

From: Sharon Sajan  
Sent: Sat 3/23/2019 11:14 PM  
To: Clerks Richmondhill  
Subject: Committee of the Whole - Land Acknowledgement

To whom it may concern,

I would like to add my thoughts in SUPPORT of land acknowledgement (read below), entered to become part of the public record.

If time allows, I would also like to register to speak as a delegation in support of this motion. Please see following letter to e added to the public record:

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Dear Members of the Council,

I am a first-generation immigrant to Canada and has been a resident of Richmond Hill since 2006. It is the town my family has decided to settle in and call our home. As a resident and community member of this diverse town, I recognize that diversity is a value we share with our neighbours and our council.

Therefore, I was disappointed to learn that the issue of Land Acknowledgement was delayed, and especially horrified to learn about deputy mayor Joe DiPaola's comments in opposition to this motion.

I truly believe it is only right to recognize that the land which I call my home is not rightfully mine, and my ability to reside here is a privilege donated by me (as a settler), that came from the historical atrocities and current practices that disproportionately impacted and continues to impact the indigenous people of our community.

As an immigrant, and a proud woman of South Asian culture, I believe that acknowledging the land is an important duty and an act I am proud to support.

"Diversity" is not encouraged by erasing responsibility to one community at the name of others. "Diversity" should not be cited to stay deaf to the calls for reconciliation.

"Diversity" is not blinding ourselves to the differences in our diverse population, or their independent histories. As a settler in Canada, my history is different from the First Nation's and Indigenous residents of our community. Recognizing and honouring that difference is not disrespectful or in refutation of the other cultures that live in our town.

As elected members of our town, Council has a responsibility to the people of this town. Responsibility to respect the history of this land, recognize the wrongs, educate itself to the impacts of us settlers on the indigenous people who resided and resides on this land, and to lead by example in a move towards reconciliation – and above all, to not to participate in actions that continue to perpetuate erasure of Indigenous people.

I hope the Councillors of this town will reconsider their decision, and vote in favour of including land acknowledgement statements.

Thank you,  
Sharon Sajan