



TOWN OF EXETER

Planning and Building Department

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 772-4709

www.exeternh.gov

Date: October 5, 2020
To: Russell Dean, Town Manager
From: Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner
Re: Star Gazing Event at Raynes Farm

I am to request to Selectboard support for the Conservation Commission to host a star gazing event at Raynes Farm on October 16th from 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm.

The event is planned for the open field at Raynes with no access to the barn permitted.

A representative from the NH Astronomical Society will be present to point to different stars and planets visible in the night sky. We are requiring all participants to be masked and remain socially distanced throughout the program. We have implemented a ticket reservation system to ensure number remain manageable with an attendee cap of up to 100 participants.

Given the short duration of the event, no food or port-a-potty will be provided.

Thank You.



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: Indigenous Peoples' Day

1 message

Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 5, 2020 at 3:10 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Brindamour, Emmanuelle** <ebrindamour@exeter.edu>
Date: Mon, Oct 5, 2020 at 2:14 PM
Subject: Indigenous Peoples' Day
To: Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, NPapakonstantis@exeternh.gov <NPapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>, DBrowne@exeternh.gov <DBrowne@exeternh.gov>, mcowan@exeternh.gov <mcowan@exeternh.gov>, jgilman@exeternh.gov <jgilman@exeternh.gov>, loliff@exeternh.gov <loliff@exeternh.gov>

Dear Mr. Dean, Mr. Papakonstantis, Mr. Browne, Ms. Cowan, Ms. Gilman, and Ms. Roundtree Oliff,

My name is Emmanuelle, and I am a senior at Phillips Exeter Academy on 20 main street. Mr. Dean, we communicated a few months ago regarding supporting the town during Covid.

I have indigenous roots from Quebec and have been surrounded by Abenaki and Wabanaki culture growing up. Since last spring, I have been a member of Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective and I've started my school's first reconciliation initiative at PEA. In both initiatives, one of our main focuses is the importance of Indigenous Peoples Day.

I know it is a busy time for you, but I hope that you can consider the following request. Below, I provide several reasons why I believe the Indigenous Peoples' Day should be celebrated instead of Columbus Day in the town of Exeter, which is coming up on Oct. 12th. I've also attached a more in-depth policy brief from the perspective of a colleague regarding this change in her own town (<https://indigenousoh.com/2020/10/02/indigenous-peoples-day-policy-brief/>). The treaty of Exeter, on which I am conducting an independent study with the PEA history department, signed by Rev. John Wheelwright shows that the lands of Exeter were indigenous lands that remain unceded. It is imperative that we recognize the history of the lands on which we live and operate.

In my opinion, the town of Exeter should replace Columbus with Indigenous Peoples Day for the following reasons:

1. This requested change helps to ensure that we celebrate people(s) instead of celebrating a single person who had no direct relation to the North American history and caused (even if some argue did not enact) genocide (as a consequence) of local populations; this request helps to symbolically remove a reminder of the violent history of 500 years of colonial oppression at the hands of European explorers - this change is the right thing to do. E.g., "It was a reaction to a sense of 'Why would Americans celebrate Columbus?' says Sebastian Braun, director of American Indian studies at Iowa State University, of efforts to change the holiday's name. 'From an indigenous perspective, he came to be seen as someone not very positive, who came to be seen as an initiator of oppression and the taking away of land and rights'" (see <https://www.fastcompany.com/90415959/columbus-day-or-indigenous-peoples-day-the-fight-over-a-name-and-why-it-matters>);
2. This change will allow celebrating and acknowledging that the Native populations safeguarding (stewarding) this land (and waterways) for generations. E.g., "**The most American thing about America is American Indians, said Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche)**" (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-indian/2019/10/11/indigenous-peoples-day-2019/>).

3. This day is symbolically important; it can help to raise awareness of the rich history, culture, and traditions of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/national-museum-american-indian/2019/10/11/indigenous-peoples-day-2019/>)

4. Despite some of our representatives claims to the contrary, many Italian-Americans support the change from CD to the IPD and question why Italian American pride should be tied to Columbus and not some other important group of people or, indeed, a person. E.g., In 2017, the then-president and chief operating officer of the National Italian American Foundation, John M. Viola said (see <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/09/opinion/christopher-columbus-day-statue.html>), "...for many people, including some Italian-Americans, the celebration of Columbus is viewed as belittling the suffering of indigenous peoples at the hands of Europeans...I have never been one to blindly uphold any single figure as the representative of all things Italian-American, since all individuals are flawed, and all monuments represent just a snapshot of our history, now measured against 21st-century sensibilities." Just a side note: The voyage of Columbus (born in the either Republic of Genoa, NOT then Italy, or "Spain" [although again there was not Spain at that time] or Portugal [which is the oldest nation-state on the Iberian Peninsula and arguably the first colonial European power in the 15th century]) was funded by the Spanish crown (not Spain per se, but the Kingdom of Aragon (Ferdinand) + the Castilian nobility (Isabella)). So, in fact, this holiday celebrates the Spanish crown or/and Portugal more than anything else.

5. The purpose of the IPD is NOT to offend Italian-Americans. E.g., "The California state senator Lori Hancock, then the mayor of Berkeley, remembers encountering Italian-American pushback at the time [1990s]... 'We just had to keep reiterating that that was not the purpose,' she told Mr. Feeney. 'The purpose was to really affirm the incredible legacy of the indigenous people who were in the North American continent long before Columbus.'" (See <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/04/learning/should-columbus-day-be-replaced-with-indigenous-peoples-day.html>).

6. It is the right thing to do because there are (a) plenty of precedents in US history (see the map @ https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/news/map-making-indigenous-peoples-day-official-across-the-country-NRjFLa8jfESLKA1831N8aA?fbclid=IwAR0M6p29a5BHb6djrvULXkzcZSGU8W1_jlfvz7mPLTcaobOaIV_FrY6qKYU), and there is an international on-going effort to make this happen. In 1977, several indigenous leaders at the UN Conference in Geneva, moved to celebrate indigenous sovereignty and self-determination by observing "October 12, the day of so-called discovery of America, as an International Day of Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples of the Americas"; this was formally recognized by the UN in the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in Sept. 2007.

7. Adopting the change will help to use this day as a state-wide educational opportunity to help us build a stronger community.

8. **Several** towns have moved to replace CD with IDP; it would be great to be on the right side of history.

Please consider bringing this change to the town council to ensure an official discussion occurs (just like various Indigenous peoples have been erased purposefully and by us being and staying silent about their lives, plights, and great contributions) I have faith that our town will do what is right.

Sincerely,
Emmanuelle Brindamour