

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON WHETHER CONDITIONS IN MINNESOTA RULES 2400.2703 SUBPART 6 HAVE BEEN MET FOR THE CAAP BOARD TO REVIEW THE APPLICATION TO REMOVE THE USS WARD GUN FROM THE CAPITOL MALL

A. Comments received between December 3, 2024 – January 7, 2025, during the Public Comment period.

No	Date	Comment	Mode of submission
1	12/2/2024	The Minnesota Military and Veterans Musuem is a much better venue one that the present one of it hidden in the shrubbery on the Capitol grounds. The USS Ward's deck gun fired the opening of the Pearl Harbor debacle. It is a very important artifact of Minnesota's military history and should be interpreted in a fitting way that will be done in the Minnesota Military Veterans Museum. Thank you.	Email
2	12/2/2024, 12/3/2024	I am writing to ask for clarification on the proposed removal. Is the overall plan to have the World War One Memorial, removed for repair and restoration then reinstalled? Or is it to remove the Memorial all together from the Capitol Mall? Also, the link contained in this latest update on the Memorial doesn't open to a web form for public comment. Will there be a web form, or is there a specific email address that people will need to submit their comments to regarding the Memorial? I didn't notice a solicitation being sent to request input on restoration. Was posted during this process, and could I see obtain a copy? We just had some World War Two pieces restored in NW/WC Minnesota, that would be similar to the gun from the USS Ward, so I am curious about how that process went for CAAPB. I'm sorry, I did not come across the Memos from the MMVM but was able to review them now. Thank you for directing me to them for more clarity. I do have one follow up question, as the USS Ward Gun serves as the state's WWI Memorial on the Capitol Mall, is there a tentative plan for a replacement WWI Memorial currently?	Email
3	12/2/2024	Keep the USS Ward Gun. Don't remove it. It is our history, whether you like it or not	Email
4	12/2/2024	It seems as though this is very much a part of Minnesota history and should stay here. Incidentally, about 20 years ago I noticed the footplate on the gun was loose. I reported it and saw that it was immediately repaired.	Email

5	12/4/2024	I am interested in the background of the removal discussions for the WW2 Navy cannon? can you send me info on 1. how cannon got there? it's ties to Minnesota and the petitioner to add it to Capitol area.? 2. identification of any other historical markers, signs, labels & art currently on in mall area . I assume you have a complete inventory.? 3. where this cannon will go if removed 4. what plans your committee has to replace it? or leave space empty? thank you.	Email
6	12/11/2024,	After reviewing all materials, I believe that the removal request meets the condition of M.R. 2400.2703 Subpart 6., Item 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." As a Minnesotan, I am glad this artifact will be relocated to the museum for restoration and display, and commend Randal Dietrich and his staff for their efforts.	Email
7	12/12/2024	I'm not against removing the Gun, under the conditions outlined. But there is nothing to indicate what will happen to Gun after removal. Will the Military Musium keep it? Will it be scrapped? I would like to see it saved in some way.	Email
8	12/19/2024	Hello CAAPB staff and advisory board, I would like to submit a public comment on the subject of the USS Ward deck-gun on display at the MN State Capital Mall. As a fan of Minnesota history and of our veterans, I am grateful that Minnesota has had this unique artifact in connection to America's opening shots of WWII on public display, and the special relationship it has with Minnesota. I am proud that Minnesotan's were the first to fire shots on the enemy in defense of our country in WWII, and that such history has always been easily publicly available without barriers. Primary preference: If possible, I believe that the gun should stay on the MN State Capital Mall as an easily accessible, honored place to teach and preserve that important state history. As it is on the State Capital Mall, it is among other memorials and monuments to Minnesota history and Minnesota military history (such as the nearby MN Medal of Honor Recipients memorial), and is easily visible from the road so that passersby may see it and either	Email

		remember what happened, or be curious enough to pull over and visit it someday and learn more about this important history. Alternative preferences: If due to maintenance concerns, weather erosion from outdoor display, or climate change concerns, the Ward gun must be moved I have thought of the following options which are suitable for continued historic preservation and public display. All involve the deck gun being kept in Minnesota for memorial and historical purposes. A. The deck gun stays in it's current location, and the state can build a roofed structure around it with clear plexiglass style walls around it to protect it from further weather damage. If this is not ideal due to funding, may I recommend contacting the local Twin Cities Scouts of America – Northern Star Council and seeing if any scouts would be interested in building such a structure as an Eagle Scout Project? B. The deck gun be moved to another indoor location still on the MN State Capital Mall, such as inside the MN State Capital itself, or inside the lobby of the MN Veterans Administration or Military-National Guard Administration buildings. C. The deck gun be moved to the nearby MN History Museum for permanent indoor display. D. The deck gun be moved to the Commemorative Air Force Twin Cities Chapter hanger museum at the South St. Paul Airport for permanent display; either always inside its hanger where they have a small but impressive WWII artifact museum, or displayed mostly indoors but occasionally outdoors on temporary basis during good weather for special events such as their early summer and early fall swing dances where the CAF display their aircraft and other artifacts outside their main hanger which is itself mostly turned into a dance hall with a live big-band, with the exception of the small WWII museum area in the back of the hanger. E. The deck gun be moved to the new, and currently under construction, Minnesota Military Museum located adjacent to the MN National Guard base Camp Ripley for permanent indoor display. F. The deck gun be moved to the Duluth Maritime History Museum of Canal Park adjacent to the lift bridge, as the gun is a unique piece of Minnesota maritime history.	
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B. Comments received on or before December 19, 2024, during the Public Hearing

No	Date	Comment	Mode of comment
9	12/13/2024	I strongly support the proposal to move the USS Ward Gun to the MN Military Musuem by Camp Ripley as they have the capacity to maintain this important piece of MN military history. In addition I think more people will see it and lean about it at our military museum. I am a MN combat veteran who has deployed multiple times, and a military researcher (full-time retired volunteer). I legally can not, and do not speak for the VFW or American Legion, but as an individual who is a Vice Commander at both I can say our membership supports this.	Email
10	12/18/2024	I had planned to attend the hearing tomorrow however now I am unable to make it. I am interested to hear others' opinions and thoughts. From my perspective the USS Ward gun has been on the Capitol grounds since 1958 and is made to be outdoors in a central location. I remember being in Oahu for the 70th Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. It was so neat to see the information and pictures of the USS Ward and crew. I took pride in our Minnesota connection and still do. I knew the Ward gun was at the Capitol and it sparked renewed interest in telling others and showing others where it is located. My dad and I have also visited it several times. I agree it needs to be maintained however it should be maintained at its current site...the Capitol Mall area. I do not agree it should be taken to Little Falls for the new museum that has not been built yet. In a recent article there is mention that many items are still in storage because there's not enough room to display them in the current building. It also mentions how the current location deters people from coming to the museum because of the imposing gates of Camp Ripley. . New museum aims to tell the stories of Minnesota veterans Artsandculture grandrapidsmn.com The better alternative is to keep and maintain the gun at the Capitol grounds and not be moved to Little Falls. Maybe this is the impetus to keep it maintained at our capital city of St. Paul rather than moving it to a less central location.	Email

11	12/19/2024	Thank you for allowing me to attend to this public hearing. My name is Brooks Berg and I am a retired navy captain. I served in the Sub-marine force of the United States navy. I also volunteer currently at the Dr Harold C Deutsch World War 2 history center as a member of the World War 2 round table. I also work with Randal in a limited fashion to work on restoration of the Little Falls museum area. The USS Ward gun is an artifact that deserves and demands better protection from the elements, it is a hugely valuable piece of artwork, as I see its being called here to the State of Minnesota. Randal Dietrich as executive director is here and I know he will be a proud owner of the...should it be decided to transition it away from the Capitol mall area. Randal recently hosted a meeting online on December 16th for commemoration of Battle of the Burge with noted author Alex Kershaw who wrote about the subject. Randal is such enormous proponent of Minnesota History that he pointed out to Minnesota veterans that were featured in the book prominently by Alex Kershaw the author and this is the type of work that Randal induces for the museum as the owner of this gun. This gun has been exposed to extreme weather conditions of Minnesota for more than 60 years, its hot, its cold, its icy, its next to a roadway with salt, potassium and everything else. If it is allowed to sit out there...you showed pictures of what it looks like now, I can't imagine what its looking like underneath that paint. Being a navy veteran I know that rust is insidious and attacks everywhere all the time. So not being a conservator, am just an engineer that served on submarines if you see rust like that you get nervous. If we don't do something in the right manner to preserve that gun, that gun will probably not be around too much longer perhaps, so we need to take care of it. And I don't think painting over rust is a valuable solution, or a solution that this valuable piece of a Minnesota history deserves. I think painting over it just paints over the problems instead of addressing the root cause of the problems, which is galvanic cell corrosion and some other things that are going on there. So the viable solutions being presented by removing this gun from Capitol mall to where it will be properly conserved and displayed. I know, I have seen it several many times in the last couple of years here, its not plainly visible to people that aren't exactly looking for it, and so if you are out there, you don't know exactly where to go, you are not going to find it in my opinion. Placing it in a museum with other hugely important Minnesota artefacts like this, where people actually go on purpose to see something like this makes sense to me and probably to a whole bunch of other people.	In person

		Thank you for allowing me to speak my piece.	
12	12/19/2024	Good afternoon, and thank you for the time here Tina to speak to the committee on this important topic. My name is Bill James, I am the area president for the navy league of the United States for the Upper Midwest, encompassing all of Minnesota as well as the Dakotas, Iowa and parts of Nebraska. The Navy League of the United States is a time-honored citizen led non-profit association that was formed during the Teddy Roosevelt administration. Our mission is to educate, advocate and support on behalf of the active duty and veterans of the United States Navy Marine Corp, the US Coast Guard and the Merchant Services. So, we are a citizen led team that focuses on kind of the water team if you will. So, looking at the history behind the ward and particularly the gun that is on the mall here, it is our concerted belief that we need to preserve this artifact long term so that future generations can take advantage of understanding the relevancy and importance of the history that was involved with the ward during World War 2. Obviously Randal has got a great plan for a brand new museum up in that Camp Ripley, and its a perfect location to move this gun to, that location restored so that it can reside in a safe secure, better environmentally controlled area so that future generations to come can learn about the history, and the background and the relevance and the importance of this important military artwork. So as the representatives of the Department of the Navy and marines and Coast Guard here, we'd like to have continuity of supporting not only the mission of the armed forces involved, but also the history and legacy that goes on with their great past. Where the gun sits today obviously its challenged due to the environmentals, other structural support issues and it would be a real travesty if it continued to deteriorate to the point where it would have to be removed and then obviously scraped out. So we think its a great moment in time to pick up this artefact, get it professionally reconditioned and then to put in a great brand-new museum so that future generations can enjoy and visually learn about it. Thank you.	In person
13	12/19/2024	Thank you for allowing me to speak, I am a consulting objects conservator and one time I kind of worked for the Minnesota Historical Society and was involved with the actual hands on work on the Ward Gun and I submitted 3 documents to the CAAP Board that outline the history, the maintenance history of the gun since atleast 1958, through my active work on it was in 2009 and then there is a report from MNHS dated 2015, so you can get the actual details from that. I was contracted by	In person

		Randal Dietrich earlier this year and I completed a current edition report and conservation recommendations for the gun in February and so I would just like to read my conclusions from that. As documented in the condition report submitted to the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum in February. The Ward 3 Gun currently on outdoor display is actively deteriorating resulting in continued metal losses and disfigurement. This is evident in the various paint loss areas which have exposed the underlying metal to active corrosion. Active corrosion of iron alloys which the gun is primarily composed of is indicated by flaking metal surfaces, yellow and orange corrosion products and rust staining on the painted surfaces, all of those indicators are present on the gun, including relatively large areas of metal loss on the recoil tubes which have exposed the interior springs and as was previously mentioned here, the current location of the gun is exposing it to aerosolized sodium chloride salt particles from road salt which are driving the corrosion reaction. The best course of action to preserve the USS Ward Gun and to prevent further alteration of the significant historic object is to remove it from outdoor display and store it in a controlled indoor display environment. Thank you.	
14	12/19/2024	Thank you, Bill Strusinski, and the Ward Gun was having issues when I was Commissioner of Administration back in 1978 with the restoration. We couldn't get funds to restore it or keep it appropriately conditioned, so I think this a great opportunity to get it reconditioned and to relocate to some place where there would mean a little bit more visibility for everybody, and suffice and help educate the world as to the importance of that artefact. Thank you	Online
15	12/19/2024	Hi, Doug here, not too much to add, I am really excited to see the Ward Gun restored and put in a place where it can be saved and shown to future generations, I think where its at right now is detrimental to it and happy to see this process move forward.	Online
16	12/19/2024	Good afternoon, thanks for the time to speak, I am Gary Carlberg, while I am combat deployed veteran myself, I really want to speak more on behalf of my father who was a World War 2 Vet that served in the pacific. That maintaining the condition and repairing what we have lost already and rebuilding this would be a high priority to my Dad, who appreciated going to the museums and seeing the equipment and things from when he served. And so I really think the paint	In person

		to me its not really such a big deal, but the bit where the metal is deteriorating and some of the smaller pieces, the springs and some of the other parts that can't be replaced or would be significantly expensive that has me very concerned. So I think this is a good thing we are doing to move it into the Camp Ripley where so many other people could see it, I think its good. Thank you.	
17	12/19/2024	Sorry I couldn't get audio to work. I'm a member of the small group designing exhibits for the new museum, and just wanted to stress how central the USS Ward gun, restored, will be to the visitor experience entering the galleries. It will be the first tableau visitors experience, with mannequins telling the stories of the US Navy reservists who served the gun.	Online written comment read by Erik Cedarleaf Dahl