BOARD OF ALDERMEN
SHELTON, CONNECTICUT
PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES
TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2013

CALL TO ORDER
Alderman Anglace called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL
Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President – present
Alderman Lynne Farrell - present
Alderman John “Jack” Finn – present
Alderman Stanley Kudej – present
Alderman Noreen McGorty - present
Alderman John P. Papa – excused
Alderman Eric McPherson - present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – present

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Police Chief, Joel Hurliman

PUBLIC HEARING
President Anglace announced that there was legal notice advertised in the paper, as required by the City Charter. This proposed ordinance deals with a proposed weapons free zone.

1. PROPOSED ‘WEAPONS FREE ZONE’ ORDINANCE

Giovanni Sanzo, 91 Chamberlain Drive

First of all, I would like to thank Alderman Simonetti for getting back to me and I would to recognize him on this matter. Aldermen/Alderwomen: Thank you for affording me the opportunity to voice my concerns over your proposed ordinance.

My name is Giovanni Sanzo and I reside on Chamberlain Drive. I have been a Shelton resident since 1989. Since moving to Shelton, I have been a productive member of society and serviced our City as a Volunteer EMT with Echo Hose Ambulance, and I continue to serve as a member of Huntington Fire Company,
Number 3. I have made this City safer and continue to do so today. I have put my
life on the line volunteering with our Fire and EMS services and have done so freely.
Now, you may ask why I am mentioning all of this... I mention it because as I serve
the City and place my life on the line. I do so freely and willingly. You passing this
ordinance will place my life and the life of my family in harm's way NEEDLESSLY.
Why do you feel you have the power to knowingly place my life and the life of my
family in harm's way?

If this very misguided ordinance passes, who will follow it? The LAW ABIDING CITIZEN
will; that is who. Do you honestly feel the criminal will adhere to it? Seriously think
about that. Imagine I am a criminal looking to perpetuate a crime in Shelton... Do
you think I will disarm myself because you passed an ordinance stating “Weapons
Free Zones” NOT AT ALL! Guess what? You are now telling all criminals that they
now have softened targets in the City of Shelton. I will not be armed and be able to
defend myself. So you will make me a target, make my family a target... or turn me
into a criminal if I choose to ignore this ordinance to afford myself the ability to
protect myself and my family. Don't you want LAW ABIDING CITIZENS to be the ones
with the “weapons” and not the criminals???

If this passes, what is next? Shall we ban all motor vehicles within the City limits to
protect against drunk drivers and speeding vehicles? EVERYONE here has broken
the law with regards to speeding BUT that is socially acceptable. It's 100% illegal,
but we accept it. Guess what? When you speed even 1 MPH over the posted limit,
you put EVERY other driver at risk. My carrying a firearm puts a criminal at risk, NOT
one single other person around me.

I have been a responsible firearms owner for almost half of my life. The Second
Amendment guarantees me the right to have a firearm to protect my family and
myself. You are not above the Constitution of the United States of America. The
State of Connecticut gives me the right to either open-carry or conceal-carry; you are
not above the State. You want to make Shelton safer; that is great and I applaud you
for that and encourage you to do so. HOWEVER, this ordinance will make me and my
family softened targets and a greater target for criminals. Oh, and PS, people are not
the only thing I worry about defending against.

I frequent the trails and open spaces. In Shelton, we do have a large coyote
population. I have seen bobcats and we do have bears; these animals do attack
people on occasion... I may be able to outrun a criminal but guess what, I am not that
fast to outrun one of those animals, and neither of my children. I read this ordinance
the moment I was able to get to it and you state that these open spaces are for my
enjoyment. Do I have to worry about a criminal attacking me? That is pretty
enjoyable. When I have to worry about a criminal knowing that I am not armed and I
am a target, how enjoyable is that? My future stepdaughter feels more comfortable
when I carry my firearm with me.
In closing, I ask you to turn your energy and efforts in making Shelton safer by attacking the criminals, and enforcing the laws already on the books. For instance, our High School has many fire code violations for how many years now? To this day, have they all been addressed? I do not care about the politics involved; they have not all been addressed. You should maybe put your time and energy into that or other things that need to be addressed that violate the laws. If you want to it to be safer and to protect us, do it by not taking our rights away.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. I appreciate that you educate yourself on all aspects of this. It is not someone’s personal agenda, not misguided information but facts. I have my letter signed by five other people who cannot be here, but read it and agreed with it. I hope you accept their signatures as backing up this statement. Thank you.

Denese Deeds, 65 Walnut Tree Hill Road

My name is Denese Deeds, and I live at 65 Walnut Tree Hill Road, in Shelton, Connecticut. I am a proud Democrat and I am here to support this ordinance, and I want to thank Jack for bringing this up to the town. I do not necessarily think that there are high hopes that this will pass, however, I want to say for the record that I have the right as a taxpayer to feel safe in the public space; places that my tax money supports. I have the right to feel safe when I go to the library, the community center or City Hall, that I am in a place where people are not carrying weapons. I feel the right to feel safe. I do not permit weapons on my property, guns particularly on my property and I have the right to not allow people to carry weapons there. I like to feel that when I go to my public places that my tax money supports, that I could feel as safe.

My last point is that we have an ordinance here in Shelton, which prohibits alcoholic beverages in our public places, buildings, and parks. I guess I do not understand why alcohol is more dangerous than a weapon? Thank you for your time and I hope you support this ordinance.

Jeff Caporaso, 4 Laurel Lane

This is the first time I ever stood and spoke about this issue. I have not had time to go up to Hartford and for all those rallies, but unfortunately, all of those bills have been passed already. I am a first responder, an EMT in Shelton. I have been with Echo Hose Ambulance for three and a half years, and it was one of the reasons why my wife and I have moved to Shelton. We have been living on Laurel Lane for about two years; I moved from Stratford to Shelton.

I am an EMT and I always carry my firearm with me, not when I am on-duty, but off-duty because those are the laws in Connecticut. As you can see, I am in the building
right now and I do not know if the ordinance says that we cannot do that now as it is; I am responsible. I figure the State law is to not carry a weapon in government buildings. This being a town government, I did not bring it in here as it is, so I did not need an ordinance to tell me otherwise.

Schools are already gun free zones. We know that I cannot go to a school with my gun when I pick up my niece; I keep it locked up in my car. As far as this ordinance goes, my biggest concern is the open space. I do 8-mile hikes and I love the Rec Trail, I love that it goes to the Turkey Trot Trail, I love that it goes to the Dog Park, I love the Blue Trail; I love hiking these trails. You will see me with my walk set, walking up and down those trails all throughout the summer and the fall. I personally got caught one night: it was getting dark and I started at the Indian Wells Trail and it was getting dark, around 7-7:30, and I could feel getting stalked by coyotes. I personally experienced it, turned around and can see the yellow glare in the eyes. I was comfortable to know that I had my firearm with me if I did need it for that. If dogs did attack me, I would know how to take care of the situation then and there. You will see me around town, at the Shell station, I walk in and everyone knows me and they all know that I carry.

During the snowstorm we had, I was shoveling my street like many other citizens. I actually walked from Laurel Lane to Meadow Street on my own accord to trudge through waist-high snow that day, to help. Once I got home, I shoveled out and walked back to the gas station and realized that my firearm was exposed because I was sweating and I un-tucked my shirt. The guys at the station did not care because they know that I am a responsible gun owner. They know that I am not going to randomly pull out my gun and start waving it around. They are comfortable with that, and they know that I am responsible. So what it comes down to, limiting the responsible guys? A lot of us are first responders, EMTs and firefighters; the public looks to us for protection and that safety. We are always on duty; it is a 24/7 thing.

Mr. Finn, I know that you are a firefighter; it is how we are. We are always going to go out if our way for a medical emergency. I was in Stratford visiting my mom one day, and I saw a woman carrying a little bull terrier and I then saw two pit bulls attacking the little bull terrier. I stopped over there and instinctively I un-tucked my shirt because if I had to grab my firearm, I can dispatch these canines attacking this other canine, and this woman. Thankfully the dogs ran away, and only one of the dogs remained attached to the jowl. A cop was turning up the street on Brewster and Hollister, in Stratford. I was yelling for the cop and he did not hear me and kept driving; meanwhile I had this dog on my hand. I eventually got the owner to take the dog away, but if I had to, I tried taking the dog's nose away from my hand and it would not let go. If it came down to the dog attacking the woman, instead of just her dog, I would've done what was right to protect that woman with my firearm. Take that with the responsible people versus these criminals.

I do not want to bring up the recent events, we all know about the recent events. We already knew that they were gun free zones. I am not going to use that argument
because I am sure that you are going to hear a lot of that tonight. Just think about us, think about the guys that go through the motions to get those permits. It is not a concealed carry permit, but it is a pistol permit to carry pistols and revolvers. Connecticut is an open-carry state and it is the Constitutional State, so think.

I am a registered Republican in Shelton and I have had the opportunity to talk to Mr. Perillo, who was also one of the Chiefs at Echo Hose Ambulances. He is a great guy, he always replies to my emails if I have an issue. Unfortunately, Senator in this area, Senator Kelly did not represent me this time around; hopefully he will represent me around the next election. I am available always. You can get a hold of me and I am usually always located at Echo Hose Ambulance. I am an FTO up there and I am not just a volunteer, status quo guy, but I do special operations, community outreach. I go above and beyond the minimum of twelve hours per month. I am trying to help coordinate events in Shelton, now that we have the River walk, so I am a very active individual in this community. I want you to look at me and think that I am a responsible guy, and I just want to be able to have my rights and my safety when I am hiking the trails. As far as other buildings, you do not have to worry about the responsible guy; they already have rules in the books for illegal possession and firearms. I think we just have to focus on what is illegal already and not put more ordinances there to make more criminals.

Thank you for your time.

Richard Millo, Owner of Valley Firearms
549 Howe Avenue, Shelton, CT

We have a Pro-Democrat in the crowd who said that she seems that she does not want to be afraid when she goes about her business everyday, I agree with her. I have a question for the crowd: How many people in the crowd are law-abiding gun owners? (Most of the audience raised their hands). How many people in this crowd have been arrested of a violent crime or a committed any crime whatsoever? (No hands were raised) Ma’am, what about us that scares you? You are surrounded around law-abiding citizens who have been through extensive background checks.

Alderman Anglace: I neglected one rule: address the Board of Aldermen. Do not address the audience, please.

Richard Millo: I apologize, if you had mentioned that ahead of time, I would’ve known. Some of the things that I would like to say proving my point is that: every single person in this room that owns a gun, went through an extensive background check, had to pay fees for that background check, had to get fingerprinted, etc. They have several hundred dollars to prove that they are law-abiding citizens, who wish to exercise their constitutional right. I have to say that I am appalled that I have to come here after a long day’s work, and defend my constitutional freedom to someone who thinks that my constitutional freedoms are disposable. Mr. Finn, my
constitutional freedoms are not for you to give and take. As an elected official, you are elected to keep us free; you are not there to tell me when I can and cannot do within the legal boundaries of the law, I am sorry sir. You do not have the rights to step on my constitutional rights and I hope that I can speak for the rest of the crowd and say that we are not going to let you do that, sir. We are going to fight you with every possible legal avenue we can, in order to prevent you from stepping on our rights.

I do not know if want to get on the Federal bandwagon or the Malloy bandwagon, but I will tell you sir, that the laws that were passed in Connecticut are unconstitutional based on the Constitution, and number 2: the Heller Decision by the Supreme Court of the United States says that, "we have the individual right to keep and bear arms-the individual right sir, not our government and not the military. We have the individual right to carry popular and common guns"; those are not my words, those are the words of the Supreme Court of the United States that passed. It is telling us that we have the individual right to bear arms, and I have to say if I was a first responder, which I am not, but if I was-I see cops, firemen here who put their lives on the line and you are a first responder, sir- I am appalled that you would take these gentlemen, these men and women who serve this community and tell them that they do not have the right to exercise a constitutional freedom. I am absolutely appalled, I am sorry; but the time to come and reason with you has long past. It is appalling to have you sit there and to think you have the right with what we can and cannot do within the legal boundaries of the law. I for one will not tolerate it and I have to say that one or more in this crowd will not tolerate it either. To the people in the community who do not feel safe around law-abiding citizens, let us analyze that for one second: LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS. Excuse me, but why on Earth would you be afraid of a law-abiding citizen exercising a constitutional right?

Also, alcoholic beverages were brought up: I read the Constitution that alcoholic beverages were not constitutionally unprotected. Well, my rights are and I am personally appalled that you think you have the right to tell me what I can and cannot do. This is not about guns, sir, this is not about alcoholic beverages; it is about freedom. If you refuse to uphold my freedoms, we will find somebody who will.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

Sean Welch, 105 Kanungum Trail

Thank you for the opportunity for me to come here this evening, to speak in opposition of the proposed ‘weapons free zone’ ordinance. I lived in Shelton my entire life, I went to school here, and my son goes to school here. I am a proud gun owner, citizen and resident of the City of Shelton.

I wanted to address some things that Alderman Finn pointed to say in the media over the past few weeks. I do not mean to pick on you, sir, but you were the only one to be quoted in the media. Let us start talking about schools: According to State Statute
and federal law, "schools are already considered in gun free zones". How well did those laws do in stopping Sandy Hook? I know Alderman Finn stated in the media, "this ordinance was not brought on because of this tragedy". It was a tragedy, do not get me wrong, but I find it too much of a coincidence that this comes out now; only after a few months after this horrible tragedy, and what the State is doing to our freedoms. In my opinion, Adam Lanza, knew that Sandy Hook was a gun free zone, and therefore, was the path of least resistance. That is what these criminals do: they find easy targets. We all know the world today, and it is sick. Section 53a-217b of the Connecticut State Statute makes it a Class D felony to possess a firearm or a deadly weapon, and I quote, "the real property comprising of a public or private elementary or a secondary school, or at a sponsored-school activity". There are exceptions to this and that is, "when the firearm is legally possessed either A: a person for use in a program approved by school officials or B: by a person in accordance with an agreement in between or to be in between school officials and such person(s) or person’s employer, or C: by a police officer while engaging in the performance of police officer official duty, or D: by a person traversing such school property for the purpose of gaining access to private lands open to hunting or for other lawful purposes, provided such that the firearm is not loaded in the entry of such school property is permitted by the local and regional Board of Education". So, the State of Connecticut and the Federal Government has already made schools a 'weapons free zone' but leaves the discretion to the local Board of Education to allow special circumstances, which in my understanding, your ordinance will not. You say, "that there are no weapons at all on school property". I do not think that that is fair for our law-abiding citizens, and law-abiding hunters that may want to cross school grounds to get to their favorite hunting spot.

Now I want to talk about Open Space. Shelton has some very nice Open Space areas. Many people utilize the miles of walking trails and paths in the City. Whenever I go for a walk with my family, I prefer to carry my legally purchased, personal firearm with me. As I have already stated that there are bad people out there. All they want to do is harm innocent strangers and even, children. This is a sad fact. As much as I am worried about those bad people, I am also concerned about the wildlife that we have in Shelton. As some people have already brought up, we have coyotes; we have seen pictures of bobcats, mountain lions. I have never seen one myself, but people believe that they are out there, and God knows what other creatures that we have in these woods. I carry my firearm, not so much for my personal protection, which I do but I am more concerned for the protection of my wife and children, as much as everyone here would love to protect themselves and their children. I cannot wait for the police or animal control to come to my rescue. I have experienced the police response in this City and that is another story, altogether. I know that there is an ordinance already in effective to prohibit discharging firearms in an Open Space. I want to make clear that when I leave my house, it is NOT my intent to fire my firearm; but I am prepared to use it just in case, for my protection and for the protection of my family. My life and my family's lives are worth more than your $250 fine. Banning weapons from public buildings does nothing for safety.
I want to address Alderman Finn’s comments on the pistol safety class that was held in the Community Center because that was in the media. I want the Aldermen to clarify something for everyone and me, tonight: Sir, are you saying that you are opposed for residents to learn how to SAFELY handle and operate a firearm? Have you ever taken a gun safety class, yourself? Also, why do you question the appropriateness of the event? How is any class that teaches safety, not appropriate? I could understand if was a class on learning how to shoot people, but that is not what it is about. In fact, there is no portion of the class that pertains to any kind of tactics or self-defense. It is strictly a class to learn how to SAFELY operate and handle a firearm. During the class, and I know some friends that teach the NRA safety class; during the class none of the firearms are loaded at any time. In fact, the instructors do not even bring the ammo into the same room as the firearms. They usually reserve that for when they go to the ranges to fire at a safe, certified range that they can do that- the fact that this class was held in the basement of the Community Center. Your quote in the Connecticut Post was saying, “I just do not feel like these are the proper classes that should be held, especially since there are children in the building all the time”. Alderman Finn, do you honestly believe that children were in any danger, at any time during that class? Then, you have been completely misinformed. Maybe you need to sit in one of the classes to see what it is all about. I think you would actually learn a thing or two. In my opinion, it is a great class to offer to the residents of the City of Shelton, and I would love to see many other classes offered. The more educated people are, the safer we will all be.

Alderman Finn was also quoted in the same article, “we also had a person come into the City Assessor’s Office last year, and threatened to come back with a gun”. This person would be facing criminal charges regardless of the ordinance.

The last thing that I want to reference is about Alderman Finn’s comments about the other incidences in Shelton. You mentioned the incident at Elizabeth Shelton School, when the Board of Education Maintenance Supervisor was shot and killed before the gunman took his own life. If this would have happened at the victim’s homes, we would not be talking about this in 2013, when it happened in 1988. Just like no one has been talking about the numerous motor vehicle accidents that happen every year in Shelton. Then, maybe you should create an ordinance to stop people from driving on City streets, because ultimately it will keep them safe. How many people have been killed on City property because of guns, in the past year? Or even in the past decade? I think the Board has their priorities mixed up. Let us worry about keeping our citizens safe from the real threats that we face.

I know that this ordinance is about creating a ‘weapons free zone’, but what we are really talking about is a gun free zone. Let’s face it, that is what is in the media now, and that is the hot topic. Let us be honest: is anyone going into a school or a public building with a crossbow? Is that a real problem in the City of Shelton? Granted, hunters may cross Open Space with their bows on the way to their favorite hunting location as I have mentioned before; but now they face a fine by doing so.
I want to mention a couple of other gun free zones: the Century-16 Multiplex Theatre, in Aurora, Colorado; that was a gun free zone. Did that stop James Eagan Holmes from killing all of those moviegoers? Columbine High School was a gun free zone. Did that stop Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold from murdering 15 of their fellow classmates? Sandy Hook Elementary was a gun free zone. Did that stop Adam Lanza from taking 26 innocent lives? The answer is no. These sick and twisted individuals had no regard for gun free zones, laws or even human life! I doubt that they would've even cared about an ordinance, and a $250 fine. I will tell what would have stopped them: a law-abiding gun owner. If a law-abiding gun owner was allowed to carry their concealed firearm; that might have made all of the difference even if it took away the shooter's attention for just a couple of seconds; maybe more people would have gotten away. We have heard everywhere lately that the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun.

I urge this Board to vote no to any ordinance that takes away any law-abiding citizens' God-given right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, like this proposed ordinance does. By passing this ordinance you have made everyone a potential victim. We are not the criminals here. I thank you for your great service to the City of Shelton and for allowing me the opportunity to come and speak to you tonight, thank you.

**John Sturmer, 180 Salem Road, Stratford, CT**
Certified NRA Instructor

I do live in Stratford, but I do teach in town. I am an NRA certified firearms instructor. I found out about this proposed ordinance a couple of hours ago, and I came up from Stamford to be here tonight. I hope you will all give your attention on this matter. After everything that has been going on for the past few months every since Sandy Hook, people that have been talking and the laws that were passed, I really have to wonder what they hope to accomplish on more firearms restrictions. I do not understand it and I do not get it. If any of you have never been trained in the use of firearms, please call me and I will give you me name and number; I will teach you for nothing. If you understood how they work, then you would understand that ordinances like these would be completely ineffective; it will not work. We talk about bans on magazines: I did the same thing that another gentlemen did, and disarmed myself before I came in here. They are going to tell me I can have a 15-round magazine with only 10 rounds in it. Do you think a criminal is going to do that? Do you think that any criminal is going to think of how many rounds are in his magazine? Is that even sensible? You are going to commit murder and you think that you are going to worry about how many rounds are in your magazine? I have to say I do not understand it.

The State just passed one of the most restrictive firearms law in the country; one that nobody understands by the way. Instructors, shop owners, even police officers we sit here and talk about it: What about this and what about that? It is a law that they
pushed through that doesn't make any sense, and now you want to add another law, another ordinance. By the way, which everyone knows that there is no criminal sanction; it is a town ordinance, a civil matter. It has nothing to do with criminal law whatsoever. As you can see, I took off my gun before I came in here for respect for you and respect for this process, and I don't know if there is an ordinance in this town to prevent me from carrying it here, so, to be cautious I left it at home. Do you think a guy that had the intent of shooting this place up would have done that? Now, what you have done to a guy like me, a professional and like other professionals in this room; you have taken away our abilities to defend ourselves, and all of you. I just want this Board to ask themselves: Does this in some way, shape or form make sense?

Moving on from that, what I wonder about in all of my classes when I start teaching; I usually walk in with a gun, that is always empty because you are not supposed to have ammo in the classroom. The gun is empty and I ask to the class if anyone is nervous. Sometimes I get a couple of hands that go up. They mention that they are "a little nervous". "Well why?" I ask. The person replies, "I have never held a gun before." This is understandable, but the bottom line is when they eventually become to learn is that they are not afraid of that tool, a piece of hardware around my waist. What they are really worried about is the person. They know that I am a professional; I am wearing a uniform, a shirt that says "instructor". That calms them down a little bit. You have to understand that people that lawfully own firearms in the State of Connecticut have gone through extensive series of background checks. Every time you buy a gun, a number of us have quite a few of them and we get checked. You have very little to fear from us, and the people who do it illegally, well, I can tell you that this ordinance is not going to stop that. So, once again, I encourage you to give me a call and I will leave my number here if any wants to get in touch with me. If you want to come in and sit in one of my classes, you are more than welcome to. I welcome it and I encourage it. Please learn to see what you regulate before you do it.

Thank you very much for your time, and good night.

Lee Nichols, 53 Beardsley Road

Mr. Mayor, members of the Board and the audience. My name is Lee Nichols; I live on 53 Beardsley Road, Shelton, CT. My family dates back 200 years and the Nicholdale Land Trust came from my grandfather's farm.

I would like to state my concern on a proposed weapons ban in Shelton all City properties. When you create gun free zones with good intent, you actually create a safe zone for criminals and deranged people. Criminals or people with ill intent do not obey or care about any laws, and look at gun free zones as a place where they will not meet any resistance.

The Sandy Hook murders were committed by a deranged person who showed many signs of mental illness, which were not addressed. There is no such thing as a gun
free zone. You only create a zone where law-abiding people are unarmed. As soon as Adam Lanza shows up as the only person with a gun, is insane. Adam Lanza broke many laws already in place. Mainly, no one in Connecticut can bring a gun into a school, except police and security personnel. If the principal or a teacher was well trained, and had a permit to carry, this tragedy may have had a better outcome. Remember, she was unarmed and she attacked Adam before he shot her.

Remember Columbine, Virginia Tech, the Aurora, Colorado theatre and Sandy Hook. These were all gun free zones for deranged criminals. Police can only help after the fact. If a law-abiding person were there, who had been safely trained, many lives could have been saved.

The Connecticut gun laws that were passed do nothing to prevent crime. They only hinder law-abiding people. It doesn’t address enough mental illness issues or even violent video games that give criminals ideas. This law is only a feel good to do something that doesn’t really address criminals. Criminals need stiffer punishments, and no get-out-of-jail-early cards. They do not obey laws, only law-abiding people do.

Chicago and Washington D.C. have the strongest gun laws going. They also have the most murders and crime partially, because law-abiding people cannot possess firearms. Only criminals have guns because they do not obey laws, therefore, they are criminal safe zones with no resistance.

Professor Gary Kleck, a criminology professor at Florida State University, and a self-described liberal conducted a scientific survey. They concluded on average, private citizens defend themselves with a gun 2.1 million times a year. Gun control advocates like to say in England; only 40 homicides are committed per year. They do not like to mention there is over 2,400 violent assaults per 100,000 people, while, in the United States, there are only 440 violent assaults per 100,000 people. This disparity can only be explained by the fact that people in England cannot defend themselves.

Mr. Mayor, members of the Board and all of the people in the audience, thank you for hearing my opinion.

Michael Vitka, 488 Shelton Avenue

I just heard about this, this afternoon, thank you to Valley Firearms. Mr. Finn, you might not be the most popular guy in the room tonight. I do not believe that this ordinance has any shot of passing, and I apologize. I believe the positions that you, and the other members of the Board of Aldermen are in the positions you are in, because you want to help our community. I did not start in Shelton, but I lived in Bridgeport, which is not the greatest area. Then, I moved to Stratford and then I have been blessed with a beautiful home in Shelton, which is such a beautiful City.
To be honest, the first time I was offered to buy a gun, on the street, was when I was 13 years old. I can tell you a dozen of different places where people can go and find guns illegally. I do possess my own pistol permit, paid for it and I do everything legally. It took a while and I worked hard at it. I kept myself on the straight and narrow, so I was able to have it.

You do not allow people in public places having guns, and I know even yourselves, if you had a gun, and if someone was hurting me or my goddaughter, nieces or my sisters, I would expect any of the first responders that have a pistol and went through background checks if they had to, to put two in the chest and one in the head to protect anybody. That is Americans and we protect each other. I do not want to see any family have to bear what the families of Newtown, or the families in Colorado had to do. I had a nephew in third grade, which he was in Sandy Hook that day that made it out just fine. We could talk about having teachers with pistols, but this meeting today is about the men and women who have passed the background checks, who have done the necessary steps to take care of their constitutional rights. The whole process is even ludicrous as it is, but now they have even newer laws like the other gentleman said, “these laws are not stopping the criminal.” Anybody can buy a gun, any criminal. We go to Valley Firearms, and we pass every background check that we have to. Even the clerk, he is not going to sell something to someone that he doesn’t trust.

You taking our right away to carry, whether it is in a public place or whether it is on a private road, in White Hills somewhere; there is crime everywhere. The crime does not come from the people who have passed the background checks. You do not have to worry about me- I served in the Navy, I am trying to become a cop now. I love Shelton and I would not want to move out of Shelton. I just bought my first house at 25 years old- I will sell my house if you tell me that I cannot go to the park, where kids are getting shot at school, but I am not supposed to expect that from somebody who couldn’t do that at the dog park, on the corner of Nells Rock Road, or down by the river?

It is about safety, and unfortunately our society is not safe. Focus on what is going to make us safe. These first responders that are here, if it was up to me, the first responders can carry while on the job. Volunteer firemen are getting clipped in dozens of different places. These men and women do not deserve to not even be offended- it is offensive to even have an ordinance like this. Worry about the criminals, sir. I support you in other things that you do that are positive. I do not think that you are a bad guy doing this; maybe your heart was in the right place, but you worded it wrong. There is just no way that this ordinance should even be discussed.

Thank you.

Jean Cayer, 46 Cloverdale Avenue
I am a member of the Library Board, and I would like to speak as a citizen who lived here since 1979. Before there was a tragedy in Newtown, there was a concern for the Library Board, based on hearing the current gun safety class. I absolutely agree that there should be gun safety classes; our concern was should it have been in the library, where there are children all of the time and the Library Board was not aware of it. There are great places to have those safety classes, possibly NRA shooting ranges or places like that. That was our initial concern, but I would have to say I hear all the talk about the first responders and that is great if they have legal guns; that is fine.

I worked in the hospital, and all of those first responders, doctors and nurses cannot carry guns, which there is a reason for it, a concern over it, and that is what I would like to express. Everyone is saying that they are not worrying about the law-abiding citizens- you are correct; you are worried about who else may be there. At least if you know that you are in a zone where you do not expect to see a gun, and if you do see one then you would know that something is wrong. So, I don’t think this is crazy-thank you for your attention.

**Margaret DeCapua, 8 Mustang Drive**

At the time of the Second Amendment, a strong government was feared. They had just thrown that off and the people were the protection of the hard won freedom. We are the militia; there is a distinction between the militia and what we think of the National Guard. We are the militia, just like if you were Christian; you are the Church. It is the individual citizen who has the responsibility to protect their freedom. If we are fooled or confused by common sense laws then we are going to lose that ability; when we bring in outside control, we lose our freedom.

Gun control advocates invite the power grabbers in, and I would like to remind you that Hitler’s Germany in the 1930s, their priority was to disarm the populous because after that, they could do what they want. This is your absolute slippery slope.

Thank you for listening.

**Ted Berntsen, 1017 Howe Avenue**

I did not really have a statement prepared because I found out about this hearing about one hour ago, which this tells me that this did not really make it far across town before people could actually find out about it, which I am personally quite offended by.

All I am going to do is leave you with a very important quote by Benjamin Franklin. He said, “those who would give up some of their freedom for a little bit of temporary
security, deserve neither"). If I may be so bold to add to him to say that they will get neither. Thank you.

**Paul Augustine, 8 Lynne Terrace**

I have been a resident of Shelton for more than 44 years, and for most of my life I have been a responsible gun owner. I do not have any prepared remarks, but I would like to speak with a passion, in opposition to this proposed ordinance.

I think that we have to be careful of- we have had tragic occurrences in this country due to gun violence, by what is best described as maniacs, and because of that we should not have knee-jerk reactions to laws that are meaningless, and they will do nothing to ensure the safety of everyone.

That is what I pretty much want to say, except for one thing, and I am going to close with this: last week there was terrible incident in Boston. I can guarantee you that every gun owner in Boston in that secured area had their firearm at the ready. It was there for protection, and responsible people only use it for protection. I did not hear of anyone up there firing any wild shots out of their living room windows. That is another caution and support for gun ownership. Thank you.

**Marlow Tinari**

I have been a valley resident for the greater part of my 78 years and I have also been a firearms owner. I have been proud to carry a legal firearm, as prescribed by law. I will not burden you with the details of two incidents that have occurred in my personal life, which saved lives, with mine included.

My simply brandishing a firearm, not having had to use it but neutralize the situation that was very life threatening. I will focus primarily on Jack Finn’s proposal, that I believe in the deepest aspects of his heart that he truly believes the ordinance, as he defines it, “ensuring the safety and welfare of those who use this facility”. I have to suggest Jack, that however, in error of your observation of that; quite contrary I think it endangers the lives of all of those that may be present. A good use of it for example, is that we have a facility that your ordinance addresses at this very moment.

We might have a scenario and it might very well be in such a case that you are very aware; that there are multiple firearm owners here who have carry permits. Whether they have their firearms on them or not, I do not know. However, a scenario unveils a public hearing, we have some discourse, some agreement and disagreement then everyone goes home, and no one is harmed and nothing bad has happened, but we have to consider one deniable factor: evil exists. It has existed since Adam and Eve. This Board, this governing body and perhaps will or will never find a way to eliminate
it; it is just there as unfortunate as it may be. However, addressing specifically your issue: we have a scenario that I have just described: the meeting adjourns and everyone goes home safely. There are two other possibilities that may very well exist in this scenario: we have a situation where all of a sudden, we have X,Y,Z criminals sitting out there. It is a mentally deranged individual that has a grudge of some member of the Board of Aldermen, or some made up grudge that he has in his warped mind. He, by definition, taking action with a firearm immediately becomes a criminal and violates not only pertaining to gun free zones, but he violates any number of laws. He is a felon of his nature, which he ignores the law that you proposed to impose upon us. So we have a scenario, unlike my initial one where everyone goes home happy, no one is harmed. Where, on the spur of the moment, draws his firearm and to your colleague sitting to your right, they are no longer with us. He turns his firearm, and directs it at you; Jack, and you bravely stand up and wave your ordinance saying you cannot do that; that is against the law.

Now I ask you specifically under those scenarios, I would like to ask you if you would prefer to have your ordinance in your hand, as you are a deterrent? Or would you rather have these individuals that are law-abiding citizens carrying a firearm and to dispatch that individual and save your life? Plain and simple, that is the only thing that you have to ask yourself. Which would you rather prefer to have in you defense? A piece of paper that is worthless in deterring a criminal? Or have some mechanism in place to have an effective means to protect yourself, the remaining members of the Board, the public in general and these two little children, over there so there wouldn't be the same type of scenario that has happened in Sandy Hook?

I suggest to you, and I think you know in the deepest of your heart, which you would rather prefer to have, and I can only urge you to make this observation in a general sense. A firearm is no more than a tool. It could be used for good and it could be used for evil. It can be used to commit a crime and it could be used to prevent a crime, it all depends on the man that has it. There is no good gun or a bad gun. Does a good gun become a good gun in the hands of a good man? Does a good gun become a bad gun in the hands of a bad man? I do not want to address the broader issue, except to address the scenario described to you here. Think of it in those terms and I think in the deepest aspects of your heart, you would feel a lot more comfortable with one of these law-abiding gun owners, who by far and large incidentally, in order to have that right to carry. They had to prove proficiency in the use of the firearm. We think of first responders as the police and the fire department. They do an excellent job, but unfortunately they are not on the premises. A true interpretation of a first responder is a person that is on the scene at the time. Perhaps those were the very victims, or those in his presence. Those are the true first responders who have the most effective ability to terminate a tragedy at its first inception; not five minutes later, not an half an hour later, not two days later. All of the politicians get up and give their scenario speeches on the "should haves, could haves or would haves, the ifs and the what's". The presence of law-abiding citizens within a municipal building or out in the general public is one of the most effective deterrents against a warped mind of a criminal.
Again, your life being in danger, which would you prefer to have in your presence: Your ordinance on a piece of paper? Or one of these law-abiding citizens, that may very well come to your rescue and the rescue of all of us?

I thank you for your time and courtesy.

Dave Gioiello, 65 Walnut Tree Hill Road

Let me address some issues that were raised on the issue: one of them pertaining to the Second Amendment. The Supreme Court certainly has upheld everybody here that has a right for a person carry a weapon if they so choose, and nothing in this ordinance prevents that. The courts have also upheld that the government has the right to restrict where we take those weapons. I cannot remember the last time that someone has taken a gun on an airplane. You cannot take one in a federal building; you cannot take them into the State buildings. When was the last time you were at a sporting event, that they did not want you down to see if you were carrying a weapon? They took it away from you if had one, or they would not allow you in. On private property, if you bring a weapon to Sikorsky, you would no longer consider yourself an employee.

So government, private property and private owners have a right to restrict weapons. There is nothing in this ordinance that prevents anyone from purchasing a weapon, and carrying it legally, whether they are allowed.

I hear about soft targets, but I do not hear of any statistics that this is why the individual that has created the crimes that they did, on picking those targets. They had problems, mental problems that had nothing to do with picking those targets with what issues they had, because it was a weapons free zone. As far as Columbine goes, there was a security guard with a weapon there and that did not stop it.

Shelton, according to the paper, “is the fifth of the safest cities in the State.” With what I hear tonight, is that what everyone here is extremely afraid when they travel the streets of Shelton? When they go to the Community Center, park, to the Dog Walk, they go with their kids to Little League, soccer games and have to carry a weapon. If that is the case, then it is up to the government of Shelton to provide protection in what they are supposed to be doing. This means that we should have police here, police at the park, police at the Little League fields, etc. This isn’t 1813 this is 2013. A civilized society does not need to carry weapons everywhere they go.

Terrance Gallagher, 43 Judson Street

I just want to say that I do not own a pistol. My dad took me hunting as a teenager and I have enjoyed sports since then. My son recently wanted to go and the State
law says you have to go to a hunter’s safety class before you get your hunting license. The DEEP offered it, so I decided to take him to learn some new things; that could not hurt. As it turned out, all this spring they were booked up, but the slots that were open were in places such as Harwinton or Barkhampsted. They tend to have these things in the Northern tier of the State because there are more DEEP facilities. So, because of his school schedule, we are going to wait until the summer to take the DEEP class. I as a Shelton resident, would like it, if hunter’s safety classes were offered at the Community Center or the library or other local areas so you would not have to drive for 40 minutes to get to it. I think it would be a community service.

The State laws that were passed about gun ownership, preventing guns getting into the hands of the wrong people; some of them I do like and some of them I do not like. One of the laws I do like is that everyone must go through a gun training class if they want to buy shotgun shells for duck hunting and .22 shells for target shooting. So, the number of people that have to go through these classes is not just for pistol permits, but it is for everyone who owns a shotgun or a rifle. I do not know how the legislature thought out the whole hunter’s safety training thing when they approved that law very quickly; but I have a hunch that there will be more of a command for more and more places to have that. I strongly suggest that the City of Shelton box out its options for adding the Police Department and offer it in the basement of the Police Station, or wherever. It could be a good public service.

The second thing that I want to bring up is that I personally have helped maintain Shelton trails and Open Space for the last twenty years. We have one of the finest Open Space systems in the State, and we have recently won another award for that from different State agencies, and you have been very helpful in supporting and funding it. The types of problems that we see in Open Space with things like neighbors encroaching on private property, illegal dumping, graffiti, vandalism and ATVs tearing up the trails. We really have had no problems with weapons and generally it is not a big problem. Our trails are very safe, unless you are someone walking a chihuahua at dusk, near Nells Rock Road. We really have not had any problems of wildlife from coyotes attacking people. We have a great system of trails and Open Space in Shelton, and I encourage you to come out and use it to its fullest extent. We have a trail on Independence Drive, if you want to join. That is my to-sense, thank you.

Angel Cadena, 67 Long Hill Avenue

What you have in front of you is a law-abiding citizen and a United States Marine Corp Veteran. I have been to 49 out of the 50 states in this country, and I have traveled all over the world. I have begun in a gun free zone, called Chicago. Ironically enough, it started just like this, here. They said they were just going to put it in yard, in the parks and in public places. The next thing you know, it encompassed the whole city.
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I am not here to talk to you about the statistics on what you heard before; or on what you will hear over and over again on how many people are dying. I am not going to tell you about my personal story of having to dodge bullets because I did that. What I am going to tell you is that that type of fear, you cannot calculate that people live with in Chicago because they are unable to defend themselves. Fortunately I was born without that gene because I didn't care. I went where I wanted to go, and I got out to see the world. Every time I go back, I see the same exact people, doing the same exact thing and they are in this world that they have this burden on them. The fear is something that you cannot calculate or predict with the laws that you pass. I am telling you now that it is a slippery slope; once you take one law you take more. It pains me to see where Connecticut is going to end up, and I am going to do everything in my power to stop it because I feel that, that is the reason why I ended up here.

Sean Mitola, 2 Hamburg Street

I understand why Alderman Finn wanted my name and address. I had email correspondence this afternoon, so I came here to put a voice and a face together with my emails.

I am here to say that this ordinance has no place to be even considered. The 2.5 million times per year, a firearm is used by a law-abiding citizen to stop or prevent a crime. That is 2.5 million lives that are saved every year, just by one of us. One of the things that you said in one of your email responses was, "in 2007, there was already an ordinance 833 that is on the books, that already talks about hunting and discharging firearms in Open Spaces. As I said in my email, "that ordinance, whether opposed in the public hearing, will do nothing about the carrying of licensed, holstered firearms on Shelton public lands." I think that was one of the reasons why no one opposed it. You can see just by looking around, that there are very many people today that oppose this ordinance, and with good reason. I do not know if my comments were read on the record yet. I did not bring any copies of them with me.

Alderman Anglace: The comments that you sent in an email do not get read into the minutes. They get put into the record.

Sean Mitola: I didn't bring copies of them with me, but if they get put into the record, that is fine.

Alderman Anglace: For everyone's information, there have been a number of people who have called and asked if they can send emails. The problem with sending emails is that the minutes are done in 7 days, so we probably can accept emails, and leave the hearing open for two days to accept emails. You can send them to www.cityofshelton.org.
Sean Mitola: I used the aldermen contact information; they do not appear here but I am sure that you will get them.

There is no reason why that someone that has gone through the background checks, has gotten their Connecticut State pistol permit should be restricted from carrying their firearm on public property. If you want to restrict it in schools, then it is your prerogative. I think it is a horrible mistake, and it has been proven time and time again. Only now, after the tragedy of Newtown are certain towns starting to wake up and realize that simply waving a piece of paper in front of their faces saying that, “this is a gun free zone”, is not working, and we are starting to put police officers, former police guards and security guards in front of schools and recommending bulletproof glass. Some people talk about turning their schools into a fortress.

Not for nothing, but when I send my 4-5/5-year-old daughter to kindergarten next year, I expect the same level of protection for her at school as I provide to her at home, when she is in my presence. To hand you over my most precious possession in the whole world, and to tell me that you have no way to defend her life, in that school; to me that is astounding. In all honesty, I have to reconsider when that time comes next year, whether I will still be living in Shelton or I will move to a town that will provide a higher sense of security for my kid; not disarming their citizens and making them more easily targetable by madmen and psychotics. Thank you.

Sean Cahill, 125 New Street

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. My name is Sean Cahill, and I have been a Shelton resident since 1985. I belong to Echo Hose Fire Department since 1990.

I would like to say that I am opposed to the proposed ordinance. I am a responsible gun owner and I do like the trails. If I hike on the trails, I am carrying a firearm for whatever reason. If this ordinance passes, I am now a criminal. I think we need to focus on the real criminals. Where I live, someone was murdered and it is still unsolved (the Gallo murder); it was 1000 feet from my house. I think the residents of this town would be better served if we focus on the real criminals. That is all I want to say, thank you.

Nancy Berntsen, 1017 Howe Avenue

Good evening, my name is Nancy Berntsen. I grew up in Shelton, and came back in 2002. I live at 1017 Howe Avenue. No allegory is perfect but I see an allegory with vaccinations and gun ownership. The view behind vaccinations is that the more people that are vaccinated, the more the more protection there is. We all know that there are a lot of people that do not want to be vaccinated. Those who are
vaccinated will help prevent the spread of disease. The people who don’t have the vaccines are still granted protection; that is the theory.

Not everyone in here owns a gun; but we are protected by those who legally carry, and I am thankful for that. I would like to see that way preserved. Thank you.

Rebecca Nichols, 53 Beardsley Road

I would to start by saying that I love the Town of Shelton. I have lived here my entire life of 34 years, plus. I am however, very disappointed that I have to be here tonight as a law-abiding citizen to defend my Second Amendment rights, to be able to legally conceal carry on any town property and hiking trails.

Your proposal to this is simply unconstitutional. I expect more from my elected officials; I expect my town officials to uphold the United States Constitution. Is this really how you choose to spend the taxpayer’s money, on more ridiculous restrictions to the people of Shelton? Your proposal would put restrictions on and if, all eliminating the ability from law-abiding, concealed carry, permit holding, tax paying residents of Shelton the right to self-defense.

This ordinance would affect me personally, as well as my family and friends. You see I enjoy hiking on the beautiful trails that Shelton has to offer. I often go hiking alone and I often think that if I have a problem while on the trails, I would first call 911 for help. The fact is that in most cases, the police arrive when the damage is already done. That is why I choose to not become a victim, but your ordinance would force me to surrender to the criminal and to be assaulted, tortured, raped, or even worse, murdered. This is all because you say that I do not have the right to defend myself, under your new proposed ordinance. Really? I am offended if you think that you can take away my God-given right and tell me what is best for me.

In addition, let us not forget all of the brave men and women who have proudly served and are currently serving now will also be affected by this ordinance, if they are residents of Shelton. They fought for us, putting their lives on the line to protect our freedoms that each one of us is able to enjoy everyday, because of them. Today, I am standing up and speaking for all of our soldiers who fought for us, and I am asking all of you to do the same. I have the utmost respect for our troops and it is insulting to me to see their rights being infringed on, as well as all of the other residents in Shelton.

Therefore, I oppose any new legislation that would infringe on the constitutional rights of the people of Shelton. Just remember that the people of Shelton voted you into office, and we could just as easily vote you out if you are not representing the law-abiding, tax-paying and voting people of Shelton. Remember, the people of Shelton do not work for you; you work for the people of Shelton. Thank you for your time.
John Koche, 94 Far Horizons Drive

I do not have any prepared notes on this. I just want to stand in opposition on this. I think it is amazing that we can pledge allegiance to that flag, and have to have this conversation.

Dennis Welch, 21 Monroe Street

I found out about this proposed ordinance around quarter after six today, and one of the first things that I have noticed was that you had on there was banned already. I didn’t think you could bring it into a school, or bring it into City Hall.

With the Open Space, I am an amateur photographer and I go out at night and I take long exposures. I go to these open places and I carry; I am a permitted gun owner. The reason that I got the permit was because I got cancer, I am a cancer survivor and that cancer took my ability away to run. So, I am a sit and duck. If you put this thing through, I will not be able to go out at night, I would not be able to feel safe going out at night, taking pictures. I do not carry really expensive equipment, but I carry a couple thousand dollars of equipment.

I looked over this bill and it does not make any sense. It is geared to anyone who obeys the law. Criminals are not going to care about this. I am not going to take up too much of your time, so good night and thanks.

Bill Dimas, 60 Hubbell Lane

I just want to read out something from one of my favorite books, ‘We the People of the United States of America’. This book was written by some pretty smart men as I imagine, and it is the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States of America. This document was written without bloodshed, it overturned the Articles of Confederation, which created this country now that we trust with our children. One of the amendments that were written in the Constitution was the Second Amendment: The right to bear arms: “There is a right to bear arms to form a militia, we have the right to bear arms as a citizen of this country”. Nowhere in here does it say that you cannot carry this weapon anywhere in the United States where you live. We have rules in place; they are put in place for a reason. I understand what you are trying to do, and I applaud it, but it is a little misguided.

Nobody carries guns in schools; nobody brings guns into courthouses, into city buildings. Nobody does that if they have a permit to carry a firearm. We get permitted because we want to follow the rules, not disobey them. To collect fines
just for the fact of collecting fines, and making citizens criminals; if that is what you need, then why don’t you just raise our taxes?

If you don’t want us to protect ourselves when we go to the parks, then why don’t you hire the Police Department to protect us at those parks? Since we cannot have our guns, we need protection there. Our students, our kids in these schools—my children went to these schools. They are in college now, and my last one is graduating from high school this year. They had protection; they had police. One officer in the schools, just one! I think you should arm all of the teachers; that would be a deterrent and that would stop everybody. Send them to class, arm them and you wouldn’t have to worry about anything. We are the deterrent from crime; that is why we have a low crime rate in this country. It is not easy to come into the United States and commit crime against the citizens, if citizens are armed and able to protect themselves. We have that right, and we were given that right by some pretty smart people a couple of hundred years ago. Now if you think that the drafters of the United States Constitution were crazy, then you should not trample on the words that they wrote. They wrote them for a reason, for we the people to protect us.

**Tom Harbinson, 15 Soundcrest Drive**

I know that there are a lot of first timers in the room that came to a public meeting; that was my observation. Be aware that the aldermen are not able to reply back. I wrote a reply for them, I think. You should all know that several of them have been in military service and veterans, and they do respect the Constitution. They do respect the rights of citizens, so I would encourage you all to be respectful of their service here as aldermen, because what they propose, whether you agree or disagree with it, they do things, for us citizens in order to make a safer community.

With an earlier regard to the speaker, concerning the schools: every school is making their efforts to secure those schools with better security. An earlier speaker spoke about his hometown in Chicago, and I have a sister who lives in Chicago and I know what it is like to be in a big city. I do a lot of construction work in New York City, and when you have a civilized society that is a complicated society, it requires laws, rules, regulations and ordinances to serve everyone in a harmonious way.

You will never have surety that you will be safe in this world, if you carry a handgun or not. There is evil in the world, as an earlier speaker spoke of; there are maniacs in the world that an earlier speaker spoke of. I will add that there is stupidity in this world. In New York City, the same day of the bombing in Boston, there was a visitor/tourist from North Carolina who was with the tour group and wanted to visit the 9/11 Memorial. When he discovered that you couldn’t take a weapon to the zone, he returned to the hotel and quickly put the handgun underneath his seat cushion in the hotel lobby. Unfortunately, it was discovered by somebody who was sitting on that seat cushion, who alerted the police, and of course given the events of that day, it created quite a security alarm. The police eventually figured out who this
was, due to surveillance with cameras and talking to police about who was there at that time, in order to track him down. So, even though he may have been legally carrying, sometimes people do stupid things.

I am Chairman of the Conservation Commission and I have a few thoughts about the concerns that people have, regarding the trails. To reiterate what Terrance Gallagher- he was a steady volunteer for the trails for many, many years- he said that, “there was an abundance of wildlife in Open Space.” We have never had an incident in public, of any person being attacked. Yes, there are bobcats in town; yes, occasionally there will be a bear that comes along; yes, there are coyotes in town. Does that mean that you should be concerned about being attacked on our trails? Really, no, but if it brings you a sense of comfort from that fear; then yes, currently you have the ability to carry a weapon. However, in terms of the hunting, we have an Open Space Ordinance 833 that was referred to tonight. I will just read it for everybody’s benefit, to see what it says: “Hunting, trapping, archery, discharging firearms, paintball guns, air guns or use of any weapon into City Open Space areas is prohibited. Hunters crossing over City Open Space areas to gain access to private or State property may proceed through any City Open Space areas, only with an unloaded firearm”. That ordinance was passed a number of years ago; we’ve really had no issues with it. Terrance Gallagher has said that most of our issues with Open Space was, “ATVs and so on”. Hunters, whether they would be hunting into Open Space or not; on Open Space is a very minimal issue.

We do have a lot of Open Space that has a health that citizenry need to maintain. That health is facing a challenge with the deer population, and the under canopy of that natural environment is eaten away by the over-population of deer. If there were to be a traumatic weather event, such as a tornado, hurricane, like we have experienced recently, where there is a forest fire, there is a devastation of the high tree canopy. There is no understory to come up and replace it in many areas. There may come a time when we need to select Open Space properties for hunting, but there are currently private property owners who allow hunting. That is a very important aspect to reduce the deer population; which is in an overabundance in our area. To allow that activity to continue, we need to allow people with the education of the proper use of firearms.

The libraries in our community are meant to serve the public in educating them, which may mean reading books, by speakers giving training exercises. I have been the benefit of receiving my safe boating certificate. I learned how to operate a vessel by taking a lesson that was given by the power squadron, at one of our City facilities. I think properly educating the public on how to properly use a firearm, and to how to go about becoming licensed, to carry and use one are important aspects. So, in general, I know that Alderman Finn’s heart was in the right place, however, I disagree with this ordinance as it currently written.

Thank you very much.
**Linda Garamella-Fusco, 10 Cloverdale Avenue**

I am here to support my Second Amendment right, and also to speak against this ordinance. This is to dispel a previous statement that was said, however, when I go into a courtroom, there are armed guards there so I do not have the need to protect myself in a courtroom or a federal building.

When I go out and about on town, I usually have my husband and no one is going to mess with me while my husband is on my arm; he is a big guy. If I were to walk through the parks, I walk with my dog- he is a German Shepard, and I think that he would protect me but he is a big baby. As a woman, the equalizer is to be able to carry a weapon to protect myself, and I have heard it in the news that maybe to protect myself from a rapist, I should wet myself or throw up on myself; but I would rather carry a weapon. I just want you to keep that in mind and to preserve our Second Amendment Rights. Thank you.

**Charles Worsham, 494 Bridgeport Ave, #236**

I just heard about this, so I rushed over to see what was going on. Schools ok that’s fine, government buildings, maybe; but Open Space is Open Space. If I want to carry a gun there, I should be able to carry a gun. It will be concealed like everywhere else that I carry; it will be no harm to anybody. I will not be firing it or discharging it; there will be no safety issue whatsoever for me to carry, which is issued by the State. I do not see absolutely why Open Space should be banned? We are not going to hunting, or target shooting. There should be no reason why it should be banned on Open Space.

If it were schools, that would be another issue, but as the Second Amendment rights says that I get to bear arms. It is public space, outside, going around and I don’t cause harm to anyone. It should not be banned on that particular space. Thank you.

**Michael Fusco, 10 Cloverdale Avenue**

I have been a law enforcement officer for over thirty years. It is amazing that I even have to be here, talking about this.

I took an oath to the Constitution and I am sure that you all did too. How can we even be talking about this? You have the right to carry arms and I do not think you are giving people- I am not just talking as a police officer, but as a civilian, and you are not giving these people enough credit. They have gone through a lot of stuff to get their pistol permits. I am a safety instructor for hunting as well. I do not know if you think that we are all nuts going around, and shooting people? I just don’t get this and I do not even know why I am here talking about this. You are not giving the
citizens of the United States enough credit, and they are not nuts. They went through these things in order to carry a gun. They should be able to carry a gun and if you do not want to carry a gun, that is fine. If you want to be a sheep for slaughter, that is fine.

As far as giving a safety course in the library, they just passed this law that you have to have a safety course, so now you are telling me that they cannot have safety courses? I had mine when I was in high school, in Enfield in 1979. Are you kidding me? Now it is a bad thing and you cannot teach that? That is crazy! You want to teach gun safety; that is what it is all about. I do not know what to say anymore, and I have been doing this for thirty years. I think every civilian should be able to carry a gun, no matter where it is, to be honest with you.

By the way, there was the man downtown that came up to me, and I was carrying that day. That guy came at me, and I called the police department. I was not drinking, I was not going to a bar or anything like that; we were sitting in the car and the guy was knocking on my window. I told him that I was a cop and to get away, and he just stood there. This was just last year and I had to call the police department down there to take care of it. You should have a right to protect yourself.

Seth David Rose, 6 Manton Street

Almost everything that I wanted to say was said prior to me, but the only thing that I want to say is that it is us who vote for you. We are not criminals and I do not know what kind of vision that you have in your head. Are we like malignant cancer cells that we are good until all of a sudden? Do we pop and then just turn bad? That we are safe, and then pop, we turn dangerous? We are responsible people.

I have read this in the newspaper the other day that they want to have an education class. People are asking to have an education class. How much safer can it get? I am so tired of having, of you and of me, of us thinking that we are criminals; that we are dangerous, cannot be trusted or that we are crazy. We are not. We are safe, sane; we are just exercising our Second Amendment freedom. I couldn’t imagine if some of these restrictions that are being considered, thought on others. How will all of you feel if a woman is raped in an Open Space, because you cannot say that you have an ordinance that says we cannot have any criminals in public space? If a woman is raped, how will you personally feel? How will you respond in the newspaper? How will you reply to your constituents? She could have saved herself, she could have protected herself; but we chose that she couldn’t. How will you handle that? That is not a theoretical question because this happened in Texas. Her parents were killed and she went on to become a public figure. How will each and every single one of you feel if you restrict me in that way? How would you feel if you restrict us in that way? It doesn’t have to be a woman; it could be a man. It could be a small guy like me, or a big guy like the previous speaker. I wonder how you will feel.
Yes, you do answer to us and we vote you in or we can vote the next person in. Do you solidly feel that you can support this idea this idea of restriction? Thank you for letting me speak, I appreciate it.

Alderman Anglace: I would like to make an announcement: during most of this public hearing tonight, our Chief of Police has been here, listening to your comments. I thank him for coming and being part of this hearing, and listening. I also want to thank every one of you for the exemplary conduct in which this public hearing was conducted. That in itself, says something about your point of view. Lastly, I think the Board of Aldermen has learned a lot from what you had to say tonight, and we sincerely thank you for participating.

As I said earlier, we will take public comments via email for two days following the hearing. So if anyone wants to send in a comment, send it in to the cityofshelton.org website, and you should know that within seven days, the minutes of this public hearing will be on the City website. If you are interested and would like to read the minutes, you are more than welcome. Again, we thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other speakers, Alderman Anglace closed the public hearing at 8:40 p.m.

Alderman Anglace MOVED to keep the public hearing open for two days to allow comments, via email; SECONDED by Alderman Simonetti. A voice vote was taken and hearing was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Brittany Gannon, Clerk

DATE APPROVED: ________________ BY:

______________________________
Mark A. Lauretti
Mayor, City of Shelton
Attached, are copies of emails that were received, via email, PRIOR TO THE PUBLIC HEARING:

Renee Robillard, 28 Country Place

Sent: 4/10/2013 9:34:08 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time
Subj: Alderman Finn’s “weapon free zone” proposal

Dear All,

I’m sorry I’m unable to attend your meeting to speak directly, but I would like my thoughts regarding Alderman Finn’s proposal noted for your review.

My condo association uses both the Community Center and the Huntington Branch Library on an almost monthly basis for both board and owners’ meetings as do several other associations who do not have facilities of their own. In the past, there have been contentious, heated meetings – a couple of which the then board hired off-duty police to attend – so there are times when folks are angry when just walking into a building. Because of new condo laws that went into effect a couple of years back, all board meetings must be open to all owners as if there’s a posted agenda item that’s a hot topic, it’s possible to have owners on both procon sides in attendance. At each meeting, similar to the City meetings, there’s also an open forum where owners can speak about anything. Many times, words are weapons themselves at such meetings.

I for one would want peace of mind that someone has had the foresight to have thought of such a proposal - before the City of Shelton finds itself in a situation similar to that of Newtown. To allow any sort of weaponry class, even one with the word “safety” in it, seems counter-intuitive in a building that’s busy with all sorts of activities every day/most evenings.

Alderwoman McPherson’s quote in the CT Post alludes this to be legislation based on emotion is just the opposite – it’s planned before something happens. Better to be proactive than the usual reactive. To say the “focus should be more on violent television shows and movies” is very puzzling to me. Mr. McPherson I would ask how you would propose to regulate/legislate television shows and movies.

Instead, the City could add a clause of some sort to each individual/community/whatever who rents rooms at the Community Center or Library to sign off acknowledging there are to be no weapons of any sort on the building/parking premises. Perhaps when we renew our library cards a similar statement can be included, or at the very least a sign posted at each entrance. This would at least shift some of the liability off the City and let patrons know the City has their safety in mind when using the facilities. That the ordinance would also carry a fine, would only add to it and show the City is serious about our well being. I’m sure Corporate Counsel would be able to provide an opinion.

I was very disappointed to read Mr. McPherson’s negative comments were made when he admitted he hadn’t seen the proposed ordinance. And to further say “... We can’t enforce the laws already on the books and now you have even more...” tells me there must either be something wrong with those laws already on the books not being enforced, or perhaps we just need different people to enforce them.

I do hope you give Alderman Finn’s proposal the real thought it deserves. Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Ronée Robillard
28 Country Place, Shelton, CT
Giovanni Sanzo, 91 Chamberlain Drive

> Original Message
> From: Giovanni Sanzo <gsanzo@att.net>
> To: 
> Date: April 12, 2013 at 9:22 PM
> Subject: cityofshelton.org: RE: proposed "weapon-free zones"
> 
> This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from:
> Giovanni Sanzo <gsanzo@att.net>
> 
> I am writing to you as a resident of Shelton, Chamberlain Dr., regarding my concern and opposition over the proposal of weapon-free zones. How do you or the City plan on protecting myself and my family in these weapon-free zones? Do you realize you are advertising to criminals that law abiding citizens will be defenseless against attack and harm. Once again, the LAW ABIDING CITIZEN is not the problem as we abide the laws set forth. The criminal is the problem and you are trusting that the criminal will abide by the ordinance you are proposing? A criminal couldn’t care less about the law or ordinance you set forth as they will now know they have softened targets (unable to defend themselves) to rob/break/rape or kill. I ask you to think about the logic of passing an ordinance that only the "good guys" will follow knowing that by them following said ordinance YOU will make them a target for attack. Thank for for taking the time in reviewing such a serious life & safety matter.
Attached, are copies of an email that was received, via email, SAME DAY AS THE PUBLIC HEARING: 4/23/13

Shawn Mitola, 2 Hamburg Street

From: smitola2@hotmail.com
To: 
Subject: RE: cityofshelton.org: Weapon free zone proposal

This ordinance say nothing about the rights of CT state pistol permit holders from being able to carry their licensed firearms on Shelton public spaces. The paragraph you have quoted pertains to the discharging of firearms, and specifically calls out hunters "crossing" public land but says nothing about the rights or CT state pistol permit holders carrying their licensed firearms on Shelton public spaces. In the strictest interpretation of Ord #833 I think you'd have a hard time convincing a judge that someone violated the ordinance since it does not specifically call out permit holders. Hunting licenses hold much fewer restrictions than permit holders. Is it your belief that Ord #833 restricts the right of citizens in possession of a CT state pistol permit from carrying their licensed firearms on Shelton public lands? If so then perhaps you should reexamine that thought. The wording certainly does not lend to that belief. I believe that no one opposed Ord #833 because of what I have stated earlier no lawyer or judge would be expected to believe that the wording of this ordinance was meant to extend to CT pistol permit holders since it specifically calls out hunting only and or the discharging of firearms. I wasn't aware Shelton had a serious problem with people running around shooting guns for no reason. Ord #833 was obviously meant to restrict hunting on Shelton land and as such I find no fault with the Ordinance. I do find fault when you attempt to apply it to legal gun owners carrying licensed, permitted, and holstered firearms for self defense. This kind of interpretation is a clear violation of the 2nd amendment and should Ord #833 be applied in that manner then it will be challenged in court as well.

I also have to ask again for an answer to my question of what benefit does this ordinance serve the public? Who will stand to be protected by it? Is it your belief that if some mad man decided to bring a firearm or other deadly weapon into one of these weapon free zones that he would be deterred by the fact that he was breaking the law? I restate my opinion that ordinances like these do nothing to protect anyone and only serve to disarm law abiding citizens and restrict our 2nd amendment rights.

From: 
Date: Tue, 29 Apr 2013 16:26:07 -0400
Subject: RE: cityofshelton.org: Weapon free zone proposal
To: smitola2@hotmail.com

Shawn,
Thank you for taking the time to contact me with your concerns on the proposed ordinance and sharing with me your thoughts.

The City of Shelton already has an ordinance (# 833) approved by the Board of Aldermen on December 14, 2007 which does prohibit various weapons. This ordinance at the public hearing in 2007 had no one from the public was opposed to that ordinance.
- The Shelton Open Space Ordinance #833 (found here) already prohibits much of what is discussed:
  * "Hunting, trapping, archery, discharging firearms, paintball guns, air guns or use of any weapon on or into any city Open Space area is prohibited. Hunters crossing City Open Space areas to gain access to private or state property may proceed through City Open Space areas only with an unloaded firearm." This ordinance at the public hearing in 2007 as I already stated had no one from the public who was opposed to that ordinance, I was not the author of #833
- CT state Statutes 53a-217b is already a class D felony. That state statute pertains to possession of a weapon on School grounds.
- Really the only thing at issue is the public buildings.

Jack Finn
Attached, are copies of emails that were received, via email, AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:

Kimberli Carpenter, 27 Crescent Drive

Record saved to database with ID: 321

Form ID: 1
Form title: request
Form name: request
Submitted at: 2013-04-23 21:10:40
Submitter IP: 76.23.170.13
User-ID: 0
Username: -
User full name: -
Submitter provider: Unknown
Submitter browser: Mozilla/5.0 (linux; Android 4.2.2; Nexus 7 Build/JDQ39)
AppleWebKit/537.31 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/26.0.1410.58 Safari/537.31
Submitter operating system: unix

Name: Kimberli Carpenter
Address: 27 Crescent Drive
City: Shelton
State: Connecticut
Zip: 06484
Email: kwcspyder@gmail.com
Retype Email: kwcspyder@gmail.com
Type of Concern: Other
Please provide a detailed description: I attended the meeting tonight regarding Mr. Finn's proposal to ban firearms in public places such as open spaces. I love walking the trails but would not feel safe walking them unarmed. I don't fear animals as much as I fear criminals and although this is a great city to live in there is also a criminal element here and I would hate to be on one of those trails, far into the woods with a possible attacker roaming. At least with my firearm I would have a fighting chance. I am a law abiding permit holder, a tax payer who enjoys the city's amenities that I pay for and do not want to be stripped of my right to protect myself. This proposed idea is not in the best interest of the public and I believe Mr. Finn is behaving like a typical grand standing politician who wants to get re-elected. I won't vote for him or anyone who passes this.
Wayne Caserta, 25 Jordan Ave

--- Forwarded Message ---
From: Wayne Caserta <wcaserta@sbcglobal.net>
To: 
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 3:37 PM
Subject: cityofshelton.org: Proposed Weapons Free Ordinance

This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from:
Wayne Caserta <wcaserta@sbcglobal.net>

I would like to make known that I am against the Proposed Weapons Free Ordinance.

Thank you,

Wayne Caserta
25 Jordan Ave
Doug Huffman, 131 Willoughby Road

Subject: cityofshelton.org: Gun control and Boston, from The Washington Times
Date: 4/4/2013 9:53:48 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time
From: doug.huffman1@gmail.com
To:

This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from:
Doug Huffman <doug.huffman1@gmail.com>

Danielle Keeley Gayda, 174 Birdseye Road

Sub:  cityofshelton.org: NO WEAPONS FREE ZONES!
Date:  4/24/2013 6:00:51 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time
From:  daniellegayda@yahoo.com
To:  

This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from: Danielle Keeley Gayda <daniellegayda@yahoo.com>

Dear Jack,

Your proposal for weapons free zones is ludicrous. Do you really think that by simply having an ordinance you are going to stop a criminal from shooting someone? Do you think Mr. Ellis would still be alive just because there was a City ordinance? NO! You clearly have not thought this through. Criminals, by the very definition, are LAW BREAKERS. The only thing this ordinance will do is chip away at the rights we as citizens of the United States are entitled to. Do you think that our forefathers would be happy that they fought so hard to secure our rights only for people like you to rip them away from us? I totally disagree with your proposal. I wish I could have attended the meeting last night but many of my friends and neighbors did and I’m proud of them for speaking up. I’ve voted for you in every election. If you proceed with this ordinance, I will have no choice but to vote accordingly. I am a law-abiding gun owner that has passed a background check. I’ve safely carried a gun since I was 21 years old. I have never been arrested and have no criminal history. In fact, I am weeks away from graduating with a Masters degree in Forensic Investigation. My studies opened my eyes to the kinds of criminals that lurk in parks and open areas where there is a plethora of innocent helpless victims like women and children to prey on. I will not be going to a park anytime soon without a proper way to protect myself and those I’m with. The criminals will always have weapons. This ordinance will put innocent lives in danger. Reconsider for the sake of families, children, and law-abiding citizens who are proud to be Shelton residents and who are privileged to have such beautiful parks and open spaces to enjoy.

Sincerely,
Danielle Keeley Gayda
174 Birdseye Rd.
Colleen-Anne Kelly, 66 Lakeview Terrace, Derby, CT

-----Original Message-----
From: Colleen-Anne Kelly [mailto:irishgirlkellie@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 9:15 AM
To: shelton01@cityofshelton.org
Subject: cityofshelton.org: "Weapons Free Zone" ordinance.

This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from:
Colleen-Anne Kelly <irishgirlkellie@gmail.com>

My name is Colleen-Anne Kelly. I live at 66 Lakeview Terrace in Derby Ct. I am a
47 year old single mother. I have 2 daughters. Like many I have a pretty busy
life, I work 6 days a week (a full time and a part time job) today after working 9
hours, I attended your Board of Aldermen's meeting the proposal of a "Weapons
Free Zone" ordinance. I did not speak at your meeting, for I did not want to take
away from members of your community, however I spend a lot of my free time
hiking in Shelton, where my boyfriend is a resident. I OPPOSE your ordinance of a
"Weapon Free Zone." I am a law abiding citizen, a member of the NRA, and of The
Connecticut Citizens Defense League which is a non-partisan, grassroots
organization devoted to advocating rights affirmed by the Constitutions of the
United States of America and the State of Connecticut and I am a gun owner. I
worked very hard to be able to afford my pistol permit-the cost the Class alone
is $125, then for your temporary state pistol permit there is a $50 fee plus a
$19.25 fee for DPS to run a criminal history and background check and an
additional $70.00 to the local authority, a grand total of $264.25. While to most
that may not seem to be alot of money but to this single mother it was, but it
was also important to me, and important for my family. I took the class and
passed all of the back round checks. I have NEVER been in trouble with the law.
This is because I am LAW ABLIDING...I AM NOT A CRIMINAL. It is my right to protect
myself, and my family. I believe if you choose to pass this ordinance you will be
giving criminals a free pass...you are telling them that they are free to come
into your community and do as they please. Please think long and hard about your
decision and the affect it will have on your community, Sandy Hook was a "Gun
Free Zone" it did not stop Adam Lanza. Weapon Free & Gun Free Zones give you the
perception that you are "safe" but in reality it is just a sign on the door and a
piece of paper, it is the allusion of being safe, it does not keep your
community safe, because criminals do not follow the law. Did Adam Lanza follow
the law? I cant help but think if only one of those teachers had been armed that
December morning might have ended much differently.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely

Colleen-Anne Kelly
Dear John:

Didn't know how to reach the entire Board. I assure you that I will not abuse the privilege of having your e-mail address. My comments are provided for the Board's Review!

Thomas Jefferson: "As human beings, we are all capable of error. The sooner we recognize and accept this truth, the faster we can work towards self-correction and organizational improvement."

If the Board is to successfully address the issue, they must recognize the magnitude of the problem and work towards a comprehensive solution. I believe that passing an ordinance to regulate cell phone use while driving would be a step in the right direction.

If the Board really wants to do something to protect Shelton Residents other than simply passing "feel good legislation" than I suggest they get in their cars, park them and observe the "numerous law breakers" (cell phone users) all along Bridgeport Avenue at rush hour each and every day. Many routinely run red lights! These "law breakers" are endangering the lives of innocent/compliant with the law Shelton residents and some residents alike every single day without "consequence".

Sources:
1) At the Constitution Blvd. Southbound light/entrance to rt. 8
2) At the intersection of Nells Rock Road and Bridgeport Avenue.
3) At the Crown Pointe Shopping Center entrance/exit to Bridgeport Ave.
4) At the Beards Saw Mill Rd. and Bridgeport Ave. intersection. (Farm hedges prevent visualization of traffic traveling in both directions on Bridgeport Ave.)
5) At the intersection of Commerce Park and Bridgeport Ave.

Dear God, the assault launched by progressives upon freedom loving, law abiding Americans has become a never ending daily event since Barack Obama took office!

Thank you for the many, many "common sense public service years" of devotion to this community and Great Nation. You sir have demonstrated repeatedly that you don't just talk the talk but walk the walk. God Bless you and yours.

Kind regards,

[Signature]
Joseph S. Popowski
434 Woodell Lane
Shelton, Conn. 06484
James Whipple, 8 Birdseye Road

---Original Message---
From: James Whipple <jwhizzle@aol.com>
To: 
Sent: Wed, Apr 24, 2013 7:10 am
Subject: cityofshelton.org: Weapons Ban Ordinance

This is an enquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from:
James Whipple <jwhizzle@aol.com>

It was with great dismay that I learned that you were holding a meeting to
discuss an ordinance to ban firearms from Shelton public spaces.

I have had a pistol permit since 1980. I have also had a spotless criminal
record my entire life. Also, I have held a Top Secret Security Clearance with
the Federal Government since 1976.

I routinely use the Shelton Open Space lands. Many areas are very remote, and
can pose risks such as criminals, or dangerous wildlife. I will continue to
carry a firearm in these areas, no matter what you do.

I am not some paranoid "end of the world" prepper. However, I refuse to have my
federal and state constitutional rights stripped away by this type of
politically correct, feel good, useless regulation. As with any type of gun
laws, such an ordinance would only affect the honest citizen, and not dissuade a
criminal or mentally deranged person from committing a crime.

This is nothing more than another Democrat attempting to capitalize on the
horrible tragedy at Sandy Hook to push their social engineering agenda. I will
refuse to comply, and work to un-seat any politician who supports this action.
Robert Woods

Subject: cityofshelton.org: Gun free zones
Date: 4/24/2013 10:00:15 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time
From: Rwoods336@yahoo.com
To:

This is an inquiry e-mail via http://www.cityofshelton.org/ from:
Robert woods <Rwoods336@yahoo.com>

Hi I am not happy at all about you people thinking you know what's best for us law abiding tax payers! Honestly no gang banger or mental sick job is going to care what gun free zone signs you put up because their criminals THEY DON'T CARE! Your gun free zones just make good honest people helpless victims because they will be the only ones that obey this dumb law! Don't even tell me I can count on the police to protect me or my family cause that's a joke!! They will get there when its over!! Thank you but no thanks to this gun free zones
Charles Worsham, 494 Bridgeport Ave, #236

Charles Worsham
494 Bridgeport Ave #236
Shelton, CT 06484
April 25, 2013
Board of Aldermen –
City of Shelton Connecticut

Please enter this written testimony to the minutes of the Public Hearing on Ordinances in Shelton City Hall on Tuesday April 23, 2013

Dear Board

Please oppose the firearm restriction ordinance proposed by Alderman John Finn. While Mr. Finn's intentions I am sure are well placed, the proposed ordinance should contain at the very least an exemption for legally carried firearms by state licensed persons.

Here are some reasons;

1) THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL. Anyone nowadays in Connecticut who spots an individual with a weapon is probably going to call 911 ANYWAY. Why do we need to let criminals know NO ONE entering, present, or leaving an area is not legally armed? This creates a condition which is much more dangerous and more of a threat to the public's safety than that of a licensed citizen with a firearm in those same areas. Why are we going through all the expense and trouble to implement this ordinance when it is obvious the same outcome would happen without it? A safer and much more prudent approach would be to simply implement a policy change at the library addressing the issues of Firearms safety courses.

2) The firearms at these courses are not supplied by the students they are supplied by the instructors. There is no ammunition present. It is a classroom instruction only. It's not like there is a bunch of novice firearm owners running around our libraries with loaded firearms.

3) The presence of our citizens who have been certified by the State with a rigorous background check, classroom and proficiency tests, which allows them to carry their firearm in public actually makes our municipal spaces safer. It's like having an auxiliary police force which augments our Shelton's wonderful police force. Its deterrent effect is very powerful.

4) It takes many minutes for our police to arrive at a scene after dialing 911. It's not the fault of the Police it's the way the 911 system works in Shelton. While Shelton's police response time I am sure is one of the best in Connecticut, most crimes of violence or bodily harm, which are the only types of crime a firearm can legally be used in, evolve and end in SECONDS. In most cases these types of crimes end long before the Police officers even get the dispatch.
5) If implemented the city will have to spend money on signs, ligature, and manpower. The City will have to post and maintain in entryways of buildings, parks and at trailheads leading into open space, clear notification of this rule for everyone to see. Certainly this is a waste of much needed resources.

6) An out-of-town person who is legally carrying their firearm and is unaware of this restriction, traveling to Shelton for business in a municipal building or other restricted area will be faced with a choice. Either ignore the law and continue into the restricted area (making them a criminal) or store their firearm unattended in their automobile, which everyone knows is a very unsafe practice because the firearm could be stolen or seen by someone nearby as it is stored (again making them a criminal) or skip the business and go home. I'm sure this is not the way Shelton wants to greet its visitors.

For these reasons alone, please abandon this useless costly approach and simply implement a few common sense policy changes at the library with respect to these classes. After all these classes promote firearm safety which is something I know everyone on the board is concerned with.

However, if my reasons do not dissuade you and you are determined to proceed with this course of action to curb the misuse of our resources in regard to bows, crossbows, bb and pellet guns, again I ask you include an exemption for legally carried firearms by state licensed persons.

Thank You.

Charles Worsham