
Date: Friday, July 24, 2015 2:28 PM
From: Michael McGovern <michael.mcgovern@capeelizabeth.org>
Subject: Important Update on the Spurwink Rod and Gun Club

Dear Members of the Town Council and Interested Parties:

Yesterday, we received the draft report of the range safety evaluator the town contracted with to evaluate the safety conditions of the Spurwink Rod and Gun Club. We understand there are a few typos in the report which Mr. Larosa desires to fix, but being unsure of when we will get the final report, we did not wish to delay public release of the significant findings and recommendations in the draft report.

The evaluator, Rick Larosa of R Design Works in Kennesaw, Georgia was hired in May to undertake this evaluation. He was recommended as an appropriate neutral person to all sides by the manager of range services of the National Rifle Association. Our first contact with him was in January and he had a preliminary visit to the range in early April.

I have pasted below an unedited summary of the key recommendations from the draft report adding only italics and placing in bold an especially significant recommendation.

While the existing range is in the process of implementing a plan of improvements, a more comprehensive approach to containment and sustainability needs to be considered, designed, funded and implemented to provide a safe environment for users and contiguous property owners. Elements of this approach are as follows:

An accurate topographic and environmental survey needs to be conducted of the existing site to establish the existing conditions for the basis of design and engineering.

A comprehensive "Range Manual" needs to be compiled addressing procedures. Additionally, a narrower limit needs to be established for the ballistics, fire-arms and powder charges allowed on this range. Once that is determined, the range designer can better design to contain live fire.

A range designer needs to be retained to work with the gun club and city to determine the exact requirements for containment. At that time, a range baffling, containment, no blue-sky, sound dampening or other systems can be engineered. These decisions can also incorporate schedule, budget, phased use, limited use and any other (environmental) considerations.

Until the above steps are begun or implemented, we recommend the existing range discontinue use of any live fire. The reasons are as follows:

All ballistics that are currently indicated as "allowed" at the range have the potential of leaving the range site and property. Also, current "down-range" users and residences are within the distance these ballistics "allowed" can reach.

There is currently no containment system in place. The angle of trajectory needed to exit the property is only 8.6% (5 degrees). This is not significant enough to assure live-fire (or ricocheted-fire or fragmented-fire) does not create an unsafe condition to the surrounding properties and residence. Even though the direction of fire (in terms of elevation differential from the firing line to each of the target locations (5, 10, 25, 50 and 100 yards) is generally level or in a downward direction, this is not enough to assure accidental fire, ricochets or fragments are contained.

The existing firing line shed is not protective of users or accidental discharge.

The clubs 'Range Manual,' allowed ballistics and operating procedures are not complete.

Security around the clubs property is not substantial or delineated well enough to assure accidental entry.

The existing and proposed improvements are not sufficient to assure containment.

A more comprehensive containment system needs to be designed and implemented including side berms / baffles, overhead baffles, firing shed protection, bullet trap / berm, targeting systems (holders) and ground materials / berms / baffles. Sound and environmental issues need to be addressed, if desired, at this time also.

It is well understood that this situation is no doubt difficult to absorb or remedy. The sequence of events that have led to the proximity of live fire, adjacent properties / residences and city ordinances, while important, are not the


concern of this report. Our work effort is to evaluate the existing conditions and react to (report) the situations with recommendations for the safety of life and the health of the gun range.

After having first seen a draft of the report late yesterday, we consulted with John Wall at Monaghan Leahy to obtain legal advice yesterday afternoon and today . Chief of Police Neil Williams studied the report and the Shooting Range Ordinance. The police department is the enforcement authority for the ordinance.

Following the reading of the report, the interpretation of the ordinance and legal advice, Chief Williams sought a meeting with Tammy Walters, president of the Spurwink Rod and Gun Club. They met early this afternoon and the chief informed Ms. Walter that he was requiring that the shooting of live ammunition be suspended awaiting council action on the license application for the range. The leadership of the gun club is expected to meet early next week to discuss its position on the report and on the town's action. The police chief is posting notices at the gun club this afternoon.

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 [Spurwink Rod and Gun Club Safety Evaluation Draft Report 07 23 2015.pdf](#)

 [Existing Property Plans Appendic to SRG Club Safety Evaluation Report.pdf](#)

 [Existing Range Improvement Diagram Appendix to Report.pdf](#)

 [CHPT 24 Shooting Ord approved 3-10-2014.doc](#)
