

AGENDA
PLANNING COMMISSION
City of Westminster

Monday, September 15, 2025

6:00PM

Regular Meeting

Westminster City Hall

100 E. Windsor St,

Westminster, SC 29693

Westminster Planning Commission

September 15, 2025 Meeting

6:00pm- City Hall

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Certification of Quorum**
- 4. Comments from Staff**
 - **Next Planning Commission Meeting: October 20, 2025.**
 - **Training Scheduled for September 30, 2025 at 6:00pm.**
 - **Misc./Other**

Routine Business

- 5. Consideration of Minutes from August 18, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting.**

New Business

None.

Old Business

- 6. Consideration of ORDINANCE 11-18-2025-01: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 130.45 OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES AND SECTION 151.055 OF THE CITY'S ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.**

At the June 17, 2025 City Council Meeting, Council directed staff to draft an ordinance allowing limited use of firearms in City Limits to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and subsequently be brought before City Council for consideration.

The proposed ordinance amends the City's firearms regulation (Section 130.45) to address firearm discharging and hunting in City Limits.

Proposed amendments would provide exceptions to the blanket ban of the discharge of firearms, including exceptions for Law Enforcement, ceremonial blank rounds ("blanks"), and other similar items.

The Planning Commission reviewed and held a public hearing on the item at its August 18, 2025 meeting and made several changes to the proposed ordinance. The item was tabled until the Planning Commission could review the amended language at its September 15 meeting.

The following amendments were made:

- Any reference to the Zoning Code was removed. Firearm discharge is proposed to be allowable for any property of 25 contiguous acres or greater.
- Big game hunting has been changed to hunting to be more inclusive.
- Private ranges are to be approved by the Chief of Police in writing.
- Restrictions on discharging firearms through property lines have been removed.

Chief of Police Fred Miller will be present to provide additional context and answer questions from a law-enforcement perspective.

City Staff is seeking feedback on the ordinance as amended and recommendations from the Planning Commission to present to City Council.

A redline and clean draft of the Ordinance are attached.

7. Adjourn

City of Westminster
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
August 18, 2025 6:00 pm
Westminster City Hall

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm. In attendance were Sandra Powell, Charles Morgan, Ben Lewis and Jared Brucke.

Staff:

Assistant City Administrator, Regan Osbon
City Clerk, Kiley Carter
Police Chief, Fred Miller

Call to Order

Sandra Powell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Invocation and Pledge

Ben Lewis led the planning commission in the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Certification of Quorum

Kiley Carter certified a quorum.

Comments from Staff

Mr. Osbon announced that there would be no meeting next month unless something comes up. He noted that he would keep the commission updated.

Mr. Osbon spoke about the training for this commission. That will be held at the County building at Pine Street in the county council chambers. Members of this commission must attend training once a year. Online alternatives are available if a member cannot attend the training in person.

Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Mr. Morgan and seconded by Mrs. Powell, the motion to approve the June 16, 2025, meeting minutes passed unanimously.

New Business

Public Hearing for ORDINANCE 10-18-2025-01: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 130.45 OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES AND SECTION 151.055 OF THE CITY'S ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.

Mrs. Powell opened the public hearing for this ordinance.

Mrs. Powell closed the public hearing.

Consideration of ORDINANCE 10-18-2025-01: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 130.45 OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES AND SECTION 151.055 OF THE CITY’S ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.

Mrs. Powell turned this over to Chief Miller to explain who turned it over to Mr. Osbon. Mr. Osbon explained that currently there is a blanket ordinance that prohibits the discharge of firearms within city limits. He explained that the City would like to tie this ordinance to the zoning ordinance. The City is asking for feedback from this commission. This ordinance will then be presented to city council with the recommendations made by this commission. Currently, the police cannot discharge firearms within city limits, so this definitely needs to be fixed.

Chief Miller explained that he is in favor of this ordinance with certain guidelines so one does not shoot their neighbor.

DNR and state guidelines would still apply to this ordinance. By state law, the city can only consider anything 25 acres or less in this ordinance.

There was discussion on the type of gun (caliber) that can be used being added into the ordinance in addition to no commercial hunting (leave section B).

After much discussion, the commission agreed on 4 changes to the ordinance proposed.

1. Remove big game language
2. Zoning restriction being removed (acreage only)
3. Buffer zone is removed (300 yards from residence); go back to DNR guidelines
4. Shooting ranges go by Police Department or Chief Miller for approval

This commission would like to see another version of this after the changes above are made to approve before sending to City Council.

Mr. Osbon stated that he would check with the attorney to remove all restrictions and comments on hunting. Hunting would then be allowed only by DRN standards in this ordinance.

The new version of this ordinance will be reviewed at the September 15th meeting.

Upon a motion by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Brucke the **motion to AMEND SECTION 130.45 OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES AND SECTION 151.055 OF THE CITY’S ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Powell		Yes
Lewis	Motion	Yes
Brucke	Second	Yes
Moore		Absent
Morgan		Yes

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mr. Brucke and seconded by Mrs. Powell, the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 pm passed unanimously.

(Minutes prepared by Kiley Carter)

Sandra Powell, Chairperson

ORDINANCE NO. 11-18-2025-01

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 130.45 OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Westminster (the “*City Council*”), the governing body of the City of Westminster, South Carolina (the “*City*”), in a meeting duly assembled as follows:

Section 1 Findings. The City Council makes the following findings of fact in connection with the enactment of this ordinance (this “*Ordinance*”):

(a) The City is a municipal corporation under the laws of the State of South Carolina (the “*State*”) and is authorized pursuant to Section 5-7-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended (the “*SC Code*”) to regulate the discharge of firearms in the City subject to the Constitution and general law of this State, and more specifically, subject to the limitations set forth in Section 23-31-510 of the SC Code.

(b) Pursuant to these authorities and subject to the limitations recited above, the City Council desires to amend Section 130.45 of the City of Westminster Code of Ordinances (the “*City Code*”) regarding the discharge of guns, pistols or other firearms in the City.

(c) The City is further authorized, pursuant to the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, Chapter 29 of Title 6 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended (the “*Act*”) to adopt a zoning ordinance regulating land use within the City and has adopted the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Westminster, South Carolina, codified at Chapter 151 of the City Code (as subsequently amended, the “*Zoning Ordinance*”). At the request of the City Council, the City of Westminster Planning Commission (the “*Planning Commission*”) considered certain amendments to the text of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for hunting as an allowed use within the Rural Residential District and to further consider whether it is appropriate to impose additional conditions on such use.

(d) In compliance with Section 6-29-760 of the Act, following proper public notice, the requested changes to the text of the Zoning Ordinance were brought before the City of Westminster Planning Commission (the “*Planning Commission*”) on August 18, 2025, which conducted a public hearing on the matter where both proponents and opponents of the proposed changes were permitted to speak, and, after due consideration, the Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the proposed changes.

(e) The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed Ordinance and recommended removal of references to the Zoning Ordinance and any association with a zoning district, and further recommended that the Ordinance, as amended, be submitted to City Council for adoption. The City Council wishes to adopt the recommendation of the Planning Commission and approve the changes to the text of City Code set forth herein.

Section 2 Amendments to Section 130.45 of the City Code. By and through the enactment of this Ordinance, Section 130.45 of the City Code is hereby amended to read, in its entirety, as follows:

§ 130.45 - GUNS; DISCHARGING OF SAME.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot, fire or discharge any gun, pistol or other firearms within the limits of the city; provided, however, that this shall not apply to acts of necessity.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to the following:

(1) the discharge of firearms by any officer of the law in the performance of his duty;

(2) to prohibit any citizen from discharging a firearm lawfully defending his person when in fear or life or when in fear of having serious bodily harm inflicted upon him, or when lawfully defending the life of another;

(3) the use of blank ammunition at athletic events, military funerals and other functions at which the use of blank ammunition is appropriate;

(4) commercial indoor target ranges which possess a city business license;

(5) the discharge of firearms for the purpose of hunting in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, and all other applicable state laws and regulations, is permitted on property comprised of at least twenty-five (25) contiguous acres.

(6) a landowner discharging a firearm on the landowner's property to protect the landowner's family, employees, the general public, or the landowner's property from animals that the landowner reasonably believes pose a direct threat or danger to the landowner's property, people on the landowner's property, or the general public. For purposes of this item, the landowner's property must be a parcel of land comprised of at least twenty-five (25) contiguous acres.

(7) No commercial hunting operations or paid access are permitted.

(8) Privately owned and managed firearm ranges must be approved in advance and in writing by the Chief of Police or his designee before operation.

Section 3 Codification. The City Clerk and City staff are hereby authorized and directed to codify the amendments enacted hereby into the City Code and are further authorized and directed to make such changes to the enumeration of the various sections and subsections of

such amendments as may be necessary to effect such codification. The City Code, as previously enacted by various prior actions of the City Council, is hereby amended accordingly.

Section 4 General Repealer. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

Section 5 Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance, or the amendments to the City Code enacted hereby, are for any reason held or determined to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance or such amendments, as applicable.

Section 6 Effective Date. The provisions of this Ordinance shall take effect upon the due enactment of this Ordinance.

DONE AND ENACTED in a meeting duly assembled this ____ day of ____, 2025.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER, SOUTH
CAROLINA

[SEAL]

[ATTEST]

Brian F. Ramey, Mayor

Kiley Carter, Clerk/Treasurer

Planning Commission [August __, 2025]
First Reading [_____, 2025]
Public Hearing [August __, 2025]
Second Reading [_____, 2025]

ORDINANCE NO. ~~1011-1418~~-2025-01

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 130.45 OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES ~~AND SECTION 151.055 OF THE CITY'S ZONING ORDINANCE~~ REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Westminster (the “*City Council*”), the governing body of the City of Westminster, South Carolina (the “*City*”), in a meeting duly assembled as follows:

Section 1 Findings. The City Council makes the following findings of fact in connection with the enactment of this ordinance (this “*Ordinance*”):

(a) The City is a municipal corporation under the laws of the State of South Carolina (the “*State*”) and is authorized pursuant to Section 5-7-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended (the “*SC Code*”) to regulate the discharge of firearms in the City subject to the Constitution and general law of this State, and more specifically, subject to the limitations set forth in Section 23-31-510 of the SC Code.

(b) Pursuant to these authorities and subject to the limitations recited above, the City Council desires to amend Section 130.45 of the City of Westminster Code of Ordinances (the “*City Code*”) regarding the discharge of guns, pistols or other firearms in the City.

~~(e)~~—The City is further authorized, pursuant to the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, Chapter 29 of Title 6 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina 1976, as amended (the “*Act*”) to adopt a zoning ordinance regulating land use within the City and has adopted the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Westminster, South Carolina, codified at Chapter 151 of the City Code (as subsequently amended, the “*Zoning Ordinance*”).

~~(d)~~(c) At the request of the City Council, the City of Westminster Planning Commission (the “*Planning Commission*”) considered certain amendments to the text of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for hunting as an allowed use within the Rural Residential District and to further consider whether it is appropriate to impose additional conditions on such use.

(d) In compliance with Section 6-29-760 of the Act, following proper public notice, the requested changes to the text of the Zoning Ordinance were brought before the City of Westminster Planning Commission (the “*Planning Commission*”) on August 18, 2025, which conducted a public hearing on the matter where both proponents and opponents of the proposed changes were permitted to speak, and, after due consideration, the Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the proposed changes.

~~(e)~~—The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed Ordinance and recommended removal of references to the Zoning Ordinance and any association with a zoning district, and further recommended that the Ordinance, as amended, be submitted to City Council for adoption.

~~(f)(e)~~ The City Council wishes to adopt the recommendation of the Planning Commission and approve the changes to the text of ~~the Zoning Ordinance~~ City Code set forth herein.

Section 2 Amendments to Section 130.45 of the City Code. By and through the enactment of this Ordinance, Section 130.45 of the City Code is hereby amended to read, in its entirety, as follows:

§ 130.45 - GUNS; DISCHARGING OF SAME.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot, fire or discharge any gun, pistol or other firearms within the limits of the city; provided, however, that this shall not apply to acts of necessity.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to the following:

(1) the discharge of firearms by any officer of the law in the performance of his duty;

(2) to prohibit any citizen from discharging a firearm lawfully defending his person when in fear or life or when in fear of having serious bodily harm inflicted upon him, or when lawfully defending the life of another;

(3) the use of blank ammunition at athletic events, military funerals and other functions at which the use of blank ammunition is appropriate;

(4) commercial indoor target ranges which possess a city business license;

(5) the discharge of firearms for the purpose of hunting ~~big game~~ in accordance with ~~Title 50, Chapter 11, Article 3 of~~ the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, and all other applicable state laws and regulations, is permitted on property ~~zoned "Rural Residential" as designated on the Official Zoning Map of the City of Westminster, so long as no firearm is discharged within 300 yards of any property line and all conditions set forth in Section 151.055 of the City's Zoning Ordinance are met; or~~ comprised of at least twenty-five (25) contiguous acres.

(6) a landowner discharging a firearm on the landowner's property to protect the landowner's family, employees, the general public, or the landowner's property from animals that the landowner reasonably believes pose a direct threat or danger to the landowner's property, people on the landowner's property, or the general public. For purposes of this item, the landowner's property must be a parcel of land comprised of at least twenty-five (25) contiguous acres.

(7) No commercial hunting operations or paid access are permitted.

~~(6)(8)~~ Privately owned and managed firearm ranges must be approved in advance and in writing by the Chief of Police or his designee before operation.

Section 3 — ~~Amendments to Zoning Ordinance.~~ By and through the enactment of this Ordinance, Section 151.055 of the Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to read, in its entirety, as follows:

~~(C) Conditional uses. The following uses shall be permitted in any RR Zoning district subject to conditions set forth in §§ 151.220 and 151.221.~~

~~...~~

~~(10) The hunting of “big game,” as defined under the laws of the State of South Carolina, is permitted in the Rural Residential Zoning District, subject to the following conditions:~~

~~(a) All hunting activities must comply with applicable laws and regulations of the State of South Carolina and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), including but not limited all required permitting and licensing requirements and subject to S.C. Code Ann. § 50-11-355 regarding the hunting of deer near residences with firearms.~~

~~(b) Hunting may only occur on parcels consisting of at least twenty five (25) contiguous acres and within 300 yards of the property line.~~

~~(c) No commercial hunting operations or paid access are permitted.~~

Section 34 Codification. The City Clerk and City staff are hereby authorized and directed to codify the amendments enacted hereby into the City Code ~~and the Zoning Ordinance~~ and are further authorized and directed to make such changes to the enumeration of the various sections and subsections of such amendments as may be necessary to effect such codification. The City Code ~~and the Zoning Ordinance~~, as previously enacted by various prior actions of the City Council, is hereby amended accordingly.

Section 45 General Repealer. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

Section 56 Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance, or the amendments to the City Code ~~or the Zoning Ordinance~~ enacted hereby, are for any reason held or determined to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance or such amendments, as applicable.

Section 67 Effective Date. The provisions of this Ordinance shall take effect upon the due enactment of this Ordinance.

DONE AND ENACTED in a meeting duly assembled this ____ day of ____, 2025.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER, SOUTH
CAROLINA

[SEAL]

[ATTEST]

Brian F. Ramey, Mayor

Kiley Carter, Clerk/Treasurer

Planning Commission [August __, 2025]
First Reading [_____, 2025]
Public Hearing [August __, 2025]
Second Reading [_____, 2025]