

Lee Higdon, President  
**Charlestowne Neighborhood Association**  
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November 29, 2023

VIA US MAIL AND EMAIL

The Honorable John T. Tecklenburg  
Mayor of the City of Charleston  
PO Box 652  
Charleston, SC 29402

RE: TRAFFIC CONTROL FOR VETERANS DAY PARADE

Dear Mayor Tecklenburg:

I am writing to you as the President of the Charlestowne Neighborhood Association ("CNA") to set out CNA's concerns related to the Veterans Day parade that took place on Sunday, November 5, 2023.

CNA's members live south of Broad St. and, for them, the traffic management and citizen communications related to this parade were a disaster that could, and should, have been avoided.

First, during the parade, the police cut off all roads in and out of the area south of Broad, making it impossible for our members to get to or from their homes. For some reason, Chisolm St. was closed to traffic for an hour or more, although it was not being used for the parade and had been open during this same parade in previous years.

Second, our members were not warned that they would be cut off from the world for an hour or much longer. There were no direct communications to our members from either the City or the sponsor of the parade, and limited communications, at best, to CNA. Those communications did not indicate that Chisolm St. would be closed; rather, they indicated that the parade would end at Colonial Lake.

Third, at least for some time and some officers, the police who were blocking traffic could not advise CNA members (or anyone else) how to get out of, or into, our neighborhood. They could just recite that they could not let cars pass on the roads they were blocking.

Our members were thus unpleasantly surprised to discover that they (and their guests, business partners, and other visitors) would be forced to wait for some indeterminate amount of time to get to or from the neighborhood. Appointments were missed, schedules were thrown off, and lives were generally disrupted. Also, some residents drove, walked, or ran, to and from various streets, trying to find a way for cars to get in or out, only to be cut off at every turn by police who provided no solution, creating an incredible amount of frustration.

CNA respectfully requests, on behalf of its members, that traffic control be better planned, better managed, and better communicated, for future parades or events that impair their ability to traverse Broad St., or otherwise impair their ability to access their homes, including the following steps:

1. The parade/event route should be planned to leave open at least two streets into, and out of, the south of Broad area. Preferably, one street would be on the east side, and the other on the west side.

2. The parade/event route and timing, and the open streets in and out, should be communicated clearly by the event's sponsor and/or city authorities to residents of the neighborhood, well before the event.

3. The police officers deployed for the event should know what streets will remain open for access to the area south of Broad, and be prepared to give people clear directions on how to get in and out of the area.

Most of the steps requested above are already required by the City's current ordinances and procedures.

Generally, the City's Special Events Ordinance states that, "to accommodate... the rights of adjacent property owners and the needs of the public to use streets", the City may require the sponsor of any event to make "accommodations for pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic using public right-of-ways and [impose] limitations on the duration of the special event".

More specifically, that ordinance states that the sponsor must give at least 30 days prior notice to the "impacted neighborhood president(s) and business(es)... listing date(s), time(s), and location/route", with a reminder 15 days prior to the event. Also, the template for the notice to the neighborhood president sets out that the sponsor will list all impacted streets and will place "information flyers" in the area. To our knowledge, no such list of streets was provided, and no such flyers were distributed to residents south of Broad.

CNA members support events like the Veterans Day parade, but we have voiced our concerns in this letter in an effort to ensure that these events do not needlessly create a calamity for us.

Finally, I think you should know that I will cease to be president of the CNA at the end of 2023, and Jack Cleland will take over that role in 2024. Jack has worked with me on this letter; Jack and other CNA Board members fully support it. If you have any questions or concerns about any of CNA's requests referenced above, Jack is prepared to take the lead on responding. His email address is [clelandjh@gmail.com](mailto:clelandjh@gmail.com) and his cell number is 607-725-1437. If you think it might help, he could arrange a meeting between relevant City personnel and him and/or appropriate CNA board members.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Higdon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lee Higdon  
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cc (via email):

Daniel Riccio, Director, Livability and Tourism  
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Chito Walker, Chief of Police  
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Mike Seekings, District 8 Councilmember, City of Charleston  
William Cogswell, Mayor-Elect, City of Charleston