

A COMPLETE LISTING OF COMMENTS SUBMITTED BETWEEN MARCH 31 TO MAY 5, 2025, DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD CONDUCTED BY CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD (CAAPB) STAFF ON BEHALF OF THE USS WARD GUN COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORK REVIEW COMMITTEE (CARC).

Comments were submitted to provide input on the application to remove the USS Ward Number Three Gun from the Capitol Mall, disposition plans, and restoration of the removal site by the Department of Administration.

Comment No.	Date	Comment	Mode of Submission
1	3/31/2025	Hello, I have a public comment regarding the USS Ward Gun on the MN Capital Plaza: Even though I would be sad to see the gun leave its place of prominence in downtown St. Paul, I do support its movement to the proposed location of the new MN Military Museum at Camp Ripley. It will be much better protected from the weather and risk of human caused damage, and restored for the benefit of generations to come in this new location, along with key context and educational displays. I fully support and endorse moving the USS Ward Gun to the MN Military Museum of Camp Ripley.	Email
2	3/31/2025	I am very much behind the effort to move the gun from the Capitol Grounds to the Minnesota Military Museum! Thank you.	Email
3	4/14/2025	Please support moving the USS Ward gun from the capitol grounds to the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. Thank you	Email
4	4/14/2025	I support the plan to move the USS WARD gun from outside the MN Capitol to inside the soon to be new museum by Camp Ripley, Little Falls, MN.	Email
5	4/14/2025	Please allow the USS Ward gun to be moved to the Camp Ripley museum.	Email
6	4/14/2025	This artifact needs a secure place to protect it from vandals and the weather. I fully support the museum's proposal to have it moved.	Email
7	4/15/2025	I'm writing to express my support for relocating the USS WARD's Gun Number Three from the state capitol grounds to the Minnesota Military Museum, Little Falls, MN. Having visited the site where it is currently located, outside, exposed to the elements, it is clear that time and weather have taken their toll on this historic piece	Email

		<p>of American history with significant ties to Minnesota. This item was manned by a U.S. Naval Reserve Crew from the Twin Cities and fired the first shots against a Japanese submarine attempting to enter Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. This action marked the United States' entry into World War II.</p> <p>This is the only significant piece of equipment left from the naval destroyer. Time, weather, and neglect have led to its deterioration. However, the Minnesota Military Museum staff has already demonstrated their ability to restore and preserve such items. Gun Number Three's relocation to the museum ensures that this historic piece will be restored and preserved under better conditions than it is now.</p> <p>President Lincoln once referred to the "silent artillery of time," and its impact upon public memory. Time is of the essence, and we must act now to ensure this historic piece is restored and preserved for future generations.</p>	
8	4/15/2025	<p>Good morning. I am Director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in Madison, the Badger State's counterpart to the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum. Our mission is to preserve and interpret the role of Wisconsin's veterans in American military history from the Civil War to the present. We are pleased to collaborate with our partners in Minnesota on many fronts.</p> <p>I write to you today to register my strong support for Randal Dietrich's application to have the USS Ward gun moved from the Capitol grounds and preserved. This gun is of national and international significance, and is perhaps the most prominent artifact from December 7, 1941, not located in Hawaii. It is a great treasure for Minnesota, an important part of the state's history, and deserves to be somewhere it can be restored, interpreted, and preserved for future generations.</p> <p>If you have questions or need additional information, please let me know. Thank you for your time and attention.</p>	Email
9	4/15/2025	<p>I am writing to express my full support of moving the gun from the USS WARD to the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum in Little Falls, MN.</p> <p>This piece of history is important to Minnesota History and its people. My uncle (Kenneth Ekblad) served on the USS WARD on Pearl Harbor day, and into the Pacific through WWII. Our family has letters he wrote to his</p>	Email

		<p>fiancé/wife through those years and we will be sharing them with the museum. Many Minnesotan's served on that ship and this history needs to be passed down to the next generations.</p> <p>I am happy to hear that the Veterans museum is wanting to restore and care for the gun.</p> <p>Thank you for hearing my voice in support of this project!</p>	
10	4/16/2025	<p>Good morning.</p> <p>Please do all you can to save the gun from the USS Ward with the MN museum as it is an important part of our history of WWII.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>	Email
11	4/16/2025	<p>This is a note to support moving the USS Ward gun #3 from the State Capitol grounds to the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. That valuable artifact can be restored and protected inside at the new museum there.</p>	Email
12	4/16/2025	<p>I write today in proud support of relocating this historical artifact to the Mn Military and Veterans Museum. The USS Ward Gun #3 has graced our Capitol Complex since 1958 and now needs a new home that protects it from our harsh climate.</p> <p>My grandfather Nels was in France the day the Armistice was signed ending WWI; my grandfather Ruben was stateside, waiting to ship out. My father in law served on the USS Grenadier (SS210) in the South Pacific in WWII. My father served in the Air Force Reserves. I served in the Army, as did my brother Dave. My youngest daughter is an Air Force officer on active duty; my oldest daughter is married to an Air Force officer on active duty.</p> <p>History is important and the USS Ward Gun #3 is part of it. I hope it is transferred to the Museum so it can be cared for and displayed with honor.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	Email
13	4/16/2025	<p>As a proud U.S. Navy veteran of the submarine service stationed aboard five submarines and accumulating over seven years under water, I'm writing to express my strong support for the Minnesota Military Museum's plan to save, restore, and display indoors the USS Ward gun currently on outdoor display on the state capital grounds. This historic naval gun should be sheltered from the elements after having spent more</p>	Email

		than 60 years on outdoor display, and I ask that you support the museum's plan.	
14	4/16/2025	<p>I am writing to you regarding the effort to remove, restore, and relocate the USS Ward gun from the State Capitol grounds to the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. As a historian, teacher, and retired naval officer, I believe it is imperative that we seize this opportunity to preserve an artifact that played a role in one of the most pivotal events in world history. The fact that Minnesotans were the sailors manning this very gun on December 7, 1941, makes it an especially significant piece of our state's heritage.</p> <p>The gun has been exposed to the elements outdoors for far too long, and moving it indoors is essential for its preservation. The museum's new facility will offer the gun a place of prominence, protecting it from environmental damage and allowing for a more complete and compelling interpretation of its historical importance. This move ensures future generations will understand the vital role Minnesotans played in a defining moment of global history.</p>	Email
15	4/16/2025	I'm am in total support of moving the Gun to the Museum.	Email
16	4/16/2025	<p>I write to you today to share my support for the application of the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum. This proposal to relocate the USS Ward gun from the state capital mall to the museum has my full and enthusiastic support.</p> <p>My family had a strong connection to that gun and I recall going to see it numerous times as a young boy. My uncle was Kenneth Ekblad and he was a Machinist Mate 1st Class on board the Ward when that gun was fired at the Japanese Mini Sub in Pearl Harbor. Kenneth was married to my father's sister, Elsie Sundberg, who was in Hawaii when the attack took place. They were both members of the "First Shot Club". Elsie returned home to St. Paul for the remainder of the war and gave many talks about her experiences at Pearl Harbor and the actions of the Ward.</p> <p>Kenneth was a member of the St. Paul Naval Reserve that was activated. He wrote letters home as he traveled to San Diego to take the Ward out of "mothballs" and refit the Ward to be returned to service. I am writing to urge you to approve this application but also to tell you that there is no doubt in my mind that both Kenneth and Elsie would be pleased</p>	Email

		<p>to have that gun restored and on permanent display at the museum.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts on this matter.</p>	
17	4/16/2025	<p>I write to express my support for the proposal to move the USS Ward Gun to the new MN Military and Veterans Museum, which is currently under construction.</p> <p>The new facility will be a showcase for this prized artifact and it's location in central Minnesota will allow more Minnesotans to see the gun.</p> <p>I have been a long-time supporter of the Museum and know what wonderful stewards of historical preservation the staff is. The Ward gun will be in good hands!</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	Email
18	4/16/2025	<p>I strongly support the Minnesota Military and Veterans Musuem's plan to preserve and protect the historic USS Ward Gun.</p> <p>It amazes me that we in the land locked state of Minnesota have the weapon that fired the first shot at Pearl Harbor! This is a piece of MN military history we need to preserve, not let it continue to deteriorate.</p>	Email
19	4/16/2025	<p>I fully support the removal and restoration of the Ward gun to be relocated at the Mn. Veterans and Military Museum.</p>	Email
20	4/16/2025	<p>Please consider backing the proposal of giving this very important artifact in the history of Minnesota Veterans during World War II, a proper home where it will no longer rust and deteriorate in the open weather. And where its story can be properly told and appreciated. Please vote to preserve this important artifact in its proper place.</p>	Email
21	4/16/2025	<p>The gun of the USS Ward, which fired the first rounds against the Japanese in the pre-dawn of December 7, 1941, has sat outside on the Capitol grounds for the past 67 years. I strongly endorse a proposal to relocate it to the new Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum currently under construction at Camp Ripley. As a military historian, I recognize the significance of this unique artifact of Minnsota history. It needs to be fully restored, more properly protected, and better</p>	Email

		interpreted. The museum at Camp Ripley is, by far, best suited for this. Thank you for your support.	
22	4/16/2025	<p>I was recently made aware of the application from the MN Veterans and Military Museum that is requesting that the gun from the USS Ward be removed from the State Capitol and sent to the new museum being built outside of Fort Ripley. As a university history professor, who specializes in World War II (especially Minnesota's role in the war) I cannot support this decision enough. Having this significant historical artifact housed inside, at the brand-new museum, will give countless new visitors the chance to see and learn about this incredible moment in our history.</p> <p>I do hope the MN Military Museum's application is seriously considered so that the gun can be repaired and displayed in a way that will allow generations of Minnesotans the opportunity to see it.</p>	Email
23	4/17/2025	<p>As President of Minnesota's 9,000-member Gen. John W. Vessey, Jr. Chapter of the Association of the United States Army, I write to express our strong support for the removal, restoration, and relocation of the USS Ward gun from the Minnesota State Capitol grounds to the new Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum at Camp Ripley.</p> <p>The USS Ward's legacy—firing the first American shot of World War II—holds deep meaning for our military and veteran community. Its preservation and placement at the new museum will ensure that this iconic artifact is interpreted in context, honoring its historic role and inspiring future generations.</p> <p>This relocation aligns with the museum's mission and enhances statewide efforts to preserve and tell Minnesota's military story. Our chapter stands ready to support this important initiative in any way possible.</p>	Email
24	4/17/2025	<p>I want to give my endorsement to the initiative to bring the Ward Gun #3 from the capitol grounds to the MN Military Museum.</p> <p>In my former capacity, I was the property & fiscal officer for the MN National Guard. A portion of my duties included oversight of all federal items in the MN Military Museum. There is an absolute bevy of MN military artifacts from every era of war and peace from the MN service members statewide. With the opening of the new 30+ acre museum site in the coming year, the expansion allows for pieces that have been in</p>	Email

		<p>storage or displayed in isolated locations to be showcased once again.</p> <p>Although the monuments on the capitol grounds have undergone a true transformation in recent years, Ward Gun #3 would be best served as a rehabilitated military artifact at the state's only state-funded military museum.</p>	
25	4/17/2025	<p>I work at the Veteran's Service Building and had seen a historic gun mounted near our parking lot 100 times before I knew the amazing story behind it!</p> <p>As you are likely aware, the USS Ward Gun #3 is among the most historically significant items currently located on Minnesota Capitol grounds. It fired the first rounds at Pearl Harbor, sinking a Japanese midget-submarine that was enroute to fire upon US ships. I recently toured Pearl Harbor and was pleased that they highlight the USS Ward as the first action of WWII's Pacific Theater. The fact that Minnesotan's were at the helm (and potentially saved numerous US lives) is amazing.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the gun has not been preserved and is poorly placed where few get to appreciate it. I ask you to support the Minnesota Military and Veteran's Museum's (MMVM's) request to remove, restore, and relocate this incredible artifact.</p> <p>Bottom Line: the USS Ward Gun #3 is a great tribute to our Minnesota service members. It should be prominently displayed at the MMVM to appropriately honor, educate, and inspire all generations. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	Email
26	4/17/2025	<p>I'm firmly in favor of moving the Ward Gun from the Capital Grounds to the new MN Military and Veterans Museum.</p> <p>The gun needs to be refurbished and moved to an indoor location.</p> <p>The museum would be the perfect place to display the gun and tell the story of the USS Ward and the men who served on the ship.</p> <p>I honestly can't think of any reason to leave the Ward Gun where it is or any other "better" place to move it to. Thank you for asking for public comment.</p>	Email
27	4/18/2025	<p>I recently found out about the desire to give the USS Ward's #3 gun a new home. If so, I cant agree with this idea more. As awesome as it was to find it outside the</p>	Email

		<p>capital building, it was shameful to see its condition as this incredible piece of history is rusting in front of all to see.</p> <p>I enjoy traveling to different battlefields around the world, and visiting military museums whenever possible. I am always amazed when they have an item that was actually involved with a major historic event similar to this gun. But to be honest, these items are quite rare. The majority of the time, the items on display are trainer equipment that have been refurbished to look like the actual item, as the originals have been lost to history.</p> <p>With this gun, you have an opportunity to attract many military history enthusiast like myself and to tell the 'crazy story' of the USS Ward and it's captain/crew. Who were on their 1st mission the night/morning of 7 Dec, 1941. How they passed on the information of their attack to higher command, but were moronically ignored leading to the huge loss of life as we know it in the battle of Pearl Harbor. In addition, this same ship was rebuilt into a 'High Speed Transport' (ADP – 16) participating in 8 additional battles throughout the pacific. Only to succumb to a Kamikaze strike on 7 Dec, 1944. One additional amazing fact to this story is how the original captain of the USS Ward (while captain of another ship) was given the order to sink the doomed USS Ward/ADP 16 3 years to the day that the historic shots were fired at Pearl Harbor.</p> <p>This ship/gun/story should be on prominent display for all to learn of this fascinating story. I cant emphasize enough how stories and items associated with them at this level are extremely rare.</p> <p>I have visited the museum at Pearl Harbor several times, and noticed that they have a nice display representing the story of the USS Ward (see attached pictures). I am sure that they would love to have this gun added to their collection, especially knowing how it is being kept and primarily ignored in its current location. There is well over a million people visiting the battlefield in Pearl Harbor annually who are inspired by the amazing displays/stories and artifacts that are set for all to learn from.</p> <p>My recommendation is for this gun to be refurbished</p>	
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28	4/19/2025	<p>I'm writing to urge you to support the Minnesota Military Museum's plan to place USS Ward's gun #3 on indoor display at the new museum building near Camp Ripley, MN.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>	Email
29	4/20/2025	<p>I have worked for the State of Minnesota for over 40 years and spent the first 14 years working in the Centennial building. I would often walk over and look at the gun on my lunch break. I occasionally get over to the Capitol complex and have been disappointed by the condition of the gun. Please consider letting it be moved to the Minnesota Military museum at Camp Ripley. Along with the sail and rudder of the USS Minneapolis-St Paul submarine if would be a great addition to the new museum. Thank you.</p>	Email
30	4/21/2025	<p>I support the new Minnesota Military Museum's plan to relocate this historic artifact for future generations to continue to learn about our Minnesota history. After nearly 70 years on the Capitol Mall, I am in support of saving the USS Ward gun #3 by removing, restoring and relocating this incredible WWII artifact to the new site near Camp Ripley.</p>	Email
31	4/21/2025	<p>I would like to express my fervent support for relocation of the Ward Three Gun, owned by the U.S. Navy, to an interior showcase location where it can be better maintained and protected. This important piece of history will also benefit from a comprehensive interpretative display at its new location.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration in this endeavor!</p>	Email
32	4/21/2025	<p>I want to relate my strongest support for the transfer of the USS Ward Gun #3 from the Minnesota Capitol grounds to the custody of the Minnesota Military and</p>	Email

		<p>Veterans Museum. This national historical artifact deserves to be properly conserved and placed within a museum setting to maximize its interpretation and importance to the history of the state of Minnesota and the United States of America.</p> <p>I serve on the Executive Board of Directors for the Dr. Harold C. Deutsch WWII History Roundtable and as the USS Minneapolis/St. Paul (SSN708) Restoration Team Leader for the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum. As a retired US Navy Captain and in light of my affiliations listed just before, I have an excellent vantage point to understand the importance of the USS Ward Gun #3.</p> <p>I note the USS Ward Gun #3 has been approved by the Board in the following excerpt:</p> <p>"The Board voted on March 24, 2025, that application for the removal request for the USS Ward Gun meets the condition in Minnesota Rules 2400.2703., Subpart 6., Item C. "C. the artwork has faults in construction or requires maintenance such that the Department of Administration is unable to properly care for or store the artwork;"</p> <p>This milestone paves the way for this important historical artifact to continue on the path of restoration and into the hands of Mr. Randal Dietrich, the Executive Director of the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum.</p> <p>Other considerations include:</p> <p>The artifact has been stored outside and suffers from deterioration due to exposure to weather extremes. It has not been properly maintained per the excerpt referenced above and without expert conservation may be lost as an important historical artifact of the state of Minnesota and the United States of America.</p> <p>If not properly conserved, the Director of the Navy Heritage and History Command in Washington, D.C., may direct its return so that it may be displayed in the new National Navy Museum located there.</p> <p>The new Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum will provide an excellent home for this artifact. The museum executive director, Randal Dietrich, has deep experience in the proper conservation, display and interpretation of history. The USS Ward Gun #3 would be a key piece in the new museum guaranteeing its</p>	
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		<p>proper place in telling the history of Minnesotans far into the future.</p> <p>As a veteran and long term Minnesota state resident, the proposal to transfer the USS Ward Gun #3 to the custody of the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum is well founded with the facts above and has my unmatched recommendation for moving forward.</p>	
33	4/21/2025	<p>I write today to endorse the proposal to restore and preserve the Ward gun. While it has been nice to visit it outside at the Capitol Mall, an historical object of this importance should be better curated into the future. As the gun crew was Minnesotan, we should take the lead in it's preservation, so future generations can use it as a physical evidence of our state's role in the opening hours of WWII.</p>	Email
34	4/28/2025	<p>This WWII weapon has a serious Minnesota history; The first combat action in the Pacific in WWII, firing on a Japanese mini-sub Pearl Harbor. This is significant to Minnesota because the gun crew was made up of sailors from Minnesota. It is not readily seen in its current location on the Capitol grounds, moreover, the story of the weapon is not to be found in that location.</p> <p>The 'Ward Gun" should be displayed, in-doors with its history and the respect it deserves, at the new Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum!</p>	Email
35	4/29/2025	<p>I heartily endorse the move to the Minnesota Military Museum. It's way beyond time to see the gun be displayed in an accessible and respectful manner instead of moldering in the shrubs. Thank you.</p>	Email
36	4/29/2025	<p>I am writing to you in your role as Planning Fellow of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board to add my voice to those who strongly urge the Board to approve the movement of the USS Ward gun #3 from the Capitol grounds to the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum. The gun is a significant, one-of-a-kind, artifact with special relevance, not just to the city of St. Paul and the State of Minnesota, but also to the US Navy and American history in general. While it may not be as easily accessible to the general public if removed from an open area on the Capitol Mall, I believe a move to the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum will facilitate the artifact's restoration, conservation, and protection from the elements that its current location does not allow. Although it pains me to have the gun moved so far from the home of the majority of the men who crewed the ship, the museum is in a better position to preserve it and its historical</p>	Email

		context for future generations. Again, I support the removal of the gun from the Capital Mall and its transfer to the Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum.	
37	4/29/2025	I hope that the State will properly maintain and continue to display the USS Ward Gun. This is an important piece of history which deserves to be taken care of. Thank you	Email
38	4/29/2025	I'm writing to urge you to support the Minnesota Military Museum's plan to place USS Ward's gun #3 on indoor display at the new museum building near Camp Ripley, MN. Thank you for your time and consideration.	Email
39	4/30/2025	Please consider moving forward, to transfer the Ward gun to the MN Military & Veterans Museum.	Email
40	4/5/2025	I've recently read about the proposal to remove the deck gun of the USS Ward, restoring it, and ensconcing it at the new Minnesota Military Museum. I think that this is a capital idea as it will enhance the interpretation of Minnesota's military history and will at the very least prompt the restoration of the gun. Thank you,	Email