

From: Mary Ann Veira
Sent: Wed 3/20/2019 7:11 PM
To: Clerks Richmondhill
Cc: Tom Muench
Subject: Indigenous Land Rights Acknowledgment

To: Mayor Barrow, Regional & Local Councillors,

I am writing today on behalf of myself and my husband with respect to Councillor West's motion to include an Indigenous Land Rights Acknowledgment at the beginning of Richmond Hill Council meetings. We are both very much in favour of the motion, and will try to attend the March 25th Council meeting to demonstrate our support.

I don't think the average Canadian (myself included!) has any idea of the extent to which indigenous peoples were victimized in countless ways throughout our country's so-called "discovery and settlement" by European explorers. Unfortunately, many abuses of our First Nations peoples continue to this day, with respect to marginalization, prejudice, substandard living conditions, lack of consultation, etc.

Our Federal Government has undertaken some conciliatory measures in an attempt to recognize and atone for many of these abuses, through the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report of 2015. However, actual progress on these measures has been slow and hard-fought. Therefore, it's up to each of us as Canadians to support efforts to recognize our First Nations peoples and their historical connections to the lands that we gratefully inhabit. The inclusion of a Traditional Land Rights Acknowledgment at the beginning of Council meetings would be one such step. We see no reason why this Motion should not receive unanimous support from our Council.

Mary Ann & Peter Veira
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