated with affordable housing development in coastal areas, rising insurance costs and financial feasibility concerns, and existing opportunities for affordable housing through land donations and development incentives. *Support documents were submitted during public comment, and are available upon request from the Planning Department.*

Hearing no other public comments, Vice-Chairman Reigart entertained a motion to close public comments, then he went on to agenda item E, "New Business."

Motion: To close public comments.
Posed By: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous Approval

E. New Business – [Time Stamp: 7:14 /1:45:07]

a. Subdivision Applications

Vice-Chairman Reigart prefaced Executive session and entertained a motion to go into executive session.

Motion: Motion to go into executive session for the stated purpose of receiving legal advice protected by the attorney-client privilege concerning Sewee Sound Plat Review.
Posed By: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Second: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous Approval

i. **Executive Session for the stated purpose of receiving legal advice protected by the attorney-client privilege concerning Sewee Sound Plat Review. Upon returning to open session, the Commission may take action on matters discussed in Executive Session.**

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The Commission entered Executive Session at 6:08 p.m. and returned to Open Session at 6:30 p.m.

Motion: Motion to come out of executive session. [Time Stamp: 29:38 /1:47:13]
Posed By: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Second: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous Approval

Town Administrator, Mrs. Katharine Watkins, noted that no motions, votes, or decisions were made during Executive Session.

Vice-Chairman Reigart then moved on to the Conditional Plat Application for the Preserve at Seewee Sound Phase I & II and asked Town Planning Manager Mr. Daniel O'Hara to give an overview of his staff report.

ii. **Conditional Plat Application for The Preserve at Seewee Sound Ph I & II (TMS 680-00-00-055) –** Action Item

Planning Manager Daniel O'Hara presented the staff report and noted:

- The application was previously denied due to incompleteness.
- The materials requested have since been submitted.
- Infrastructure improvements are substantially complete.
- A surety bond has been proposed to guarantee completion of remaining improvements.
- The plat must be revised to properly illustrate the required 35-foot wetlands setback.
- Required infrastructure and permitting remain incomplete.
- The South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) Permit to Operate has not yet been issued.

Following his staff report, Mr. O'Hara outlined the actions available to the Commission and yielded his time.

Vice-Chairman Reigart then opened the floor to the applicant's representative, Mr. Ellis Leesman for their presentation. **[Time Stamp: 36:58 /1:47:13]**

Mr. Leesman addressed the Commission and:

- Discussed the proposed surety bond.
- Provided an update on construction progress.
- Explained the anticipated timeline for completion.
- Discussed the benefits of conditional plat approval.
- Responded to Commission questions regarding infrastructure, permitting, roads, stormwater, and utility installation.

After the applicant presentation, the Commission discussed the matter at hand.

Commission members discussed:

- Wetlands setback compliance.
- Remaining infrastructure requirements.

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- Timing of final plat approval.
- Public safety concerns.
- Fire access.
- Stormwater infrastructure.
- Risks associated with reliance on a surety bond.
- Protection of future homeowners and the Town.

Following Discussion, Vice-Chairman Reigart entertained a motion.

Motion: Motion to deny the Conditional Plat Application and reject acceptance of the proposed Surety bond.
Posed By: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Discussion:

The Commission findings through discussion included:

1. The plat does not adequately illustrate the required 35-foot wetlands setback.
2. Required infrastructure improvements have not been completed.
3. Acceptance of the surety bond would transfer risk to the Town and future residents.
4. The proposed bond does not include sufficient completion deadlines.
5. Essential public safety infrastructure has not been fully completed and accepted.

Vote: Unanimous Approval

The Conditional Plat Application for Preserve at Seewee Sound Phase I & II was denied.

b. **Ordinance 2026-22 –** An ordinance to amend Chapter 153, Zoning Code, Planned Development Division by amending Section 153.045 and repealing Section 153.046 through 153.050 and repealing any and all reference to Planned Developments within Chapter 153: Zoning Code.

Planning Manager O'Hara presented the proposed ordinance repealing Planned Development (PD) regulations and removing references to Planned Developments from Chapter 153 of the Zoning Code.
Commission discussion included:

- Administrative challenges associated with PD districts.
- Existing vested and non-vested PD developments.
- Future zoning considerations.

After discussion, the Commission entertained a motion.

Motion: Motion to recommend approval of Ordinance 2026-22 to Town Council.
Posed By: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Vote: Unanimous Approval

After further discussion, the Commission entertained an additional motion. **[Time Stamp: 1:28:00 /1:47:13]**

Motion to recommend that Town Council review existing Planned Development districts to determine whether inactive or non-vested PD districts should be considered for rezoning.
Posed By: Ms. Kelly Cousino

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Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Vote: Unanimous Approval

F. Old Business –

a. **Zoning Districts –** Discussion Item **[Time Stamp: 1:31:31 /1:47:13]**

Motion to open discussion on Zoning Districts
Posed By: Ms. Kelly Cousino
Second: Mr. Jeff Hardee
Discussion:

Staff presented updates regarding proposed zoning districts, including:

- Conservation District
- Park District
- Village Residential District
- Town Center District

Discussion included:

- Lot size requirements.
- Residential development patterns.
- Commercial uses.
- Future zoning map updates.
- Public outreach and rezoning procedures.

No formal action was taken.

b. Amenity Space – Discussion Item

Amenity Space Standards
Staff provided an update regarding amenity space requirements and open-space subdivision concepts.
Discussion included:

- Conservation subdivisions.
- Cluster development.
- Low-impact development techniques.
- Impervious surface reductions.
- Future subdivision ordinance revisions.

Consensus was reached to continue refining subdivision regulations before bringing amendments forward for formal adoption.

No formal action was taken.

G. Closing Remarks –

Staff reported that Town Council is considering changing the Planning Commission's regular meeting date to the second Monday of each month.

The Commission discussed potential June meeting dates pending Council action.

H. Adjournment – [Time Stamp: 1:43:39 /1:47:13]

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

The meeting ended at 7:45 PM

Next Meeting – TBD (June 8th, 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 Thursday, June 4th, 2026, by Takeya White

Final Approval Date: 6/8/2026 ***Signature:*** _____

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.

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