

**TOWN OF AWENDAW**

6971 Doar Road | P.O. Box 520 | Awendaw, SC 29429

843.928.3100 | [www.townofawendawsc.org](http://www.townofawendawsc.org)

[townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org](mailto:townadministrator@townofawendawsc.org)

Katharine Watkins | *Town Administrator*

Donna F. Steed | *Clerk/Treasurer*



**Miriam C. Green | Mayor**

**Town Council**

Paul Brown | Frank Frazier

Darrell Ketchens | Wendy Helms

Bryan McNeal, Jr. | Kent Prause

**Town of Awendaw  
Planning Commission Meeting**

**Monday, November 17th, 2025**

**6:00 PM, Awendaw Town Hall**

**6971 Doar Road, Awendaw, SC 29429**

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

**B. Call to Order and Roll Call**

**C. Approve Minutes as available – October 2025**

**D. Public Comments –**

*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.*

**E. New Business –**

- a. Text amendment – Amend an existing Planned Development, Awendaw Storage, identified by TMS 661-00-00-029.
- b. Text Amendment - Tree Preservation Ordinance
- c. Comprehensive Plan Action Items - Discussion

**F. Old Business –**

- a. Planning and Zoning Fee Comparison
- b. Vested Rights Draft Ordinance
- c. Revisions to Zoning Districts – Parks & Conservation

**G. Closing Remarks –**

**H. Adjournment**

**Next Meeting – TBD (December 15th, 2025)**

**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.**

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**Town of Awendaw  
Planning Commission Meeting  
Agenda**

**Monday, October 20th, 2025  
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, called Planning Commission Meeting to order. Chairman Osguthorpe read the Serenity Prayer, all recited the Pledge of Allegiance & Chaiman Osguthorpe led the Civility Pledge.

**B. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chairman Osguthorpe called the meeting to order. Mr. Jay Reigart, Dr. John Osguthorpe, Mr. James Gardner, Ms. Kelly Cousino, Town Administrator Mrs. Katharine Watkins, Town Planner Mr. Daniel O'Hara, Town Planning Clerk Takeya White and Town Attorney Mr. Mac McQuillin were all present. Commissioner Jeff Hardee was absent.

**C. Approve Minutes as available – September 2025**

**Motion: To approve the September 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Posed By: Chairman Osguthorpe**

**Second: Mr. James Gardner**

The floor was then opened for discussion. Chairman Osguthorpe noted one change to the meeting minutes. He then asked for a new motion.

**Motion: To approve the September 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes as amended.**

**Posed By: Mr. James Gardner**

**Second: Mr. Jay Reigart**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

**D. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair as per Ordinance 2024-09: Chapter 32 §32.01, item (C)**

Chairman Osguthorpe prefaced agenda item D and requested nominations.

**Motion: To appoint Dr. John D. Osguthorpe as Planning Commission Chairman.**

**Posed By: Mr. Jay Reigart**

**Second: Mr. James Gardner**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

After the vote for Chairman was completed, the board moved on to nominations for Vice-Chairman. **[Time Stamp: 0:00:18.47]**

**Motion: To appoint Mr. James C. Reigart as Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission.**

**Posed By: Dr. John Osguthorpe**

**Second: Mr. James Gardner**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

**E. Adoption of Rules of Procedure as per Ordinance 2024-09: Chapter 32 §32.01, item (D)**

Chairman Osguthorpe then asked Planning Director Daniel O'Hara to preface agenda item E and requested the Planning Commission to move for approval.

**Motion: To approve the adoption of the current Rules of Procedure.**

**Posed By: Dr. John Osguthorpe**

**Second: Ms. Kelly Cousino**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

**F. Public Hearings – Road and easement name request approval pursuant to S.C. Code § 6-29-1200 and Town Code § 153.004 [Time Stamp: 0:01:40.57]**

Chairman Osguthorpe then asked Planning Director Daniel O'Hara to lead the commission into the public hearing portion of the meeting. Mr. O'Hara spelled out the procedures of the public hearing and then asked if there were any wishing to speak.

2 residents desired to speak, and gave their comments:

*Lynn Vicary – 8470 Doar Road*

*Susan Cox – 6209 Rudder Lane*

**a. Subdivision: 5 Road Names within The Preserve at Seewee Sound – TMS 680-00-00-055**

1. Run Big Drive
2. Randy Road
3. Lynne Kaya Lane

- 4. Shellfish Drive
- 5. Raptor Drive
- b. Doar Creek Trail – TMS 700-00-00-062
- c. Henry Steed Road – TMS 661-00-00-043
- d. Sweetwater Lane – TMS 661-00-00-288
- e. Awendaw Farm Court – TMS 700-00-00-107

After public comments, the board discussed the need for more detailed plats with better resolution when they receive these requests. Chairman Osguthorpe then requested a motion to close the public hearing.

**Motion: To close the Public Hearing.**

**Posed By: Mr. James Gardner**

**Second: Ms. Kelly Cousino**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

Chairman Osguthorpe then moved on to agenda item H. Town Administrator, Katharine Watkins then redirected the chair to agenda item G, as it was skipped. Chairman Osguthorpe then moved on to agenda item G, "Public Comments." He then gave a short preface of the procedures for public comments and opened the floor to the public.

**G. Public Comments – [Time Stamp 0:06:27.74]**

*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 residents desired to speak, and gave their comments:

**Susan Cox – 6209 Rudder Lane**

**Lynn Vicary – 8470 Doar Road**

*Chairman Osguthorpe then asked for a motion to end the Public Comment session.*

**Motion: To close public comments.**

**Posed By: Mr. James Gardner**

**Second: Mr. Jay Reigart**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

*The chairman then moved on to agenda item "H," old business, and led with his presentation on village nodes and then asked Mr. O'Hara to give his presentation on agenda item "H(a)."*

**H. Old Business –**

- a. Edna Alston Black PD – Residential Portion of Planned Development TMS#661-00-00-290

Mr. O'Hara gave his staff report and a brief history of the Edna Alston Black PD. The Planning Commission then discussed the application and asked Town Attorney, Mr. Mac McQuillin, if he agreed and for his legal advice. Mr. McQuillin stated that the original plan was to build six homes. **Verbatim,** "The applicant is coming to us saying look I've got a plan that lets me do 6 lots I want to do 3 now so there's not a lot we can do." Mr. McQuillin stated that the applicant has produced a good development that goes along with the current desires of the community and town council. Planning Director, Mr. Dan O'Hara, then called a point of clarification and stated that if the applicant is present, he should be able to give his presentation.

Mr. John Popelka then gave his presentation on the PD for TMS# 661-00-00-290.

After more discussion between the Planning Commission, staff and the applicant, Chairman Osguthorpe requested action on agenda item "H;a." **[Time Stamp 0:20:20.60]**

**Motion: To accept the Preliminary Plat as amended**

**Posed By: Mr. Jay Reigart**

**Second: Ms. Kelly Cousino**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

**I. New Business –**

- a. Approval of Road and easement name requests pursuant to S.C. Code § 6-29-1200 and Town Code § 153.004

After brief discussion about the road names that were brought up during public hearing, the chairman requested a motion **[Time Stamp 0:22:42.04]**

**Motion: To accept the road and easement name requests as outlined in item F of the current agenda.**

**Posed By: Mr. James Gardner**

**Second: Dr. John Osguthorpe**

**Vote: Unanimous Approval**

- b. Vesting Ordinance alternatives – **[Time Stamp 0:22:52.61]**

Chairman Osguthorpe prefaced the topic on a Vesting Ordinance by saying that since they have moved the Comprehensive Plan forward, they can now begin work on ordinances that align with the desires of the Comp Plan. He stated that after the workshop with Town Council, Vesting was the #1 concern that they discussed during that meeting. The board discussed Vested Rights, and how they would move forward in

drafting a Vesting Ordinance for the Town of Awendaw. Chairman Osguthorpe stated that he would like to propose some language that they could give to Planning Director, Daniel O'Hara, to use while he continues crafting a Vesting Ordinance to bring back to the Planning Commission. The board discussed Vesting further and decided to have Mr. O'Hara continue to work out language to the vesting ordinance to bring back next month (November)

- c. Conservation Zone and Overlay District (coastal) alternatives – [Time Stamp 0:48:12.38]

Chairman Osguthorpe led a discussion on zoning and stated that at the next meeting, we will see the words for the first 2 preposed zones. The board members then discussed the zones listed on the future land use map within the current Comprehensive Plan (2025) and continued discussion on the Conservation Zone.

- d. Consideration of Fee schedules – (AN EDUCATIONAL SESSION ONLY) [Time Stamp 1:03:06.91]

Chairman Osguthorpe then moved on to item "d" under New Business and led a discussion about the current fee schedule and stated that he would like to see an increase in planning fees. The board discussed fees a while longer and moved on to New Business item "e."

- e. Concurrency –

Chairman Osguthorpe led a discussion with the Planning Commission on Concurrency and asked the commission to take action on this item.

Motion: To ask Town Council to support the Concurrency initiatives as set forth by the House of Representatives.

Posed By: Mr. James Gardner

Second: Dr. John Osguthorpe

Vote: Unanimous Approval

#### J. Closing Remarks –

Mr. James Gardner welcomed Ms. Kelly Cousino to the Planning Commission.

#### K. Adjournment –

Motion: To Adjourn

Posed By: Mr. James Gardner

Second: Dr. John Osguthorpe  
Vote: Unanimous Approval

*The meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM*  
Next Meeting – TBD (November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

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, November 12th, 2025, by Takeya White*

**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>**

DRAFT

## TOWN OF AWENDAW

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### *Town Council*

Paul Brown | Frank Frazier  
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November 5, 2025

RE: Memo for Town Council concerning the existing Planned Development located at the property identified by TMS 661-00-00-029.

This memo outlines recommended modifications to the existing Planned Development (PD) document for the property identified by TMS 661-00-00-029. These revisions will improve the administration of the PD, prevent future confusion, and align the development with the town's broader planning goals. The recommendations are organized by the relevant section numbers of the PD document.

### **2.0 Permitted Uses**

Staff recommends removing language that allows for multi-family dwelling units. The lack of available sewer infrastructure on this property makes multi-family density infeasible.

### **4.0 Building Setbacks**

The current language regarding building setbacks is confusing and needs to be clarified. The document states a 35-foot minimum setback, yet it also includes a 20-foot undisturbed buffer, a 15-foot Berkeley Electric easement, and a 10-foot grading area, which totals 45 feet.

Staff proposes two options:

Option A: Amend the language to state that the 35-foot setback is inclusive of the required buffer, easement, and grading areas.

Option B: Increase the building setback to 45 feet to be measured from the property line, outside of the 20-foot landscape buffer and 15-foot Berkeley Electric easement.

Additionally, staff recommends amending the internal setbacks to 15 feet to ensure consistency with the Town's current zoning standards.

### **8.0 Signage**

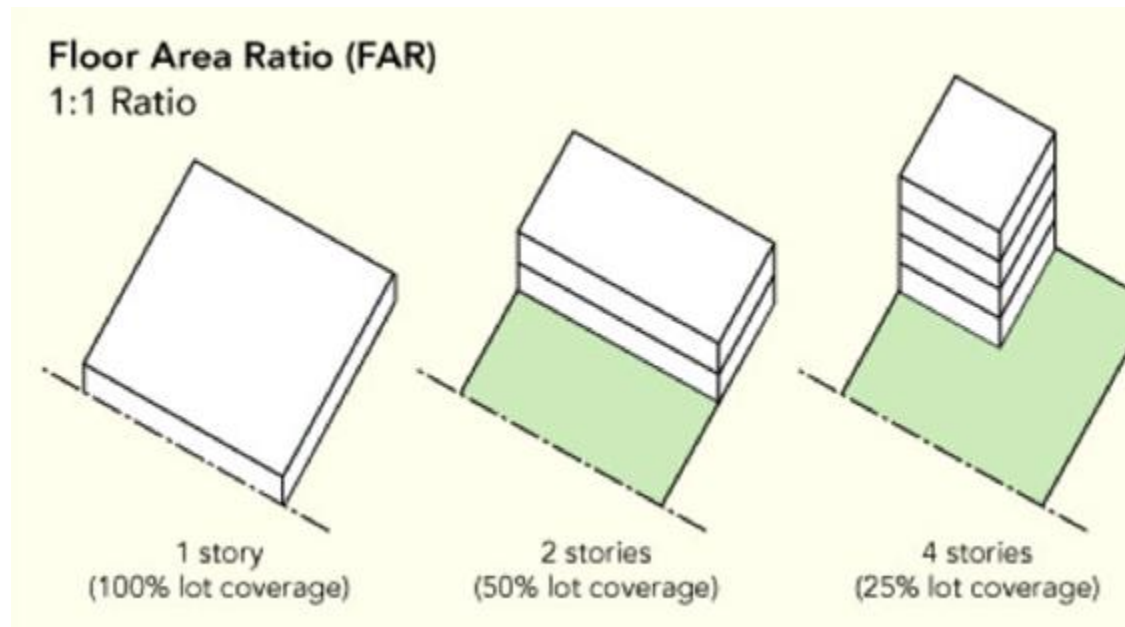
Staff recommends removing the provision that allows the Planning Commission to approve additional signage. This provision is inconsistent with the Town's existing sign code, which limits the amount of signage permitted. Removing this provision will ensure all properties are regulated under the same rules, promoting fairness and consistency.

## 12.0 Density

The current density provisions are problematic and require significant revision.

**Lot Coverage:** The existing 75% lot coverage is too high for this property. This percentage is typically interpreted as impervious coverage (buildings, pavement, etc.), and a 75% impervious rate is more than what is typically permitted in Town. Staff recommends different standards for residential and commercial areas, with a maximum 35% lot coverage for residential lots.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** Staff recommends the removal of the 1:1 FAR language. A 1:1 FAR allows the total floor area of a building to be equal to the lot area, effectively permitting the entire lot to be covered by a multi-story building. This is likely not the intent of the PD.



Sincerely,

Riccardo Giani, AICP  
Interim Zoning Administrator  
Town of Awendaw

Staff Recommendations for the Revision of the Awendaw Storage Planned Development –  
September 10, 2025

Red text with strikethrough equal proposed removed language (Example)

Purple text is language that is proposed to be added (Example)

Awendaw Storage - Revised Planned Development Guidelines

Date: 4/18/2018 Deferred by applicant on May 21, 2018 at Planning Commission Meeting

Re submitted for October 15, 2018 Planning Commission meeting

Planning Commission Revisions October 15, 2018

Town Council Amendments November 6, 2025 – Approved at first reading

Prepared by: Zuendt Engineering

P.O. Box 26177

Greenville SC 29616

Phone: 864-990-2995

### 1.0 Description of Property

The property (TMS #661000029) is an undeveloped wooded parcel currently zoned PD. The previous Planned Development Guidelines are dated 6/23/2014. The parcel is currently owned by 6465 Self Storage LLC. The parcel is approximately 7.21 acres with frontage to US Hwy 17 N. on the western edge of the property and frontage to Doar Rd on the southeastern edge of the property.

### 2.0 Description of Permitted Uses

Both residential (single family attached, detached, ~~or multifamily~~) and commercial uses are allowed in the Planned Development. Modular or pre-manufactured homes shall not be allowed. Approximately 4.7 acres adjacent to US Hwy 17 N. (Phase I) is intended to be developed into a commercial/office building fronting the highway with self-storage buildings behind. Commercial/office must be built before or in conjunction with the storage. The remaining portion of the site (approximately 2.51 acres, Phase II) will be developed as residential use.

#### Table of Permitted Uses

##### A. Commercial:

- i. Self-Storage Facility BEHIND COMMERCIAL FRONTAGE
- ii. Offices including service, professional, medical and administrative
- iii. Consumer Repair Services
- iv. Food Sales (grocery, restaurant, or cafe)
- v. Liquor, Beer, and Wine Sales (only as an accessory use to a restaurant)
- vi. Retail Sales and Services
- vii. Hair, nail and skin care services, including massage therapy

##### B. Residential:

- i. Single Family Detached
- ii. Single Family Attached, including townhomes and duplexes
- ~~iii. Multi family, including apartments and condominiums~~
- iv. Accessory Dwelling Units
- v. Any uses not specifically listed herein would be subject to approval by the Planning Commission.

Staff Recommendations for the Revision of the Awendaw Storage Planned Development –  
September 10, 2025

Red text with strikethrough equal proposed removed language (Example)

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3.0 Architecture and Site Design All buildings must conform to the current building code as adopted by Charleston County and the State of South Carolina. Drawings submitted for Town review must be prepared by a SC licensed design professional qualified in the discipline of the area submitted. For example, site plans shall be prepared by a registered civil engineer, planting plans shall be prepared a registered landscape architect and buildings shall be designed by a registered architect.

All structures shall be reviewed for approval by the Planning Commission for exterior construction materials and aesthetics before requesting a building permit. The architecture should respect the strong rural architectural heritage of the Lowcountry. Submittals for Planned Development zoning must include photos of inspirational designs.

The Town of Awendaw requires that Low Impact Development techniques be used as much as possible. This includes the use of pervious paving materials, bio-swales, etc. Low impact measures shall be used where feasible depending on land use and site conditions. In addition to buffers, landscaping is required throughout the site to include foundation plantings, parking lot plantings, etc. All landscape details and plans must be approved by the Town prior to the issuance of any zoning permits.

Separate architecture design guidelines adopted by the Planning Commission and Design Review Comments dated October 8, 2018 are made part of these guidelines.

#### 4.0 Building Setbacks

U.S. Highway 17 frontage: 35': **Inclusive of a 20' undisturbed landscaped buffer and Berkeley County Easement.**

Doar Road lot frontage: 85'

All other Front, Side, Rear Exterior Setbacks: 20'

Internal Setbacks: ~~15'~~ minimum, all sides

Wetland setback: 35'

#### 5.0 Landscape and Buffers

No land clearing or selective tree thinning is permitted until the Planning Commission approves a development plan and all state permits are issued and then only the area to be developed may be cleared. Clearing shall be limited to the area of proposed development at the time of development or during Town approved timbering operations.

##### A. Landscape Standards

- i. A survey of all trees eight (8) inches or greater DBH is required for the entire parcel. A minimum of 20 trees per acre are required to be retained or planted, with the minimum tree size being 2 ½ caliper inches. The owner or developer is encouraged to retain existing trees.
- ii. Parking lots shall have a tree island between every 10 spaces and at the ends.
- iii. Foundation planting are required around buildings except in rear loading areas.

Staff Recommendations for the Revision of the Awendaw Storage Planned Development –  
September 10, 2025

Red text with strikethrough equal proposed removed language (Example)

Purple text is language that is proposed to be added (Example)

- iv. All landscaping is to be coordinated with site lighting and shown on photometric plans.
- v. All landscaped areas must be irrigated.

B. Buffer Standards

- i. Vegetative buffers should contain indigenous plant material.
- ii. Existing trees within a buffer must be retained to help satisfy screening and buffer requirements. New plantings will be required where necessary, to accomplish a visual buffer as stipulated.
- iii. Planting plans must be prepared by a Landscape Architect.
- iv. Utilities/easements, drainage areas/easements, detention areas, parking, storage areas and buildings may NOT be located in buffers.
- v. Grading is NOT allowed in buffers.
- vi. Planted areas in buffers must be irrigated.
- vii. Road Frontage: 20' semi-opaque buffer (exclusive of drives):
  - 1. 5 understory trees 6-8 feet height per 100 lf
  - 2. 4 canopy trees ½" caliper per 100 lf
  - 3. Shrubs throughout (20-25)
- viii. Adjacent to existing commercial uses: 15' semi-opaque buffer:
  - 1. 5 understory trees (8-10 feet in height) per 100 linear feet and
  - 2. 4 canopy trees (minimum 3.5" caliper) per 100 lf and
  - 3. Shrubs throughout (20-25)
- ix. Adjacent to residential zoning or uses: 50' opaque buffer:
  - 1. 10 understory trees (8-10 feet in height) per 100 linear feet and
  - 2. 8 canopy trees (minimum 3.5" caliper) per 100 lf and
  - 3. Shrubs throughout (30-40)

C. Maintenance

The land owner, or successors in interest, shall be responsible for the following:

- i. Regular maintenance of all landscaping in good condition and in a way that presents a healthy, neat, and orderly appearance. All landscaping shall be maintained free from disease, pests, weeds and litter. This maintenance shall include weeding, watering, fertilizing, pruning, mowing, edging, mulching or other maintenance, as needed and in accordance with acceptable horticultural practices.
- ii. The repair or replacement of required landscape structures (e.g., fences, irrigation system) to a structurally sound and functioning condition;
- iii. The regular maintenance, repair, or replacement, where necessary, of any landscaping required by Planned Development documents or the Zoning Ordinance; and
- iv. Continuous maintenance of the site as a whole. When replacement of trees, plant material or other landscape features is required, such replacement shall be accomplished within one growing season, one year or such time-frame as required by the Planning Director, whichever is shorter.

Staff Recommendations for the Revision of the Awendaw Storage Planned Development –  
September 10, 2025

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It is anticipated that access shall be from a single curb cut on U.S. Highway 17 and a single curb cut on Doar Road. All curb cuts, curve radii, traffic markers, signs, and pavements widths shall meet SCDOT requirements and shall have approved encroachment permits. The self-storage facility will be accessed from US Highway 17 N at a single shared curb cut with the Planned Development immediately north of this property so that both parcels have access to the median cut. The residential development will be accessed by a single curb cut located on Doar Road. There will be no vehicular access between the self-storage facility and the residential development.

## 7.0 Site Lighting

Exterior site lighting should be used in minimal amounts to provide for efficient and safe flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. These lights are to be shielded to prevent spillover and glare onto adjacent properties and roadways. To ensure this:

- A. All site lighting must be IES cut-off fixtures. They shall be shielded to reflect down onto the ground and not out onto the streets or neighboring property.
- B. All lamps shall have a color range from 2700 K-3500 K and shall be consistent throughout the site. Sodium lighting is not permitted.
- C. Luminaire heights shall not exceed 18 feet from the average surrounding grade.
- D. Foot-candle levels from all fixtures shall not exceed 10 foot-candles at any point and shall provide uniform light levels.
- E. Building Flood lights are not permitted.
- F. Requirements for Review

At the time of final plan submittal, a site lighting plan shall be submitted providing:

- i. Location and mounting information for each light shown on the landscape plan.
- ii. A fixture schedule listing fixture design, type of lamp, etc.
- iii. Manufacture's photometric data for each type of light fixture.
- iv. Photometric plan.

## 8.0 Signage

Along the Highway 17 property entrance there will be one monument sign (no larger than 32 sq ft.) that will represent the entire commercial property. The Doar Road residential development may have one monument sign. The monument signs are to be integrated with landscaping and will have down lighting (internal lit signs prohibited). Building materials and design should coordinate with the architecture.

All signage will follow the Town of Awendaw ordinances for size and location and will be reviewed for approval by Town Staff. ~~(Any additional signage requires approval by Planning Commission.)~~ Signage should be integrated in architectural features such as parapets or on store front windows. The architect should specify building sign locations and parameters. Each business shall apply for sign approval through the Town of Awendaw by submitting elevation drawings. Internal lit signs are prohibited. No signage will be permitted on individual storage buildings.

## 9.0 Garbage Disposal

Staff Recommendations for the Revision of the Awendaw Storage Planned Development –  
September 10, 2025

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Dumpsters will be provided for each business or grouping of businesses. A concrete pad and screening fence will be used to limit visibility. Dumpster locations and screening details shall be approved by the Planning Commission.

#### 10.0 Parking

Parking to be provided per Town Zoning requirements, Sec 9.2. Shared parking to be encouraged where possible, and where approved by Town of Awendaw.

#### 11.0 Development Standards

The Town of Awendaw requires that Low Impact Development techniques be used as much as possible. This includes the use of pervious paving materials, bio-swales, etc.

#### 12.0 Density

The impervious coverage for proposed land uses for all phases shall not exceed 45% for the commercial development and 7535% lot coverage for residential development with impervious surfaces. Of this 5.40 acre impervious area, there is no stipulation between building area and other impervious surfaces. Building area is regulated primarily by building setbacks. Floor Area Ratio shall not exceed 1:1. Maximum height allowed is 35 feet. Residential densities shall not exceed a gross density of 4 units per acre, or 10 units.

#### 13.0 Exhibits

Conceptual and Diagrammatic General Land Use Plan (next page)

This plan is conceptual and diagrammatic in nature and is to be used for illustrative purposes only for the Planned Development rezoning. Final design and construction layouts shall meet all requirements included in the Planned Development Guidelines as approved by the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina

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## Staff Report

Subject: Tree Preservation Amendments

Prepared for: Planning Commission

Date: November 17, 2025

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### Background

Section 153.195 Significant Tree Protection was amended earlier this year to strengthen the Town's existing Tree protection standards by Ordinance (No. 2025-06) this was approved under its second reading at the May 20, 2025, Town Council meeting. The new language is currently in effect and restricts the removal of significant hardwoods and softwoods based on their diameter at breast height. This new language also provides a path for removal of trees if there is hardship due to compliance with the section and mitigation of tree removal.

As the code is currently written, any form of approval or review is only required for softwood trees **over 24" in DBH**. The section for softwoods and hardwoods reads as follows:

- A) No hardwood trees (excluding gums and water oaks) which are twelve - inch diameter breast height (12 "DBH) or larger in size are to be damaged, destroyed, or removed from any property.
- B) No pines or other softwood trees that are over 24-inch diameter breast height (24" DBH) or larger in size are to be damaged, destroyed, or removed from any property.

The Staff have noted that there is no detailed procedure in which a person could remove a protected hardwood tree if it did not meet the removal criteria, how it should be mitigated. As the code is written, they would be required to petition the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) directly, this could result in reoccurring BZA variances for this part of the code. There are identified exemptions and a procedure for removal, if necessary, for pines or other softwoods. In an effort to be proactive staff have proposed revisions to the Significant Tree Protection Section of the Town's Code of Ordinance to offer a clearer mitigation and replacement method.

### Staff Findings

The recommended language change would provide a broader administrative process to ensure that the same procedure for softwood is being applied to hardwood trees. The establishment of a permitting process ensures that proper oversight and best land management practices are taking place before a tree can be removed. This amendment also expands the requirement of when and how a mitigation plan is acted upon.

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## Potential Motions

The Planning Commission may:

1. Motion to recommend the amended language to Town Council for approval based on staff recommendations.
2. Motion to recommend the amended language to Town Council for approval based on staff recommendations with additional changes (as determined by the commission).
3. Motion to defer a recommendation for further amendments.
4. Take no action.

### Attachments:

- Staff report
- Recommended changes to the Significant Tree Protections

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 153, ZONING CODE, SUBSECTION 153.195, SIGNIFICANT TREE PROTECTION, TO RESTRUCTURE THE REVIEW AND MITIAGTION PROCESS FOR THE REMOVAL OF PROTECTED TREES.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission made a recommendation on October 16, 2023, to approve the recommended changes presented by staff; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to strengthen the preservation of trees within the Town of Awendaw based on the staff's recommended changes.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it Ordered and Ordained by the Council of the Town of Awendaw, S. C. that Article 7.1, Tree Preservation Requirements of the Code of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, shall be repealed and replaced as follows:

**Section 153.195 Significant Tree Protection.**

- A) No hardwood trees (excluding gums and water oaks) which are twelve - inch diameter breast height (12-“ DBH) or larger in size are to be damaged, destroyed, or removed from any property.
- B) No pines or other softwood trees that are over 24-inch diameter breast height (24” DBH) or larger in size are to be damaged, destroyed, or removed from any property.
  - a. Exceptions to this include trees grown for farming activities.
- C) ~~Additionally, tProtected t~~ trees may be removed by utilities which are exempted from these regulations by State law.
- ~~C)D) If compliance with tree preservation requirements presents a hardship~~ **If the conditions of this section present a hardship, a person must submit a tree removal permit application to the Zoning Administrator. a permit for tree removal may be granted must be applied for. when, The Zoning Administrator or their designee determines that any of the following conditions exist may grant a tree removal permit based on the following factors:**
  - a. Trees are diseased, dead or dying;
  - b. Trees pose a safety hazard to nearby buildings, or pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
  - c. Trees prevent essential grade changes or all reasonable utility installations;
  - d. Trees prevent all reasonable site configurations;
  - e. Trees are within the footprint of a proposed residential structure, as shown on a site plan;

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f. Removal of trees is the only reasonable means by which building, zoning, subdivision, health, public safety, or other Town requirements can be met.

~~D)E)~~ If none of the above conditions are deemed to be met by the Zoning Administrator or their designee, ~~removal of such trees~~ a tree mitigation plan must be ~~mitigated by~~ submitted and approved by the Zoning Administrator or their designee before any tree removal can take place, ~~a mitigation plan of replacement trees~~

~~E)a.~~ The tree mitigation plan shall replace the total DBH inches lost on a one-inch-for-one inch- basis with no replacement tree being less than 2-inch DBH.

~~F)i.~~ Where difficulty in replacing the total DBH of inches lost is approved by the Zoning Administrator or their designee, the applicant may pay a tree replacement fee of \$100 per DBH inch of significant hardwoods and ~~\$50 per DBH of~~ softwoods.

~~F)ii.~~ If trees are clearcut for farming or timbering, the land may not be used for development for eight (8) years following the removal of trees.

b. If trees are removed without an approved permit and or mitigation plan, the cost of tree replacement will be increased to \$200 per DBH inch of significant hardwoods and softwoods.

THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY UPON FINAL READING

\_\_\_\_\_  
Miriam C. Green, Mayor  
Town of Awendaw

First reading:

Public Hearing:

Planning Commission Recommendation:

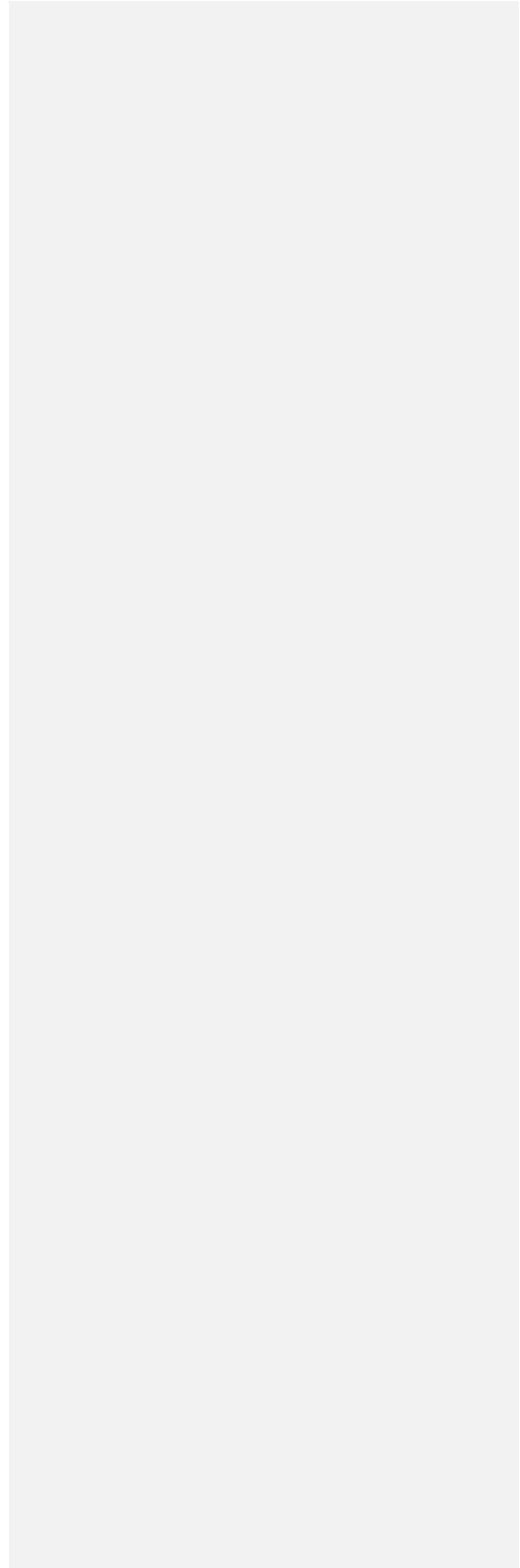
Second and Final Reading:

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ORD. NO. 2025-

Donna F. Steed, Clerk of Council



# ACTION PLAN

Frequently Used Stakeholder Acronyms:

Planning Commission (PC)	(BCDCOG)	SC Dept. of Natural Resources (SCDNR)
Town Council (TC)	SC Dept. of Transportation (SCDOT)	Charleston County School District (CCSD)
Charleston County (CC)	SC Dept. of Environmental Services (DES)	US Fish & Wildlife Services (FWS)
Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments	SC Dept. of Parks, Recreation, & Tourism (SCPRT)	US National Forest Service (NFS)

GOALS & STRATEGIES				GUIDING PRINCIPLE(S) & RELEVANT ELEMENTS
	Foster a strong sense of community pride and small-town character by supporting local community events, festivals, organizations, and lifestyles.			Community Character Rural Lifestyle Community Culture
A-1	Support and assist local organizations in coordinating festivals and other events that promote the rural coastal lifestyle of the community.	Town Staff		Population Cultural Resources
A-2	Continue to hold festivals and events at the Town Park.	Town Staff		Cultural Resources
A-3	Improve the Town’s gateways and wayfinding signage to bolster the community’s sense of place as well as bring attention to the various community facilities and resources offered throughout the area.	TC & Town Staff		Community Facilities
A-4	Collaborate with other public and private entities in showcasing the Gullah Geechee heritage through the preservation of Gullah Geechee folklore, arts, crafts, and music.	Various Organizations		Cultural Resources
	Broaden the number and range of cultural, historic, educational, natural, recreational, and community facilities and amenities offered throughout the area.			Community Character
B-1	Continue to pursue grants to help fund and develop the Awendaw Town Park as a passive park facility.	Town Staff & SCPRT		Community Facilities
B-2	Maintain a healthy and communicative relationship with Charleston County to continue providing adequate public services (i.e., Police, Fire & Rescue, EMS, Recycling, Stormwater, etc.) to residents.	CC & Town Staff		Community Facilities
B-3	Support private and public investment in the local environmental, historic and cultural resources as a driver for appropriate economic development.	TC, Investors & Business Owners		Economic Development Cultural Resources

B-4	Collaborate with other public and private entities in the acquisition and preservation of lands and resources important to the Gullah Geechee culture and heritage.	TC & CCPRC		Natural Resources Cultural Resources
B-5	Evaluate the feasibility of staffing the programming and utilization of parks and recreation facilities.	TC & Town Staff		Community Facilities
B-6	Coordinate with local schools to allow shared access to school sports fields, courts, and related facilities when available (i.e., cooperative use agreement)	TC & CCSD		Community Facilities
B-7	Evaluate the need for outdoor recreation fields/facilities as well as possible location and funding sources.	Town Staff & CCPRC		Community Facilities
B-8	Require any redevelopment of property to preserve or restore any existing cultural or natural resources on site (i.e. riparian buffers, walls or fences, signs, landscaping, etc.)	PC		Natural Resources Cultural Resources
	Expand appropriate economic services and opportunities offered within the Town by encouraging serviced-based businesses and enhancing workforce development.			Commercial Services
C-1	Coordinate with appropriate entities to promote the availability of workforce development services for local businesses, including training of the local labor force.	Town Staff & other entities		Economic Development Population
C-2	Develop a comprehensive list of all commercial and industrial properties to include the property address, tenure, lot size, building size, owner information, etc. for reference as (re)development opportunities.	Town Staff		Economic Development Land Use
C-3	Encourage and incentivize non-residential lot consolidation along arterial roadways, particularly US 17 to minimize access points on Highway 17.	TC & PC		Land Use
C-4	Incentivize local small businesses that provide daily services to residents	TC		Economic Development
C-5	Focus primarily on the recruitment of local retail and service-based commercial businesses that serve residents.	TC		Economic Development
C-6	Encourage proactive annexation by the Town to ensure compatible development of identified rural fringe areas.	TC		Land Use
C-7	Adopt a short-term rental (STR) ordinance to mitigate the possibility of STRs dominating residential neighborhoods and ensure compliance with noise ordinances	TC & PC & Staff		Land Use
	Improve the quality and range of multi-modal transportation options to enhance the mobility and inter- and intra-connectivity of the community.			Circulation
D-1	Coordinate with Charleston County and SCDOT on road paving projects and regular maintenance to improve the mobility and quality of the roadways.	TC, CC, SCDOT, & Town Staff		Transportation
D-2	Review the Town's zoning and land development ordinances to require minimum vehicular distances between access points, particularly on US 17, to limit turning movements and improve safety.	TC & PC		Transportation Land Use

## ACTION PLAN

D-3	Encourage new developments to include multi-modal infrastructure and provide one or more potential connections to adjacent properties via reciprocal access agreements, multi-use paths, or trails.	PC & Town Staff		Transportation
D-4	Coordinate with TriCounty Link to better inform residents on the availability of public transportation, service, and stop locations.	TriCounty Link & Town Staff		Transportation
D-5	Assess the need for rural-oriented traffic calming infrastructure along Seewee and Doar Rd.	TC, CC, & SCDOT		Transportation
D-6	Partner with the US National Forest Service in developing an integrated network of trails, parks, and open spaces to improve connectivity between the different parts of Town.	Town Staff & NFS		Community Facilities
D-7	Coordinate with SCDOT to annually assess the safety concerns and possible mitigation strategies at various intersections along US 17, including at Seewee Road, 15 Mile Landing Road, and Doar Road.	Town Staff & SCDOT		Transportation
D-8	Coordinate with SCDOT and Charleston County in assessing the need for an additional/halfway access point connecting US 17 and Seewee Road.	TC, CC, SCDOT, BCDCOG, & Town Staff		Transportation
D-9	Work with Charleston County to ensure increased presence and acceptable responsiveness of Emergency Services: fire protection, sheriff protection, EMS	TC, Staff, CC		Transportation
	Capitalize on the Town's proximity to and abundance of natural resources by promoting eco-tourism-related businesses, uses, and amenities.			Commercial Services Rural Lifestyle Natural Environment
E-1	Use the abundance of natural resources and protected lands as potential connecting corridors to link the various recreational amenities in the area to one another via multi-use paths and trails.	PC, SCPRT, CCPRC, NFS & Town Staff		Community Facilities Natural Resources
E-2	Pursue appropriate grants through the SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCRPT), with attention to the future costs that may be associated with same, to help identify the Town as a natural outdoor recreation destination.	Town Staff & SCPRT		Community Facilities
E-3	Review current light requirements and regulations on light pollution using the Dark Skies Communities as guidance. Coordinate with Charleston County on adjusting light requirements in the unincorporated areas of the County to be consistent with the Town's.	TC, CC, & Town Staff		Natural Resources Land Use
E-4	Replace all street lights with LED lighting and down lighting to reduce light pollution	TC, Berkeley Electric, Town Staff		Community Resources

E-5	Limit street lighting and require down shielding of private lighting to retain the night sky and protect the migrating bird population that use the Atlantic flyway.	TC, Town Staff		Community Resources Natural Resources
	Establish architectural and site design guidelines and materials to ensure new development complements adjacent structures and the overall rural nature of the community.			Built Environment
F-1	Build on the Town's distinct community identity and sense of place by requiring streetscaping, signage, and building design for all new developments to be complimentary to the Town's existing rural character.	TC & PC		Land Use
F-2	Establish architectural design standards/guidelines for new development along US 17 to avoid franchise architectural practices.	TC & PC		Land Use
F-3	Modify current Zoning and Land Development regulations to require appropriate vehicular access points if a development meets a determined density threshold.	TC & PC		Land Use
	Adjust zoning, density, and land development regulations to limit the ecological disturbance from development.			Natural Environment Sustainability
G-1	Implement a maximum impervious surface requirement on all properties.	PC & Town Staff		Land Use Natural Resources
G-2	Consider the establishment of a resilient Conservation Residential districts considering flood risk, sea level rise, wildfire risk, etc. with low density regulations.	TC & PC		Land Use
G-3	Modify the Town's Tree Ordinance to include provisions focused on the conservation and restoration of the Town's diverse tree canopy and to protect all large healthy trees.	TC & PC		Natural Resources Land Use
G-4	Modify zoning and land development definitions so that wetlands and manufactured stormwater ponds are not included in open space calculations. Total available acreage for development to exclude fresh, salt and brackish wetlands, stormwater ponds, and roads.	TC & PC		Land Use Natural Resources
G-5	Increasing the amount/percent of open space required for new developments to maintain a healthy, convenient, and sustainable live, work, and play lifestyle.	TC & PC		Land Use Community Facilities
G-6	Require new traditional septic systems (no engineered septic systems)	TC, PC, & DES		Land Use Natural Resources
	Monitor and mitigate the adverse effects that existing and new developments could have on the environment, particularly on Bulls Bay and surrounding waterbodies and ecosystems.			Natural Environment Built Environment Sustainability
H-1	Educate residents on the importance of and methods for septic system maintenance.	Town Staff & DES		Resiliency Natural Resources
H-2	Adopt a Low-Impact Development Ordinance.	TC & PC		Resiliency

## ACTION PLAN

H-3	Monitor the water quality within Bulls Bay, the ICW, and Awendaw Creek while partnering with Charleston County and DES in mitigating the possible environmental impacts.	NOAA, DES, CC & Town Staff		Resiliency Natural Resources
H-4	Implement a plan to better assess the cumulative impacts of development on the natural environment and require this assessment of all new developments.	PC		Land Use
H-5	Identify priority actions to protect water quality and enact ordinances to enforce same, including but not limited to pirarian buffer areas.	TC		Land Use Natural Resources Resiliency
H-6	Partner with USFS, Cape Romain Refuge, and other appropriate organizations to prevent fragmentation through conservation of identified habitat spaces within the Town.	TC, USFS, Cape Romain Refuge & Town Staff		Land Use Natural Resources Resiliency
H-7	Through the development review process, ensure that new development maintains appropriate wildlife corridors.	Town Staff		Natural Resources
H-8	Reduce air, water, and soil pollution to keep our landscapes and waterways productive and healthy and to contribute to personal health and safety.			Natural Resources
H-9	Explore options to discourage unauthorized land sclearing and development after land clearing			Land Use
H-10	Develop and adopt a uniform set of stormwater standards and design guidelines to meet the goal of protecting the region's sensitive enviornment and residents' quality of life.	TC & PC		Land Use Natural Resources
H-11	The protection of the wetlands and wetland buffer areas from encroachment, pollution, degradation, alteration or elimination is a crucial element of the Town's stormwater and water quality management plans and supports resilience efforts in anticipation of more frequent and severe weather events, as well as documented and projected sea level rise. Procedures to protect, conserve, enhance, and maintain wetlands and wetland buffers are in the public interest and support the general welfare of the Town. Policies will be enacted to ensure protection.	TC, PC, & Town Staff		Land Use Natural Resources Resiliency
H-12	Establish and enforce buffer and/or setback requirements for wetlands, floodplain, and areas protected to be impacted by sea level rise as part of new development.	TC, PC, & Town Staff		Land Use Natural Resources
H-13	Draft a wetlands protection and conservation ordinance that is stricter than both SCDES and USACE regulations.	TC, PC, & Town Staff		Land Use Resiliency
	Enhance the resiliency of the Town by continuously updating building and development regulations that reflect current best management practices.			Safety
I-1	Develop an easy-to-understand hurricane guide for residents and distribute annually at the beginning of Hurricane Season (June 1st).	Town Staff		Resiliency
I-2	Update land development guidelines to require all new development be constructed using resilient infrastructure and best management practices.	CC & Town Staff		Resiliency

I-3	Utilize low-interest loans from the Resilience Revolving Fund to perform restoration activities and/or voluntary floodplain or coastal inundation buyouts of eligible or high priority properties.	TC & CC		Resiliency
I-4	Coordinate enhanced flooding resiliency strategies, planning, design, and engineering standards accorss all codes, plans, and policies.	CC & Town Staff		Resiliency
I-5	Promote resiliency and sustainability as necessary growth strategy.			Resiliency
I-6	Evaluate suitability of developable areas based upon all natural hazards	Town Staff		Resiliency
I-7	Review and formally adopt the Southern Low Country Stormwater Design Manual, as amended. Create long-term plans to direct new development and infrastructure away from hazardous areas.	TC & Town Staff		Resiliency
I-8	Incentivize land purchases in identified hazard-prone areas for open space preservation			
I-9	Tailor the Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (CRHMP) report to meet the needs of the town.	Town Staff		Resiliency
I-10	Explore natural and nature-based solutions (NNBS) for improving natural resilience, and implement green infrastructure techniques in stormwater management practices on new development.	TC		Natural Resources

## ACTION PLAN

	Require the preservation and restoration of riparian buffers, wetlands, and forested areas while coordinating with private developers and state & national agencies on conservation efforts.			Natural Environment Sustainability
J-1	Work with Charleston County on preserving the community's natural scenic vistas and important rural characteristics by limiting the deforestation of unincorporated properties adjacent to residential areas.	CC & Town Staff		Natural Resources
J-2	Implement the strategies and recommendations from the 2022 Tree Canopy Assessment of Awendaw.	TC & PC		Natural Resources
J-3	Develop plans for the acquisition of land or easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas and prime open spaces.	TC		Natural Resources
J-4	Develop an immediate Annexation Plan that identifies potential properties that the Town could annex in the future.	TC, PC, & Town Staff		Land Use
J-5	Work with the US National Forest Service to protect and maintain the tree canopy along US 17 and in other areas within the Francis Marion National Forest.	TC & PC		Natural Resources
J-6	Coordinate with public and private agencies on preserving and restoring important ecological habitats and the protection of rare, endangered, and threatened species.	Town Staff, SCDNR, & Various Organizations		Natural Resources
J-7	Adopt policies and ordinances that protect sensitive areas such as wetlands and riparian areas, maintain and/or increase open space, provide substantial buffers along sensitive water bodies, limit impervious surfaces and minimize disturbance of soils and vegetation.	TC & PC		Natural Resources
J-8	Strengthen the tree protection ordinance.	TC & PC		Natural Resources Land Use
J-9	Develop education programs for developers and the public about project designs that minimize water quality impacts.	Town Staff		Natural Resources
J-10	Reduce groundwater pumping to minimize the amount of salt-water intrusion in wells and aquifer.	TC & Town Staff		Natural Resources

	Modify density and land use regulations to ensure adjacent land uses compliment one another, the natural environment, and the rural character of the community.			Community Character Built Environment
K-1	Adjust land use regulations to focus local retail and service-based businesses and uses.	PC		Economic Develoment Land Use
K-2	Modify density regulations in each district to preserve the rural density of the Town.	PC		Land Use
K-3	Coordinate with Charleston County to ensure land use regulations in unincorporated areas of the County are compatible with the rural nature of the community.	TC & CC		Land Use
K-4	Evaluate existing commercial zone properties in the town and county to determine the appropriate amount, location, and scale of new commercial development.	TC & CC		Land Use
K-5	Adopt policies and ordinances to limit impervious areas and minimize or eliminate directly connected impervious areas.	TC & PC		Land Use
K-6	Adopt policies to eliminate fill and build construction to reduce damage to the enviornment and flooding.	TC		Land Use
K-7	Implement true rural development standards that restrict impervious surface, increase the retention of natural vegetation, and respect and protect natural water courses and watersheds.	TC, PC, & DES		Land Use
K-8	Utilize rural development standards, including such techniques as ingress/egress easements, flag shaped lots, and unpaved roads and driveways, to minimize stormwater runoff and other negative enviornmental impacts.	TC & PC		Land Use
K-9	Implement development standards that prevent traditional suburban development patterns of curvilinear cul-de-sac streets and curb and gutter stormwater management systems.	TC & PC		Land Use



**TOWN OF AWENDAW**

6971 Doar Road | P.O. Box 520 | Awendaw, SC 29429  
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Katharine Watkins | *Town Administrator*  
Donna F. Steed | *Clerk/Treasurer*



**Miriam C. Green | Mayor**

**Town Council**

Paul Brown | Frank Frazier  
Darrell Ketchens | Wendy Helms  
Bryan McNeal, Jr. | Kent Prause

**Staff Report**

**Subject: Proposed Language for Conservation and Parks Zoning Districts**  
**Prepared for: Planning Commission**  
**Date: November 17, 2025**

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Background

The Town of Awendaw approved its Comprehensive Plan on August 7, 2025. As a part of the Comprehensive Plan update, the Planning Commission is proposing new or amended language to the Zoning Districts to align with the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan. The proposed language is a work product of the Planning Commission.

Staff Findings

The proposed conservation language expands the existing definition of the Conservation district within the Town’s Zoning Code. This new definition identifies that conservation land should be protected that restricts potential development while maintaining pristine natural environments.

153.025 C - Conservation

~~A-This~~ district is designated primarily to protect and encourage the appropriate use of marshlands, forested areas, scenic areas and agricultural areas ~~that are not likely to be developed for urban purposes in the reasonable near future.~~ **that are under legal agreement that permanently restricts development while allowing limited private uses.**

The proposed language identifies a new zoning district that is reserved for public and civic use for recreational purposes. Staff find that the definition is consistent with what would be expected within a civic use zoning district. However, these lands should be open to public use and not private lands that restrict public access.

**153.033 – P - Parks**

**This district is designated to provide land for public recreation, parks, community facilities sites, flood control, natural or man-made bodies of water, forests or similar non-commercial open space.**

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### Staff Recommendations

The current moratorium identifies that further revisions are necessary to residential and commercial zoning districts including those under the PD, Planned Development zoning classification. Staff encourage the Planning Commission to continue to refine and propose amendments to zoning districts and their standards. However, neither of proposed zoning districts are part of the moratorium, and the Planning Commission should pivot its focus to those districts identified in the moratorium. Staff recommend that the new language and standards be compiled in part of a larger update which will be necessary for any rezoning efforts the Town may take on. Staff further recommend that the Planning Commission begin considering existing zoning code revisions since rezoning efforts will take longer than the currently allowed time in the moratorium.

### Potential Motions

The Planning Commission may:

1. Motion to recommend the amended language to Town Council for approval based on staff recommendations.
2. Motion to recommend the amended language to Town Council for approval based on staff recommendations with additional changes (as determined by the commission).
3. Motion to approve the amended language but defer a final recommendation to Town Council until further amendments to all zoning districts and standards have been discussed.
4. Take no action.

#### Attachments:

- Staff report
- Proposed Zoning District Revisions

## Proposed language for Zoning Districts

### 153.025 C - Conservation

This district is designated primarily to protect and encourage the appropriate use of marshlands, forested areas, scenic areas and agricultural areas that are under legal agreement that permanently restricts development while allowing limited private uses.

### 153.033 – P - Parks

This district provides land for public recreation, parks, community facilities sites, flood control, natural or man-made bodies of water, forests or similar non-commercial open space.