

Noise Ordinance and the Need for Amending and Tools for Enforcement

Dear City Council,

Thank you for your time today.

I'm a Richmonder, living at 312 W. Grace Street since 2017 which is the former location of Haywood's salon. It's my living space and work space, including my recording studio. I'm a composer, musician, and visual artist. I believe it's my responsibility as a good neighbor to make sure my sound doesn't disturb others outside the building. The city ordinance is necessary so everyone has equitable access to a healthy environment, free of noise pollution. But the ordinance needs to be enforceable, with proper tools and resources.

The following are my suggestions for amending the current noise ordinance language:

1. **Professional-grade Tools:** Field monitors need proper tools to measure the dBA levels, properly calibrated. Amazon sells \$20 dB meters with subpar microphones, that even when calibrated are inaccurate and can not respond to a wide frequency range that would include low bass.
2. **Location for Measuring Noise:** The location in which the measurements are taken, need to be unobstructed by walls. You can't get accurate results when measuring in an alleyway, behind a dumpster.
3. **Enforcement** -- Extend from 14 days to at least 30 days the period in which the \$500 fine is required, going forward.
4. **Hours of enforcement:** The current noise coming from Common House is impacting not only me but a 36-unit apartment building and the alcohol and drug treatment program. Daytime hours should begin at 7:30 am to 9:30 pm. I and many of the people in my neighborhood work non-standard shifts.
5. **Noise Code is Clear:**
Richmond Code § 11-21
"No one should make noise that annoys or disturbs the quiet, comfort, or rest of other people in any dwelling, hotel, or other type of residence."

Thank you for your time and service.

Paul Rucker



Decibel Level Comparison Chart

Environmental Noise	<i>dBA</i>
Jet engine at 100'	140
Pain Begins	125
Pneumatic chipper at ear	120
Chain saw at 3'	110
Power mower	107
Subway train at 200'	95
Walkman on 5/10	94
<i>Level at which sustained exposure may result in hearing loss</i>	80-90
City Traffic	85
Telephone dial tone	80
Chamber music, in a small auditorium	75-85
Vacuum cleaner	75
Normal conversation	60-70
Business Office	60-65
Household refrigerator	55
Suburban area at night	40
Whisper	25
Quiet natural area with no wind	20
Threshold of hearing	0

Note: dBA = Decibels, A weighted