

## Watson, David F. - PDR

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**From:** Nina Woolford <nina@cmwoolford.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2020 2:24 PM  
**To:** Watson, David F. - PDR  
**Subject:** 428 North Boulevard Virginia Museum of History and Culture

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Mr. Watson,

I received a notice regarding proposed changes to the property at 428 N Boulevard, the Virginia Museum of History and Culture. I contacted Ms. Jones at the State of Va with my concerns to bring to the Commission meeting this afternoon. She suggested I contact you also as some of my concerns may be covered in the Special Use Permit requested for these improvements.

I am going to take the liberty of copying and pasting the email I sent to Ms. Jones this morning... please forgive me but I am supposed to be working. Since the meeting is later today I am trying to get this to you without having to compose another email. I realize after reading the proposal though that I should emphasize my concern for parking for residents during and after the proposed improvements as well as the visual impact of the project especially from the west (Sheppard St.) side. It is very important for the Historical Society (VMHC) to realize that the back of their building is the front of our homes. Those writing the proposal may think placing unwanted visual impact elements in the back of the building is preferred over the front of the building (facing Arthur Ashe Boulevard) but for those of us on Sheppard Street it's the other way around. Therefore, how this project visually impacts the back of the site is just as important as how it impacts the front.

Below is the email sent earlier to Ms. Jones which I am copying and pasting for your review.

I'd like to voice concerns about any work taking place prior to approval of the proposal.

I have special concerns because I'm located on the corner of Sheppard St. and Stuart Ave - directly across the street from the VMHC parking lot. What happens at the VMHC has a direct impact on this block and especially this corner.

1) How will parking for neighboring residents be impacted during the construction and afterward?

Parking is impossible Thursday evening through Sunday evening when the VMFA is open. Patrons visiting the VMFA and VMHC use street parking instead of paying the fee to park in the VMFA lot. This leaves nowhere for residents to park. It is not unusual to have to drive around and around until a spot opens up somewhat nearby. This parking issue is multiplied when an event is taking place at the VMFA and/or the prior Benedictine School.

Currently the Benedictine school is going through a major renovation which I understand is planned to continue for another year or so. As a result all contractors on this project use street parking Monday through Friday 7:00 am through 3:30 pm making it impossible for residents to find parking during the week day. If this is coupled with additional parking issues resulting from the VMHC construction proposal it will be absolutely impossible for residents to find a place to park at all.

In fact, the VMFA's and VMHC's contribution to the resident's street parking issue is very noticeable with the museum's closing due to

COVID. We have enjoyed being able to park close to our homes and would like this to continue. I would like the impact of street parking for residents to be considered prior to approval of any work proposals.

## 2) Noise level.

Currently Benedictine school is undergoing a major renovation. Demolition and renovation noise for this project goes from 7:00 am through 3:30 pm. While the noise isn't every day of the week it is most of the days of the week and reaches a level so ridiculous I cannot conduct business on the telephone with my windows open. Additional construction noise is simply unconscionable.

As long as the VMHC remembers they are located in a residential neighborhood where people sleep past 7:00 am, have children who take naps and should be able to open their windows while conducting telephone business then OK. The VMHC has to be sensitive to the noise level and responsive when neighbors have something to say about it.

## 3) Cleanliness of the job site.

For last upgrade at the VMFA the back of the building was used as a storage area. Unfortunately the back of the VMHC and VMFA is what I see from my front porch. I would ask VMHC to use an area for storage that does not impact the street view from the west or Sheppard Street side.

My home is located at 400 North Sheppard St., on the corner of Sheppard and Stuart Ave. Currently there is construction debris, dumpsters and trash visible from every single window down the side of my home. The front of my home overlooks the entrance to the VMHC and VMFA parking lot. If the VMHC uses the west side

of the property as storage then there will not be a window or outdoor area that is not visually impacted by construction material and debris within steps from my home.

I think sometimes contractors are not sensitive to the fact that this is a residential neighborhood. Just because we are located in the City does not mean that we have to forgo amenities such as quiet enjoyment of our property and pleasant views at the end of the day.

I can be reached at 804-833-4249 or email at [nina@cmwoolford.com](mailto:nina@cmwoolford.com)

Thank you.

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