



Watertown City Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President &
District C Councilor

John M. Airasian
Councilor At Large

Caroline Bays
Councilor At Large

John G. Gannon,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Nicole Gardner,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

Emily Izzo,
District D Councilor

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022 AT 6:00 PM RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 149 MAIN STREET MINUTES

In accordance with the provisions of Rule 2.6 of the Rules of the City Council, and pursuant to the Call of the Council President, the members of the City Council of the City of Watertown were notified of a Special Meeting of the City Council to be held on Tuesday, June 21, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, Administration Building. The public also was invited to participate remotely using any of the public access methods listed below:

ACCESS INFORMATION:

A. The meeting was televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television):<http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=3>

B. The Public could join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertownma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>

C. The Public could join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 92991331344

D. Public could comment through email: vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov

1. ROLL CALL

Council President Sideris called to order a special meeting of the Town Council at 6:00 p.m. in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Those present were Councilors John M. Airasian, Caroline Bays, John G. Gannon, Nicole Gardner, Lisa J. Feltner, Emily Izzo, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were Thomas Tracy, Acting City Manager and Marilyn W. Pronovost, Council Clerk.

2. MEETING DISCUSSION - ACTION

A. Discussion and Vote on a Petition to Rename the Columbus Delta

Mishy Lesser – Stated the people of Watertown live on the land of the Pequosette. She described the culture of the early inhabitants as being prosperous, cooperative, and environmentally conscious until they were invaded by Europeans. Columbus was a harsh conquering force that cruelly overcame the indigenous people. Italian Americans likewise were

traumatized when they arrived in the U.S. In order to protect themselves, Knights of Columbus petitioned to name the delta the Columbus Delta in the 1920's. If Columbus were a more compassionate person, she would not be seeking a name change. This request is not an attack on Italian American neighbors, rather it is a way to recognize painful truths that have occurred in American history. This is a request of inclusion.

James DiStefano – Stated he believed in necessary change, but this request was not necessary; Columbus is a hero to many in this country and the world. The lies of Howard Zinn did not make them true; they have been debunked by several reputable authors. As President of the MA Italian American Alliance, he feared this petition would divide Watertown and urged the Councilors to vote no on the petition.

Russ Arico – 49 Fayette Street – The petition is based on distorted history. Many Italian Americans who immigrated were treated as second class citizens, but through their hard work ethic, they were able to improve life for their children making contributions to the country. The delta was named in honor of Columbus as a way of thanking the many people who sacrificed for and contributed to this country. He requested the Council not to move forward with the petition.

Eileen Ryan – 48 Pearl Street – She supported the renaming of the square. As a descendant of Irish immigrants, she understood the discrimination many immigrants faced when coming to this country; however, she did not feel Watertown should honor Columbus. The original settlement of Watertown is linked to the genocide of the native communities.

Anthony Diieso – He took umbrage at the petition because it disrespected Italian Americans and the Knights of Columbus. He felt the request emphasized misrepresentation. He asked the Council not to change the name because it is not necessary.

Clyde Younger – 188 Acton Street – Watertown has always celebrated its diversity; rather than renaming the delta, he suggested the Council consider honoring Watertown's diversity as an example that Watertown speaks and does something about diversity.

Jennifer Wolfrum – 23 Clyde Road – Stated she was a neighbor with legitimacy which meant she acknowledged she was a settler living on land settled by ancestral land owned by the Pequotette band of a MA tribe and that it was taken violently by English settlers. Slavery on this continent began in 1492 with the genocide of the indigenous people. She asked the Council to reconsider the name of the delta. This petition is not about discriminating against Italian American but about bringing the truth to who Columbus was. She would like to see Watertown as a welcoming community.

Marilyn Petitto Devaney – Stated Watertown is on Pequosette land that was purchased for more than 13 pounds. In 1940, the stone in the delta was a gift from the Watertown Council of the Knights of Columbus to the Town Council who accepted it. While she respected the opinions of the petitioners, it is based on misinformation. She felt it disrespected the Knights of Columbus who devoted themselves to good deeds for all citizens.

Sharon Bauer – 62 Pearl Street – Stated that changing stories we tell about ourselves is painful. We should not teach the story of the heroic Columbus because it is the right thing to do. We should find a way to the truth by telling the stories of the different nationalities who make Watertown a diverse community and not be devoted to only one nationality.

Elan Rhode – 43 Partridge Road – Stated her desire to retain the name of Columbus Delta. Changing the name will not achieve any social justice and will not change the actions of past. As a mixed-race person of indigenous descent, she cared very little about Columbus and felt this was an empty gesture in the name of social justice that is both insulting and demeaning.

Daniel Damico – 76 Edgecliff Road – Stated he was the son of an immigrant of Italian descent who faced discrimination; luckily, he did not while growing up because he always had Italian American role models. The community should not forget the discrimination, but remembering the past is not enough if there is no understanding and empathy for that pain. There is a need to prevent it from happening again in the future; there are others in the community facing discrimination. If Watertown is not doing something to help other people, it is not remembering the pain of the Italian Americans suffered. Therefore, he has no issue with renaming the delta.

Rafael Ortiz – South Carolina – He refuted the stories of the terrors of Columbus. The horror of Columbus is based on the stories of Howard Zinn.

“Ace” – 16 Olcott Street – Stated the name can be considered as just remembering the history; it does not mean you are honoring the person. The community cannot refuse or forget the history.

Christopher Ives – 42 Oliver Street - Stated he appreciated that Italian Americans faced violent persecution over multiple decades, but since 1940, they have celebrated their identity at the delta. As the spatial heart of the city, the delta is where Watertown celebrates its common identity, it is a central space to unite, express views, or just to relax, play, or wait for a bus. It seems fair that Watertown with its rich diversity should give the delta a new name that all can appreciate. This should be the common space and have a name that resonates not with just one group rather but with all, a name that is not alienating. The petition is not about cancelling or negating anyone but

including and affirming the diversity of the city. Perhaps it should just be named the Delta.

Al Cipponelli – 96 Chapel Street, Newton – Thanked the Council for having the courage to do this done in public. He asked the Council to not act as Newton did. He felt it was hurtful to be inclusive by being exclusive and felt it was counterproductive.

Sue Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin – 96 Russell Avenue – Watertown is not anti-Italian, and it does recognize that they suffered discrimination; however, we need to learn about the origins of places and learn about what happened to the native inhabitants, to be more inclusive. This is an issue that elicits an emotional response, but the facts cannot be ignored. The Delta's name should be one that represents all of Watertown.

Henry Barbaro – 11 Edinborough Street, Newton – Stated in colonial times life was more ruthless than it is now, but it was also an amazing time. The level of courage and exploration was amazing. We should consider the heroics of the explorers. Renaming the delta will not erase Columbus.

Felicia Sullivan – She supported the renaming of the delta. Having grown up in Austin Texas with the Confederate flag being prominent and having the schools named after Confederate generals was disturbing to her as a black person. People considered it Southern pride but now the South is changing and is removing the symbols of slavery. This is a time for reflection and the impact this name has on indigenous people in the community. It is important to learn and grow as a community. She hoped the Council would adopt the petition.

Joseph Rotella – 157 Common Street – As a second-generation Italian American, he knows of the hardships they faced: his grandfather sacrificed his life in the coal mines of PA and father served in the military in Vietnam. These are the types of Italian Americans that should be honored and remembered, not Columbus who is seen as a magnificent person. It is time for truth telling and the celebration of the many groups who came here including those who were here before the arrival of the Europeans. Removing the name or monument is not racist. Keeping Columbus' name does not celebrate his grandfather or acknowledge his stories, rather it perpetuates the narrative that does not reflect the struggle of the Italian American immigrants.

Arun Sannuti – 6 Amherst Road – Stated in 1892 a man came to this country, settled in Watertown and in 1917 volunteered in WWI and gave his life for the U.S. There is a park dedicated to him, Dominic Philippello, a true Italian American hero. He is the person who should be honored not Columbus who never set foot near Watertown.

Fred Sullivan – 93 Mount Auburn Street – The naming of the delta after Columbus was meant as a celebration of Italian Americans coming to Watertown and surviving hardships. The name of Columbus was used because it was a powerful name at the time. When there is any action, whose intent is to demonize a person, it is divisive. In 2022, a discussion of who we are is worth having; the community should celebrate who we are with no reflection on any ethnicity.

Carol – Cambridge – Stated she wrote a book on Col and the quest in Jerusalem

Marissa Babin – Malden – She opposed the renaming of the delta as it discriminates against her as an Italian American, a history lover, and as someone who is on the autism spectrum. She related to the historical figures as they provide different views and cultures. It is important to remember these figures with statues and memorials. By excluding certain figures, it becomes a trend of removing unpopular figures and does not demonstrate inclusion of the politically diverse.

Sara Keary – 46 Parker Street – As an Italian American, she favors the change of the name of the delta and feels her ancestor would agree with her. She urged the Council to consider the voices of Watertown residents.

Aravinda Ananda – 157 Common Street – The country is making a move towards using Columbus Day to honor indigenous peoples. It is the responsibility of the community to stop perpetuating the myth of a man who was influential in the genocide of the native people, their history, and their culture. The country should not continue perpetuating the harmful myth that Columbus discovered America because it erases the fact that many people lived in this country. The community has a duty to not further erase the history of the indigenous.

Elodia Thomas – 67 Marion Street – As an immigrant, she felt all parties needed to treat each other with respect and inclusion and wondered if the petitioners ever reached out to the Italian clubs. She felt change should begin with discussion and opinions of all parties. History is filled with invasion, conquering, and taking over territory. Many Italian Americans were not aware the Delta was named after Columbus. The community can do better than what it is doing currently.

Clyde Younger – Stated he was concerned that the issues of Native Americans need to be discussed as well.

Amleto Martocchia – 92 Franklin Street – Stated he was 11 when he came to the United States. His family served in the US Air Force for twenty years. Columbus symbolizes the adventuresome spirit of exploration; something

that continues today in space and in the oceans. He did not favor changing the name of the Delta but suggested finding another landmark to honor the Pequotsette people.

Council President Sideris closed the public hearing. Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer the petition to the Committee on Public Works to reconsider the naming of the Delta in Watertown Square in accordance with Resolution 2019 – R – 85; Councilor Gardner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted on a vote of 8-2. All councilors voted in favor of the amendment except for Councilor Airasian and Council President Sideris who voted in the negative.

B. Discussion and Vote on a Petition to Designate from 98-224 Main St. and Other Parcels a Historic District

Council President Sideris read the petition. He noted the only thing the Council could do under the Massachusetts General Laws at this session was to determine if it would like to investigate the establishment of a Historic District. The statute states how districts are determined to be historic: A vote would be required to investigate the establishment of a Historic District followed by an investigation and a report; the Planning Board would hold a public hearing and comment; 14 days' notice would be needed to be provided to certain owners within the district; a final report would be prepared followed by a vote of the City Council for which a 2/3's majority vote would be needed to create an ordinance for the Historic District.

Clyde Younger – Stated he submitted the petition because people see the area as a village within the City that should be lined with open space and trees consistent with New England's unique character. This would help the environment. He asked the Council to use the process to prevent the damage a proposed project would make over the area.

Joseph Salusti – Business Owner on Main Street – He opposed the request and felt it was a senseless and inappropriate request. He stated there was a difference between old and historic and these buildings were not historic.

Linda Scott – 55 Olcott Street – Businesses are marketing Watertown as a quaint area with historic homes.

Joshua Rosmarin – 29 Ashland Street – He opposed the petition because it was not about creating an historic district but freezing Watertown in the past. It was intended to block new development of new housing needed in Watertown and would block opening up Watertown to others. A city needs a robust citizen base to support its small businesses. The development would benefit housing; this petition would short circuit a way to meet housing needs and take the city in the wrong direction.

Elodia Thomas – 67 Marion Street – Stated there is a difference between significant and old. Many are fatigued by development and the Square could use upgrade. Watertown is in the midst of a redo of the Comprehensive Plan. She suggested people answer the survey to determine how it should be developed. The Mass Historic District Commission would be providing a workshop on Tuesday, June 28, 2022 on how to create such a district which is lengthy and complicated.

Dan Pritchard – 13 Hosmer Street – He opposed the change because it is harmful for the community and has unintended consequences. The petition is designed to stop development. He supported the new housing to help citizens live here and to retain local businesses. Creating an historic district would increase the cost of living here and hurt people struggling to get into the housing market.

Fred Sullivan – Stated he was small business owner restoring windows for historic grounds and has had an exposure to historic districts and felt the intent of the district is important as well. He stated Watertown has a wonderful history attached to the Revolution and the Abolitionist Movement. There is a need to build more housing, but it is important not to just to rip down buildings.

Sam Ghilardi – 46 Aldrich Road – He opposed the petition. It is difficult to buy a home here with prices going up constantly. At some point, the City must put the people of the community first. The community cannot preserve a village if there is no one can live in it.

Linda Scott – Stated the City should not ignore its heritage; history is good for the economy and makes it more desirable. Before taking down buildings with the supposition that it is not important is often regretted. She urged the Council to err on the side of caution.

Jackie Van Leeuwen – 32 Whites Avenue – She was uncertain about the petition but was concerned with the developer's commitment to affordable housing and the effect on small businesses.

Elodia Thomas – 67 Marion Road – She restated that the Mass Historic District had workshops and provided materials. If citizens are interested in an issue, they need to become educated about the matter.

Clyde Younger – He understood the need for a Historic District as the current City Historic District affected a property he owned. There is a process for creating a Historic District, and the Council should be allowed to complete it.

Mary Connolly Sullivan – 93 Mount Auburn Street – Stated she took pride in the historic district; it is important to the city. The City needs to learn to preserve but has failed to put money into preservation. She is concerned about the overbuilding of the city; it needs to slow down. The City needs to think before it builds. She asked what the city envisioned for itself and that it needs to think of its history and save it a bit.

There being no other speakers; Council President Sideris closed the public hearing.

Councilor Feltner moved to consider making a Historic District for the addresses stated in the petition; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion.

In the discussion that followed, these statements were made:

- If the motion is approved, the Historic District would need to conduct a study as to what is of historical and architectural significance of the buildings, structures, or sites. Once that is done and a significance is found, there is a more detailed process that follows that could be completed in 1-2.5 years.
- A concern was raised because not many people spoke in favor of the petition nor was a reasoned rationale provided for doing this change. There was insufficient information given for what is the purpose of the district; what is being historically saved; and why these buildings should be preserved.
- These buildings are not old buildings; there is nothing special, historic, or significant about them.
- When the Comprehensive Plan was established the building on Main Street was never envisioned as a historic district. The building was built in 1975 and is not even old enough to be considered for demolition delay which requires 50 years of existence. This petition is not about preserving a historic block, but rather the prevention of a business block from being sold to a developer.
- If a study were completed many open questions would be considered

The motion failed with all Councilors voting against on a roll call vote.

C. Discussion and Vote on Two Proposals from the CPC for Funding

Mark Krackiewicz spoke on behalf of the Community Preservation Committee. The CPC is proposing two projects for a cost of \$327,195: the restoration of the 1630 and 1930 City Hall Geographical Paintings in City Hall and the restoration of Irving Park.

The painting will be restored by Louise Orsini, a former fellow of Paintings conservation at the Harvard Art Museums' Straus Center and a former conservator at the Museum of Fine Arts, to stabilize the edges of the painting, paint over areas where the paint has disappeared, and patch holes. The brass frame will be restored by replacing the missing part with a wooden part

painted to take on the tone of the brass. The project will start this summer, be completed next summer, and cost \$33,000 which will come from the Historic Preservation Account.

The second project is the restoration of Irving Park and is currently in disrepair. It will be restored for passive recreation with a crossover aisle in the center, benches, and dark sky lighting. On the Royal Street side, there will be a small 30” metal fence with plantings and benches. On Irving Street side, there will be a fence and plants. The DPW will provide granite curbing to surround the park which will be ADA accessible. The cost of the project is estimated at \$294,195 and will be taken from the outdoor recreation reserve account.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 budget recommendations of the CPC consisting of two projects: one for the City Hall geographic paintings restoration for \$33,000 to be funded from the Historic Preservation Account and one for the Irving Park project for \$294,195 to be funded from the Outdoor Recreation Account, both projects are subject to the conditions listed by the Community Preservation Committee; Councilor Gannon seconded the motion.

The Councilors commended the selected projects and the CPC for their action noting they look forward to more improvements. When asked about the arborist, it was noted DPW would have an arborist soon who would oversee the care of the trees. The granite would be new and not reused granite. The funding conditions need to be met as part of the grant; Linnae Handy, CPC Coordinator, would ensure the conditions were being met.

The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

3. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of ___ for, ___ against, ___ present on August 9, 2022.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President
s:/MWP

**SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER
WITH REMOTE ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES**

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. Public Petition to Rename the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square – Item 2A
Emails Re: Columbus Delta
 - Virginia Gardner, Italian American Alliance, President – June 17, 2022 and June 19, 2022
 - Ginny Gardner – President, La Feminista – June 18, 2022
 - Joseph Rizza, Janice Rizza, Larry Pace, Liz Pace, Richard Grinley – June 19, 2022
 - George Lapore – June 19, 2022
 - Carol L. Delaney – June 19, 2022 and June 21, 2022
 - Keith Davis – June 19, 2022
 - Dominic Sachetti – June 19, 2022
 - Hal Shurtleff – June 19, 2022
 - Mark D. Giordano – June 20, 2022
 - Phil and Lina DAlleva – June 20, 2022
 - Katrina Ripka – June 20, 2022
 - Thomas Damigella – June 20, 2022
 - Mishy Lesser – Learning Director, Upstander Project, June 20, 2022
 - Luciano Russo – June 20, 2022
 - Winifred Carfagno – June 20, 2022
 - Brian Patacchiola – June 20, 2022
 - Teresa McNutt – June 20, 2022
 - Josephine Ovoian – June 20, 2022
 - James Ridge – June 20, 2022
 - Robert Martins – June 20, 2022
 - Joseph Iodice – June 20, 2022
 - Marissa Babin – June 20, 2022
 - Richard Sauro – June 21, 2022
 - Domenic Amara – June 21, 2022
 - David Russo – June 21, 2022
 - Anne-Marie and Mark Pettiglio – June 21, 2022
 - Irene Santoro – June 21, 2022
 - Ralph Caruso – June 21, 2022
 - Russ Arico – June 21, 2022
 - Diane Modica – June 21, 2022

2. Public Petition to Designate an Area on Main Street (98 Main Street – 224 Main Street and 99 Main Street to Whites Avenue inclusive of Saltonstall Park) as an Historic District – Item 2B
Emails Re Historic District
Thomas Gorman – June 19, 2022
3. Community Preservation Committee Project Funding Recommendations Fiscal Year 2022 – Item 2C

*Addendum
to the Minutes of the
June 21, 2022
Special
City Council
Meeting*



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SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022 AT 6:00 PM RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 149 MAIN STREET

AGENDA

In accordance with the provisions of Rule 2.6 of the Rules of the City Council, and pursuant to the Call of the Council President, the members of the City Council of the City of Watertown are hereby notified of a Special Meeting of the City Council to be held on Tuesday, June 21, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber, Administration Building. The public may also participate remotely using any of the public access methods listed below:

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- D. Public may comment through email: vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov

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1. ROLL CALL
 2. MEETING DISCUSSION - ACTION
 - A. Discussion and Vote on a Petition to Rename the Columbus Delta
 - B. Discussion and Vote on a Petition to Designate from 98-224 Main St. and Other Parcels a Historic District
 - C. Discussion and Vote on Two Proposals from the CPC for Funding
 3. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

**CITY COUNCIL ATTENDANCE
MEETING DATE: JUNE 21, 2022**

	YES	NO	PRESENT
JOHN M. AIRASIAN	__X__	_____	_____
CAROLINE BAYS	__X__	_____	_____
LISA J. FELTNER	__X__	_____	_____
JOHN G. GANNON	__X__	_____	_____
NICOLE GARDNER	__X__	_____	_____
EMILY IZZO	__X__	_____	_____
ANTHONY PALOMBA	__X__	_____	_____
VINCENT J. PICCIRILLI, JR.	__X__	_____	_____
MARK S. SIDERIS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT	__X__	_____	_____

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT SIDERIS TO OFFER THE POSITION OF CITY MANAGER TO GEORGE PROAKIS AND TO MAKE THE LENGTH OF THE CONTRACT BE FOR A RANGE OF 3-5 YEARS

Columbus Delta

Virginia Gardner <virginiagardner@aol.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 9:08 PM

To: City Councilors <citycouncilors@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Honorable Watertown Board of Selectman.

I am writing to you regarding Item A, Discussion and Vote on a Petition to Rename the Columbus Delta

I believe Italian-Americans should be recognized and respected by not renaming the Columbus Delta . . It is disrespectful to the history of the Delta and the many people who were part of Watertown's rich Italian History. It is not only important to Italian Americans, but it has also been a proud part of America history and tradition.

There has been much misinformation circulating in the past few decades regarding the history of Christopher Columbus, and in a misguided effort to be inclusive and sensitive to all cultures, this renaming produces the opposite effect - it foments exclusion and resentment, especially among Italian-Americans, who have struggled for decades to be accepted into the American national life.

I urge you to not support this racist action and keep Columbus Delta as is. I also want to remind this board that the day after Thanksgiving is recognized as Native American Heritage Day and that the entire month of November is Native American Heritage Month as already declared by proclamation by the Federal Government.

Italian Americans deserve to have this part of our history. It must continue to be preserved and protected. It unfair and discriminatory to take away this important piece of Watertown's Italian Americans recognition.

Very Respectfully,

Virginia (Papa) Gardner
Italian America Alliance
National President.

Columbus Delta

Ginny Gardner <newfoundnh@aol.com>

Sat 6/18/2022 5:33 PM

To: City Councilors <citycouncilors@watertown-ma.gov>; Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; John Airasian <jairasian@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Watertown Town Councilors,

I was sickened to learn that you are considering re-naming the COLUMBUS Delta. The very people accusing Christopher Columbus of horrible atrocities are guilty of the very same crimes.. Quite frankly, as you will read in the letter below Native Americans scalped, raped, conducted human sacrifice of adults, children and new born babies. Native American People went to war killed, murdered, took slaves, burned villages and practiced cannibalism. . These acts are well document.

I hope you will read the follow letter from Rafael Ortiz, he explains it best.

My name is Rafael Ortiz. I'm a Puerto Rican Hispanic author of Indigenous descent. I wrote three books defending Christopher Columbus. My 4th is coming soon and I'm writing my 5th right now. The fact is that the same activists who want to rename Columbus Day are the same who want to rename Thanksgiving Day as UnThanksgiving Day. In other words, this is not really about Columbus, but about demonizing America in general. The reason why these activists (so far) have been successful (to some degree) in convincing some people that Columbus "was evil" is because most people know little or nothing about him.

Since Spanish is my mother language, I took the time (years ago) to read every primary source and document in regards to Columbus to find out that the modern day accusations against him are all false. In other words, Columbus was not racist, genocidal, rapist or pedophile. The so called "sources" for these kinds of accusations are modern day revisionists, including the late Howard Zinn, a self proclaimed anarchist, whose book ("A People's History of the United States") was labeled as a "work of fiction" by many of his own peers, both liberal and conservative scholars.

Among the tactics revisionists often used are to misquote Columbus, including using mistranslations, or quoting him out of context, or putting different things he said at different timeliness in order to create false narratives. Another one is, blaming him for things he never did, in places he never visited, long after he was dead.

Another tactic is to use a document written by a political enemy of Columbus, claiming he was a "cruel man" toward the Spanish colonists. Activists like to remind people that this was the cause Columbus was removed from office. But they failed to disclose that the accusations against him were false and the accusers were charged with mutiny.

Another tactic is to diminish his accomplishments, or give the credit to someone else.

There is no reason to replace Columbus Day. There are already two Indigenous Peoples Day on the calendar: One in August and the other the Friday after Thanksgiving. November is Indigenous Peoples month.

If Columbus Day means "a celebration of war, conquest and slavery" then by the same reasoning Indigenous Peoples Day means the same and we should not celebrate it, since

they were doing the same, with the addition of cannibalism and human sacrifices.

Note- I don't oppose Indigenous Peoples Day, since I myself am one. What we oppose is to rename or eliminate Columbus Day when there is no legitimate reason for it, except for political opportunism or racial discrimination against Italian Americans.

If you still have doubts about Columbus' behavior, I'll be more than happy to answer you through email, phone, text, zoom, etc.

I'm available for discussions or debate.

Rafael Ortiz

Please rethink your position of removing Christopher Columbus Delta.

Ginny Gardner
President of La Femminista (aka La Donna)

Fwd: Urgent Action Needed: Columbus under attack in Watertown MA

Joseph Rizza <rizzjoey@aol.com>

Sun 6/19/2022 12:35 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

From: rizzjoey@aol.com

To: lgatti1055@aol.com, catttax@aol.com, rcmm359@gmail.com, dcellucci4@gmail.com, mdgr13@verizon.net, jacote7@aol.com, herbspop@gmail.com, johnlittleone@att.net, k.giordano@comcast.net, krizz515@aol.com, lee528sam@aol.com, monalee2usa@yahoo.com, luch111@yahoo.com, nanacdds8@gmail.com, rizzjoey@aol.com

Sent: 6/19/2022 12:29:18 AM Eastern Standard Time

Subject: Fwd: Urgent Action Needed: Columbus under attack in Watertown MA

it just never ends!!!!!!!!!!
another hateful vicious attack
on our heritage!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

JOE RIZZA, JANICE RIZZA, LARRY PACE, LIZ PACE, RICHARD GRINLEY
proud members of the
ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE

INDOMITO
The Voice of the Italian American Alliance

THE ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE OPPOSES DISCRIMINATION AGAINST **ALL** PEOPLE. WE PROUDLY PROMOTE OUR ITALIAN HERITAGE WHICH INCLUDES THE GREAT ADMIRAL CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS---AND WE WELCOME PEOPLE OF ALL RACES, ETHNIC GROUPS, AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES INTO OUR GREAT AND GROWING ALLIANCE FAMILY WHICH NOW INCLUDES:
Over SEVEN THOUSAND Members

Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come



CALL TO ACTION!

**Watertown City Council Meets to
Rename The Columbus Delta in Watertown Square**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022
AT 6:00 PM**

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WATERTOWN CITY COUNCIL

Watertown City Council Administration Building: 149 Main
Street Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

**THE WATERTOWN CITY COUNCIL IS MEETING TUESDAY,
JUNE 21, 2022 AT 6:00 PM IN THE RICHARD E.
MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER TO DISCUSS AND
VOTE TO RENAME THE COLUMBUS DELTA IN
WATERTOWN SQUARE.**

**We ask that you attend the meeting at the City Council
Chamber or access it remotely (see below) and *voice your
opposition to the petition to rename Columbus Delta.***

The Public may join the virtual meeting online:
[https://watertown\[1\]ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344](https://watertown[1]ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344)

Public may join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877)
853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID:
92991331344 D.

Public may comment through email: [vpiccirilli@watertown-
ma.gov](mailto:vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov)

The action to change the name of the Delta is being initiated by a group calling themselves the Pighsgusste Initiative and apparently is being led by Mishy Lesser.

Please e-mail the Councilors below. How they vote is an indication of just how much they value your opinion.

LS: Mark S. Sideris,
msideris@watertown-ma.gov

Council President Vincent J. Piccirilli,
vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov

Vice President & District C Councilor John M. Airasian
jairasian@watertown-ma.gov

Councilor At Large Caroline Bays,
cbays@watertown-ma.gov

Councilor At Large John G. Gannon,
jgannon@watertown-ma.gov

Councilor At Large Anthony Palomba,
apalomba@watertown-ma.gov

Councilor At Large Nicole Gardner,
ngardner@watertown-ma.gov

District A Councilor Lisa J. Feltner,
lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov

District B Councilor Emily Izzo, District D Councilor
eizzo@watertown-ma.gov

The Italian American Alliance has a new Website!
Please check it out:
www.theitalianamericanalliance.com

WHO WE ARE
THE ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

- ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE NATIONAL COUNCIL**
President Virginia Gardner
- The **MASSACHUSETTS ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
President James Di Stefano / Chairman Dom Amara
- The **CONNECTICUT ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
President Joey Catanzaro
- The **RHODE ISLAND ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
President Atty. Richard Pacia
- The **FLORIDA ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
 Organizing Leader Frank Teodosio
- THE NEW HAMPSHIRE ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
 Organizing Leader Don Macella
- THE NEW YORK ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
 Organizing Leader ---
- THE VERMONT ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE**
 Organizing Leader Paul Trojano

WEBSITE:
www.theitalianamericanalliance.com

FACEBOOK:
<https://www.facebook.com/theitalianamericanalliance>

 Fa  T  In
ceb witt stag
ook er ram

The Italian American Alliance, Inc. | 36 ORIENT AVENUE, East Boston, MA 02128

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Honoring Christopher Columbus

George Lapore <geojay73@gmail.com>

Sun 6/19/2022 4:13 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; John Airasian <jairasian@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon <gannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>

 2 attachments (968 KB)

Defenders of Columbus try to save explorer from "cancel culture" 10-21.pdf; Christopher Columbus and Fake History Kof C.pdf;

Before you make changes to the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square, please learn more about the true story of Christopher Columbus.

Three authors you should read are Dr. Carol Delaney, Robert Petrone and Raphael Ortiz

Thank You

George Lapore

Aleteia

🏠 ART & CULTURE

Defenders of Columbus try to save explorer from “cancel culture”

Zelda Caldwell - published on 10/11/21

Knights of Columbus produced a documentary film to set the record straight on the “real Columbus”

In an attempt to counter efforts to “cancel” Christopher Columbus, the Knights of Columbus has produced a video that portrays the Italian explorer as an imperfect hero who has been unfairly recast as a villain for political reasons.

While Columbus Day remains a federal holiday in the United States, on Friday, President Joe Biden issued a proclamation that the day would also be known as “Indigenous People’s Day.” The move follows successful lobbying in more than a dozen states and 100 cities to establish an Indigenous People’s Day (in some cases replacing Columbus Day), by activists who say the hero of Italian Americans committed violence against the Native people he encountered in the New World.

The 30-minute documentary, “Courage and Conviction: The True Story of Christopher Columbus,” released last year, reminds viewers that the statues of Columbus that protesters have demanded be toppled were, in fact, erected in response to racism. President Benjamin Harrison in 1891 instituted the first Columbus Day to honor the contributions of immigrant and Native Americans. This was a tense time in American history — in the months after a lynch mob of 10,000 people murdered 11 Italian Americans in New Orleans, and Native people were brutally killed at the massacre of Wounded Knee.

The film attempts to set the record straight about Columbus. In doing so, it tells the familiar story of Columbus’ tenacity in securing a reluctant King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain as patrons of his voyage, and of his courage in setting out on a dangerous

voyage where no men had dared go before. To add to that much-told tale, the film's makers chronicle the explorer's four voyages to the New World. And it is here that a picture emerges of two aspects of Columbus.

First, he is seen Columbus as a navigator/evangelizer with a great love and respect for the Indigenous people he met. His efforts to baptize native people, the film says, were made not just for the sake of their souls, but to protect them from slavery, since at that time, under Spanish law, a baptized person could not be enslaved.



And secondly, he is seen as a victim of his time. The violence that was committed under Columbus' watch, the film explains, was a result of the state of war that existed between rival chieftains before Columbus and his men set foot on the island of Hispaniola. That, along with the prevalence of slavery at the time, settlers who didn't follow Columbus' orders, and his own poor administrative skills, made Columbus a better navigator than a governor, according to the film.

This imperfect record, we learn, has been twisted and amplified for political purposes by revisionist historians, including Howard Zinn, whose *The People's History of the United States* (1980), created a "distorted depiction of Columbus' voyages and explorations."

Today New York is holding its first Columbus Day Parade since the global COVID-19 pandemic. Its survival in the current tense political atmosphere, is evidence of the great pride Italian-Americans take in Christopher Columbus. With this documentary, the Knights hope to keep his memory alive for future generations.

Watch the documentary here:

Tags: [KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS](#)



COLUMBIA

Online Edition

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND FAKE HISTORY

9/1/2017

by Gerald Korson

ONCE THE TARGET OF ANTI-CATHOLIC SENTIMENT, COLUMBUS IS OFTEN SLANDERED BY THOSE WHO MISREPRESENT HIS LEGACY



An 1846 painting depicts Christopher Columbus and members of his crew on a beach in the West Indies after arriving on his flagship Santa Maria Oct. 12, 1492. The work was commissioned by the U.S. Congress and installed in the Capitol Rotunda in 1847. *Landing of Columbus, 1846, by John Vanderlyn*

Driven in large part by political correctness and partisan academics and activists, it has become fashionable in recent years to criticize Christopher Columbus and the holiday named in his honor. A closer look, however, reveals the famed explorer to be a man of faith and courage, not a monster.

Many of Columbus' modern critics rely on a warped and politicized reading of history, and it is not the first time the explorer has endured such attacks. When a resurgence of anti-Catholic bigotry

erupted in early 20th-century America, Columbus was a favorite target then as well.

Despite animus among some groups today, the majority of Americans view the explorer positively and with pride. In a K of C-Marist poll from December 2016, 62 percent of Americans expressed a favorable opinion of the explorer and 55 percent said they were in favor of Columbus Day, the holiday named for him. By contrast, fewer than 3 in 10 view Columbus unfavorably and only 37 percent oppose the holiday named for him.

Nonetheless, there have been political efforts to strip Columbus of honor, and the question of whether to continue to recognize Columbus Day is under review in many places. Some states and municipalities have removed the explorer's name from the holiday or eliminated the observance entirely.

A COURAGEOUS JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

Unfair attacks on Columbus, past and present, should not be allowed to obscure the truth about the man, his voyage and his motives. Born in Genoa, Italy, Columbus was a deeply Catholic explorer who was willing to go against the grain. He believed he could reach the shores of Asia by sailing a mere 3,000 miles west across the Atlantic. Such a passage would establish faster and easier trade routes than were possible through overland travel or by sailing south and east around Africa.

Scholars of his day calculated the distance to the Orient across the Atlantic at well over 7,000 miles, out of practical range for ships of the day. Those who were skeptical of the admiral's proposal did not hold that the earth was flat, as popular myth has suggested, but rather that it was much larger than Columbus believed. Despite his miscalculation, after 10 weeks Columbus did indeed find land — not the outskirts of the Orient, as he went to his grave believing, but an entirely new continent.

Later, as a nation began to coalesce out of the American colonies, its leaders recognized the admiral's legacy. "Columbia" served as an informal name for what would become the United States of America. The eventual designation of the nation's capital reflects the esteem the founders had for the Genoese explorer.

Beginning in the 1840s, waves of European immigrants swelled the ranks of Catholics in the United States, and along with that came an increasingly anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant backlash from the Protestant majority. Catholics were subject to discrimination, slander, ridicule, anti-Catholic propaganda and sometimes mob violence.

It was within this hostile climate that Father Michael J. McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882. He and the founding Knights chose as the Order's patron Christopher Columbus — one of the few Catholics considered a hero of American history. Father McGivney believed the explorer represented both Catholicism and patriotism at the very root of America's heritage, thereby symbolizing that faithful Catholics also can be solid American citizens.

A decade later, as the Order celebrated its patron on the 400th anniversary of his discovery, President Benjamin Harrison proclaimed a national Columbus holiday. He called for "expressions of gratitude to Divine Providence for the devout faith of the discoverer, and for the Divine care and guidance which has directed our history and so abundantly blessed our people."

Colorado became the first state to establish Columbus Day in 1907, and others soon followed. In 1934, with strong urging and support by the Knights, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Congress made Columbus Day a federal holiday, mandating its first annual observance on Oct. 12, 1937.

ATTACKS OLD AND NEW

As the 1992



This statue of Christopher Columbus, dedicated by Italian-American residents in New Haven, Conn., was erected in 1892 in Wooster Square Park. In 2004, restoration of the statue was partially funded by the Knights of Columbus.

quingentenary of Columbus' arrival in the New World approached, vocal opposition to Columbus was heard from partisan and revisionist historians and activists who were often critical of Western civilization as a whole. That year, the city of Berkeley, Calif., changed Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day, and several other municipalities have made similar moves, often explicitly as a means of dishonoring Columbus.

In response to one such initiative in Baltimore, Eugene F. Rivers III, founder and president of the Seymour Institute for Black Church and Policy Studies, published an op-ed article Dec. 2, 2016.

"To celebrate one cultural group does not require that we denigrate another," he wrote. "Rather than renaming Columbus Day, why not add another holiday, Indigenous Peoples Day, to Baltimore's calendar in honor of Native Americans?"

The 20th century ended with criticism of Columbus and Columbus Day in certain quarters, just as the early 20th century had seen similar opposition.

When the Ku Klux Klan was revived in 1915 and targeted Catholics, Jews and minority groups whom they considered a threat to the nation's "Native, White, Protestant" identity, one of their targets was Columbus.

The Klan opposed the observance of Columbus Day, trying to suppress celebrations of the holiday at the state level. Klan members published articles calling Columbus Day a "papal fraud" and even burned a cross at a Knights of Columbus observance in Pennsylvania.

Today, one can still hear echoes of anti-Catholic prejudice in the modern attacks. For some, Columbus' sponsorship by Spain and introduction of Christianity and Western culture to the lands he discovered make him immediately suspect. The new wave of anti-Columbus attacks go so far as to say that Columbus intended nothing good.

"These criticisms primarily charge Columbus with perpetrating acts of genocide, slavery, 'ecocide,' and oppression," explained Robert Royal, president of the Faith and Reason Institute and author of *1492 and All That: Political Manipulations of History* (1992).

Nonetheless, a closer examination of the record reveals a different picture.

"The dominant picture holds him responsible for everything that went wrong in the New World," wrote Carol Delaney, a former professor at Stanford and Brown universities, in her book *Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem* (2011). In her opinion, "we must consider his world and how the cultural and religious beliefs of his time colored the way he thought and acted."

In a 2012 *Columbia* interview, Delaney further explained that Columbus found the native peoples to be "very intelligent" and his relations with them "tended to be benign." He gave strict instructions to the settlers to "treat the native people with respect," though some of his men rebelled and disobeyed his orders, particularly during his long absences, Delaney added.

Columbus' voyage made the Old and New Worlds aware of each other for the first time, eventually leading to the founding of new countries in the Western Hemisphere. Diseases inadvertently carried to the New World by the Europeans caused the greatest number of casualties by far, killing some 90 percent of native populations according to some estimates.

"There were terrible diseases that got communicated to the natives," Delaney said, "but he can't be blamed for that."

A RENEWED DEFENSE

According to Royal, arguments against Columbus by modern critics often constitute a "new, contemporary form of the 'Black Legend'" — anti-Spanish propaganda dating back to the 16th-century that stereotypes Spanish explorers as uniquely cruel and abusive.

The writings of Bartolomé de las Casas — a 16th-century Spanish Dominican priest, historian and missionary — exposing the abuse of the native peoples are often cited in an effort to impugn Columbus. But while de las Casas lamented the suffering of indigenous people, he also admired and respected Columbus for his "sweetness and benignity" of character, his deep faith and his accomplishments.

"He was the first to open the doors to the ocean sea, where he entered the remote lands and kingdoms which until then had not known our Savior, Jesus Christ, and his blessed name," de las Casas wrote in his *History of the Indies*. While cognizant that Columbus was human and made mistakes, de las Casas never doubted the explorer's good intentions, writing: "Truly, I would not dare blame the admiral's intentions, for I knew him well and I know his intentions are good."

According to Delaney, Columbus "fervently believed it was the duty of every Christian to try to save the souls of non-Christians," and it was this passion that "led him on a great adventure, an encounter such as the world has never seen."

Not surprisingly, popes since the late 19th century have praised Columbus' mission of evangelization. Pope John Paul II, while celebrating Mass at a Columbus monument in the Dominican Republic near the 1992 quincentenary, said the crossshaped memorial "means to symbolize the cross of Christ planted in this land in 1492."

In a speech to the young people of Genoa in May, Pope Francis talked about how a disciple of Christ needs the "virtue of a navigator," and he pointed to the example of Columbus who faced "a great challenge" and showed "courage," a trait he indicated was essential to becoming a "good missionary."

As it did a century ago, the Order is defending Columbus today. When Colorado lawmakers weighed a bill to repeal Columbus Day as a state holiday earlier this year, the Knights of Columbus helped lead the opposition. Recalling the Klan's earlier efforts to oppose Columbus Day, the K of C noted that the measure was not a progressive step but rather "regressive as it takes us back to what the Klan outlined in the 1920s in order to promote ethnic and religious resentment."

The Knights of Columbus has defended its patron from unfair attacks, urging that he continue to receive official recognition as a man of faith and bravery. Columbus represents the kind of heroic courage and religious faith that inspired the establishment of the United States. Although he surely holds special meaning for Catholics and for Italian Americans, Columbus is a figure all citizens of the New World can celebrate.

For this reason, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson said in his annual report this year, "We will continue to defend the truth about Columbus and Columbus Day."

GERALD KORSON writes from Fort Wayne, Ind.

Columbus statue

Carol L Delaney <cdelaney@stanford.edu>

Sun 6/19/2022 7:26 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Mayor: I have learned that your city is planning to remove a statue of Columbus. Please do not. He is not at all the man many people seem to think he was. I have done years of research for my acclaimed book, Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem. Suggest that people read that before removing the statue. He was friends with the natives, never enslaved anyone - that was done by horrid men later sent over by Queen Isabella. Columbus learned the native language and adopted the son of one chief as his godson who then travelled with him on other voyages. He did take 6 natives back with him on the first voyage, more wanted to go. These were presented at court - two decided to remain at court, the others returned with Columbus on the next voyage. Hope this will help to keep the statue. All best, Carol Delaney

question

Virginia Gardner <virginiagardner@aol.com>

Sun 6/19/2022 12:29 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Councilor Piccirilli,

I am writing this afternoon to ask you to table item "A" on the special meeting agenda, Tuesday night. It is the discussion and vote on a Petition to "Rename the Columbus Delta." I realize that by tabling this docket Item "A" would only postpone the vote until the next meeting. That next meeting would be the following Thursday 6/23. That 48 hours could provide us with the opportunity to present the historically correct facts.

We at the La Femminista, La Donna, and Italian American Alliance, National Chapter feel the opposition has waged a hate campaign on Italian Americans. This resolution, in our opinion, not only discriminates against us it also fuels the hate and bigotry that we have endured for generations.

I urge and plead with you to please consider tabling this "A" docket item.

Very Respectfully, yours

Virginia (Papa) Gardner

Italian American Alliance National Chapter, President
Administrator of La Femminista, and La Donna.

Leave Columbus alone!

Keith Davis <sodasdad@yahoo.com>

Sun 6/19/2022 1:59 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Cc: Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; John Airasian <jairasian@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>

About the upcoming attempts to erase Christopher Columbus from your town at your meeting Tuesday and to discuss and vote to **rename the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square:**

While I'm not a resident of your city, nor am I even of Italian descent, I strongly protest any town's attempt to rewrite history and to denigrate the role Christopher Columbus played in the early exploration, discovery and laying the foundation for the emergence of the Americas.

This **wokeness** has got to stop somewhere, for it will never end until not a single person in history remains. It is a rabbit hole you go down from which there is no escape, culminating in the inevitable hypocrisy and unforeseen circumstances. ******

I refer you to the following letter by Rafael Ortiz written some time ago in defense of Christopher Columbus and the recognition he has earned.

This expresses the sentiments and emotions much better than I can articulate.

Regards, Keith Davis, resident of Holyoke, Massachusetts

=====

One must realize that in truth, the issue is not about indigenous people . The objective is to bring the American house down by destroying its foundations...including Christopher Columbus. When one honestly examines the evidence, one has to conclude that those who speak to erase Columbus have either been duped or lack the courage to stand against America's enemies.

My name is Rafael Ortiz. I'm a Puerto Rican Hispanic author of Indigenous descent. I wrote three books defending Christopher Columbus. My 4th is coming soon and I'm writing my 5th right now. The fact is that the same activists who want to rename Columbus Day are the same who want to rename Thanksgiving Day as UnThanksgiving Day. In other words, this is not really about Columbus, but about demonizing America in general. The reason why these activists (so far) have been successful (to some degree) in

convincing some people that Columbus "was evil" is because most people know little or nothing about him.

Since Spanish is my mother language, I took the time (years ago) to read every primary source and document in regards to Columbus to find out that *the modern day accusations against him are all false. In other words, Columbus was not racist, genocidal, rapist or pedophile. The so called "sources" for these kinds of accusations are modern day revisionists, including the late Howard Zinn, a self proclaimed anarchist, whose book ("A People's History of the United States") was labeled as a "work of fiction" by many of his own peers, both liberal and conservative scholars.*

Among the tactics revisionists often used are to misquote Columbus, including using mistranslations, or quoting him out of context, or putting different things he said at different timeliness in order to create false narratives. Another one is, blaming him for things he never did, in places he never visited, long after he was dead.

Another tactic is to use a document written by a political enemy of Columbus, claiming he was a "cruel man" toward the Spanish colonists. Activists like to remind people that this was the cause Columbus was removed from office. But they failed to disclose that the accusations against him were false and the accusers were charged with mutiny.

Another tactic is to diminish his accomplishments, or give the credit to someone else.

There is no reason to replace Columbus Day. There are already two Indigenous Peoples Day on the calendar: One in August and the other the Friday after Thanksgiving. November is Indigenous Peoples month.

**** If Columbus Day means "a celebration of war, conquest and slavery" then by the same reasoning Indigenous *Peoples Day means the same and we should not celebrate it, since they were doing the same, with the addition of cannibalism and human sacrifices.***

Note- I don't oppose Indigenous Peoples Day, since I myself am one. What we oppose is to rename or eliminate Columbus Day when there is no legitimate reason for it, except for political opportunism or racial discrimination against Italian Americans.

If you still have doubts about Columbus' behavior, I'll be more than happy to answer you through email, phone, text, zoom, etc.

I'm available for discussions or debate.

Rafael Ortiz

Columbus

Dominic Sacchetti <cinimod@comcast.net>

Sun 6/19/2022 5:58 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Do NOT vote to destroy Italian heritage! Dom Sacchetti

Sent from my iPhone

Save Columbus Day and Stop Anti-Catholic and Italian Hate

Hal Shurtleff <campconstitution1@gmail.com>

Sun 6/19/2022 11:50 PM

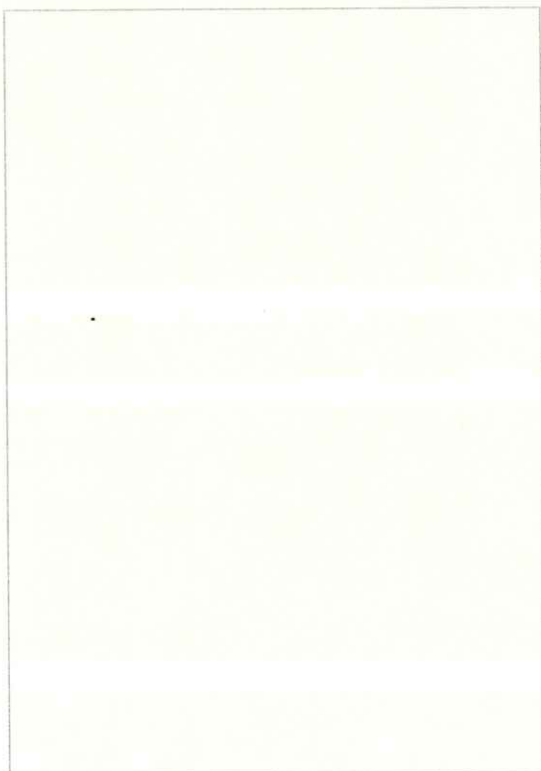
To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

I hope that Watertown does not cave into the Cancel Culture Mob based on lies against Christopher Columbus.

The following excerpt is adapted from “[Debunking Howard Zinn: Exposing the Fake History That Turned a Generation against America](#),” a recently published book by scholar [Mary Grabar](#).

Howard Zinn rode to fame and fortune on the “untold story” of Christopher Columbus—a shocking tale of severed hands, raped women, and gentle, enslaved people worked to death to slake the white Europeans’ lust for gold.

Today, that story is anything but untold. Zinn’s narrative about the genocidal discoverer of America has captured our education system and popular culture. The defacement of statues of Columbus with red paint had already become an annual ritual in many places.



Zinn is the inspiration behind the current campaign to abolish Columbus Day and replace it with “Indigenous Peoples’ Day.” High school teachers cite his book in making the case for the renaming to their local communities. In October 2018, San Francisco, Cincinnati, and Rochester, New York, joined at least sixty other cities in replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Six states also do not recognize the holiday as Columbus Day.

Many articles reporting on this trend cited Howard Zinn’s role in the change in attitude.

Stanford anthropology Professor Carol Delaney, who was quoted in a *Courthouse News Service* article to provide a counter-narrative, informed reporters that Columbus acted on his Christian faith and instructed his crew to treat the native people with kindness. But such inconvenient facts are inevitably drowned out by the Columbus-hate that Howard Zinn has succeeded in spreading.

Presumably extrapolating from the “many volumes” he had read, Zinn found the inspiration for the dramatic opening sentences of “A People’s History of the United States”:

“Arawak men and women, naked, tawny, and full of wonder, emerged from their villages onto the island’s beaches and swam out to get a closer look at the strange big boat. When Columbus and his sailors came ashore, carrying swords, speaking oddly, the Arawaks ran to greet them, brought them food, water, gifts. He later wrote of this in his log: ‘They . . . brought us parrots and balls of cotton, and spears and many other things, which they

exchanged for the glass beads and hawks' bells. They willingly traded everything they owned. . . ."

The quoted passage from Columbus's log continues with Columbus's description of the Arawaks. They are "well-built" and handsomely featured. Having never seen iron, they accidentally cut themselves on the Europeans' swords when they touch them. The passage ends with Columbus's now infamous words: "They have no iron. Their spears are made out of cane. . . . They would make fine servants. . . . With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want."

The ellipses in this passage are Zinn's, not mine. Those omissions are essential to Zinn's dishonest retelling of the Columbus story. By leaving crucial words out of the quotation, Zinn makes Columbus say something very different from what he actually said.

It's unlikely that he even read as much of "Columbus's journals" or the works of "Las Casas, the great eyewitness" as he claimed. The truth is that Zinn's description of Columbus's first encounter with the American Indians is lifted from "Columbus: His Enterprise: Exploding the Myth," a book for high school students that Zinn's friend and fellow anti-Vietnam War activist, Hans Koning, first published in 1976.

Zinn perpetuates Koning's smears. In Koning's telling and in Zinn's, Columbus set out to enslave a uniformly gentle people for the sole purpose of enriching himself with gold. In fact, that is far from the truth. European efforts to find a sea route to Asia had been going on for hundreds of years. As William and Carla Phillips point out in "The Worlds of Christopher Columbus," Columbus's voyages of discovery were a continuation of Europeans' ventures of sailing to Asia—at first, around Africa—that had begun in 1291. For centuries before Columbus, Portuguese and Spanish explorers had also ventured farther and farther out into the Atlantic Ocean.

Thus, Columbus's mission was multi-faceted and inspired by several different motivations: "to reach the East Indies, so as to take Islam in the rear, and to effect an alliance with the Great Khan—a mythical personage who was believed to be the sovereign of all that region, and favorable to the Christian religion—and finally . . . to diffuse Christianity throughout that unknown continent and trade with the traditional sources of gold and spices."

Desires to find new lands for more resources and to escape enemies and persecution are not impulses unique to Europeans. The natives of North America "in prehistoric times" themselves came from Asia and "crossed the land bridge across the Bering Strait to the lands of the Western Hemisphere."

When he encountered naked natives instead of the Asian merchants he was expecting, Columbus did not jump to thoughts of working them to death for gold as Zinn, following Koning, suggests. For example, in his log entry for October 12, 1492, Columbus wrote, "I warned my men to take nothing from the people without giving something in exchange"—a passage left out by both Koning and Zinn.

But Zinn's most crucial omissions are in the passage from Columbus's log that he quotes in the very first paragraph of his People's History. There he uses ellipses to cover up the fact that he has left out enough of Columbus's words to deceive his readers about what the discoverer of America actually meant. The omission right before "They would make fine servants" is particularly dishonest. Here's the nub of what Zinn left out: "I saw some who bore marks of wounds on their bodies, and I made signs to them to ask how this came about, and they indicated to me that people came from other islands, which are near, and wished to capture them, and they defended themselves. And I believed and still believe that they come here from the mainland to take them for slaves."

In his translation of Columbus's log, Robert Fuson discusses the context that Zinn deliberately left out:

"The cultural unity of the Taino [the name for this particular tribe, which Zinn labels "Arawaks"] greatly impressed Columbus.... Those who see Columbus as the founder of slavery in the New World are grossly in error. This thought occurred to [Samuel Eliot] Morison (and many others), who misinterpreted a statement made by Columbus on the first day in America, when he said, 'They (the Indians) ought to be good servants.' In fact, Columbus offered this observation in explanation of an earlier comment he had made, theorizing that people from the mainland came to the islands to capture these Indians as slaves because they were so docile and obliging."

Zinn's next ellipsis between "They would make fine servants" and "With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want" covers for Zinn's dishonest pretense that the second statement has anything at all to do with the first. The sentences that Zinn joins here are not only not in the same paragraph—as he dishonestly pretends by printing them that way on the very first page of *A People's History*—but they're not even in the same entry of Columbus's log. In fact, they're from two days apart.

Zinn's highly selective quotations from Columbus's log are designed to give the impression that Columbus had no concern for the Indians' spiritual or physical well-being—that the explorer was motivated only by a "frenzy for money."

But literally the explorer's first concern—the hope that he expressed in the initial comment about the natives in his log—was for the Indians' freedom and their eternal salvation: "I want the natives to develop a friendly attitude toward us because I know that they are a people who can be made free and converted to our Holy Faith more by love than by force."

Zinn just entirely omits the passage in which Columbus expresses his respect and concern for the Indians. Zinn also suppresses—and, where he doesn't suppress, downplays—the evidence from even the sympathetic Las Casas that the Indians could be violent and cruel. Zinn has to admit that they were "not completely peaceful, because they do battle from time to time with other tribes." But, like Koning, he is eager to explain their violent behavior away, arguing, "but their casualties seem small, and they fight when they are individually moved to do so because of some grievance, not on the orders of captains or kings."

In Zinn's telling, the Arawaks—or black slaves, or Cherokees, or New York Irish, or whoever—must always be persecuted innocents and the condemnation of their sufferings must be absolute. The officially oppressed cannot be blamed even for any crimes they themselves commit, which are inevitably the fault of their oppressors.

According to Zinn, there's no such thing as objective history, anyway: "the historian's distortion is more than technical, it is ideological; it is released into a world of contending interests, where any chosen emphasis supports (whether the historian means to or not) some kind of interest, whether economic or political or racial or national or sexual."

Once ideology has become a moral virtue, Zinn can discount standards of scholarship—such as those of the American Historical Association—as having to do with nothing more important than "technical problems of excellence"—standards of no importance compared to his kind of history, which consists in forging "tools for contending social classes, races, nations."

Thus it would seem that the noble political purpose behind Zinn's history justifies him in omitting facts that are inconvenient for his Columbus-bad-Indians-good narrative.

Columbus Delta

Mark D. Giordano <giordano_mark@yahoo.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 4:54 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; John Airasian <jairasian@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Watertown Councilors,

I am writing to you regarding the pending issue to rename Columbus Delta in Watertown Square.

I believe Italian-Americans should be recognized and respected by not taking Columbus away from them at every opportunity. Columbus Day is under attack, as are statues of him, and now this. It is disrespectful to Italian Americans. Columbus is not only important to those of Italian heritage, but he has also been a proud part of America history and tradition.

There has been much misinformation circulating in the past few decades regarding the history of Christopher Columbus, and in a misguided effort to be inclusive and sensitive to all cultures, this would produce the opposite effect -- it foments exclusion and resentment, especially among Italian-Americans, who have struggled for decades to be accepted into the American national life.

As a proud Italian-American Massachusetts resident and voting constituent, I urge you to not support this issue and keep Columbus Delta as is.

Very Respectfully,

Mark D. Giordano

renaming of the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square

Phil & Lina DAlleva <dalleva@comcast.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 7:33 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

June 20,2022

Dear Council President Vincent J. Piccirilli,,

*I am writing to you regarding the renaming of the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square, scheduled for Tuesday, June 21st. Removing the name of Columbus from our heritage and history is a matter of serious concern not just for the Italians, but for the future understanding of our American and world history. Columbus contribution to the innovations of navigation resulted with many other individuals setting foot on the US soil and eventually creating this much acclaimed experiment of governance by a Democracy. The founding of America has granted a refuge and a "Haven" to numerous human beings who are now ancestors of the many current US citizens of diverse nationalities. After Columbus' voyages, millions of European immigrants populated this New World and brought with them their art, music, science, medicine, philosophy and religious principles. **Hence Columbus is a symbol of the expansion of cultural and economic exchange between the two continents of America and Europe.***

*Additionally, after gaining their independence from England, our Founding Fathers, having rejected England and its cultural values, sought for ways to fill the voids. Along with other dominions, they looked for champions and heroes to fill the pages of their new developing story. They already had a number of men and women: George Washington, Abigail Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Patrick Henry, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson and countless others who had risen to prominence through their courage, patriotism, wisdom, foresight and capability. And yes, after the American Revolution, it should be of no surprise to anyone that Columbus also rose to this sought level of prominence. His foresight, audacious resolve, sense of exploration, and daring grit to risk everything for what he believed to be true aligned exactly with the sentiment of the colonists who had just defeated the mighty British army and navy. Hence, through their perseverance, **both Columbus and the Colonists are the symbol of expansion of man's evolution by altering the course of history, with their incomparable gifts of determination.***

*Today it's well worth remembering why Columbus was so admired by our ancestors and our Founding Fathers and why it is important to keep his name viable and relevant. Ronald Reagan articulated the sentiment distinctively: "[Columbus] was a dreamer, a man of vision and courage, a man filled with hope for the future and with the determination to cast off for the unknown and sail into uncharted seas for the joy of finding whatever was there." **Hence it can be said, with some good level of certainty, that Columbus was the ancestor of the American dream and the explorer whose discovery provided the land where the dream was rendered.** Columbus' name is all around us. Columbia University is named for him, as is Columbus, Ohio, Columbia County in Georgia, Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, and other numerous cities, places and counties of the US. The Knights of Columbus adopted his name in honor of his Catholic roots and most significantly, the District of Columbia, in Washington, D.C., our national capital, bears his name.*

*It is also a fact that, between 1776 and 1887, **more than 250 years after Columbus first visited the New World**, the United States government and some of its citizens, through the so-called "Indian Wars." managed to take by aggressive and morally reprehensible means 1.5 billion acres of land (roughly 2/3 the size of China) from the Indigenous People. In*

comparison, the entire continental United States currently has 1.9 billion acres of land! In addition, between 1778 and 1871, the America's federal administrations signed over 500 treaties with indigenous tribes and have broken every one of them. To blame Columbus for America's demise of the Native American Indians is comparable to blaming John Glenn, being the first American to orbit the earth, for any future conflicts that may arise in regard to space.

Essentially, the name Columbus commemorates the vitality of both Christopher Columbus and our Founding Fathers. It conveys the sentiment of bravery, equality, diversity, vitality, quality, energy, resolve, innovation, courage, etc. It should remain as it has been established in order to have the future generations know the history of our nation as it truly evolved!!! As a constituent, I urge you to keep the name Columbus Delta as it has been established.

*Very Respectfully,
Carmelina DAlleva*

Enough is enough

Katrina Ripka <asilverthread@protonmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 8:22 AM

Hello,

It has come to my attention that you are considering renaming the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square. Please don't. Stop trying to erase history. We learn from it, and are in danger for the future when we try to pretend it doesn't exist. Enough with the woke identity politics. I am so sick and tired of it. A lot of us are. Just leave things alone - please.

Thank you for your time,
Katrina Ripka

<https://www.PioneerTruth.org/vax/>

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

-Romans 6:23

There is no difference between communism and socialism, except in the means of achieving the same ultimate end: communism proposes to enslave men by force, socialism by vote. It's merely the difference between murder and suicide.

-Ayn Rand

When we get ready to take the United States, we will not take it under the label of Communism; we will not take it under the label of Socialism. These labels are unpleasant to the American people, and have been speared too much. We will take the United States under labels we have made very lovable; we will take it under "Liberalism," under "Progressivism," under "Democracy." But take it we will.

-Alexander Trachtenberg, at the National Convention of Communist Parties, Madison Square Garden, 1944

The American people will never knowingly adopt Socialism. But under the name of "Liberalism" they will adopt every fragment of the Socialist program, until one day America will be a Socialist nation, without knowing how it happened.

-Norman Thomas, (1884-1968) six-time U.S. Presidential candidate for the Socialist Party of America

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

----- Original Message -----

On Sunday, June 19th, 2022 at 1:59 PM, Keith Davis <sodasdad@yahoo.com> wrote:

About the upcoming attempts to erase Christopher Columbus from your town

at your meeting Tuesday and to discuss and vote to **rename the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square:**

While I'm not a resident of your city, nor am I even of Italian descent, I strongly protest any town's attempt to rewrite history and to denigrate the role Christopher Columbus played in the early exploration, discovery and laying the foundation for the emergence of the Americas.

This **wokeness** has got to stop somewhere, for it will never end until not a single person in history remains. It is a rabbit hole you go down from which there is no escape, culminating in the inevitable hypocrisy and unforeseen circumstances. ******

I refer you to the following letter by Rafael Ortiz written some time ago in defense of Christopher Columbus and the recognition he has earned.

This expresses the sentiments and emotions much better than I can articulate.

Regards, Keith Davis, resident of Holyoke, Massachusetts

=====

One must realize that in truth, the issue is not about indigenous people . The objective is to bring the American house down by destroying its foundations...including Christopher Columbus. When one honestly examines the evidence, one has to conclude that those who speak to erase Columbus have either been duped or lack the courage to stand against America’s enemies.

My name is Rafael Ortiz. I’m a Puerto Rican Hispanic author of Indigenous descent. I wrote three books defending Christopher Columbus. My 4th is coming soon and I’m writing my 5th right now. The fact is that the same activists who want to rename Columbus Day are the same who want to rename Thanksgiving Day as UnThanksgiving Day. In other words, this is not really about Columbus, but about demonizing America in general. The reason why these activists (so far) have been successful (to some degree) in convincing some people that Columbus “was evil” is because most people know little or nothing about him.

Since Spanish is my mother language, I took the time (years ago) to read every primary source and document in regards to Columbus to find out that **the modern day accusations against him are all false. In other words, Columbus was not racist, genocidal, rapist or pedophile. The so called “sources” for these kinds of accusations are modern day revisionists, including the late Howard Zinn, a self proclaimed anarchist, whose book (“A People’s History of the United States”) was labeled as a “work of fiction” by many of his own peers, both liberal and conservative scholars.**

Among the tactics revisionists often used are to misquote Columbus, including using mistranslations, or quoting him out of context, or putting different things he said at different timeliness in order to create false narratives. Another one is, blaming him for things he never did, in places he never visited, long after he was dead.

Another tactic is to use a document written by a political enemy of Columbus, claiming he was a "cruel man" toward the Spanish colonists. Activists like to remind people that this was the cause Columbus was removed from office. But they failed to disclose that the accusations against him were false and the accusers were charged with mutiny.

Another tactic is to diminish his accomplishments, or give the credit to someone else.

There is no reason to replace Columbus Day. There are already two Indigenous Peoples Day on the calendar: One in August and the other the Friday after Thanksgiving. November is Indigenous Peoples month.

**** If Columbus Day means "a celebration of war, conquest and slavery" then by the same reasoning Indigenous Peoples Day means the same and we should not celebrate it, since they were doing the same, with the addition of cannibalism and human sacrifices.**

Note- I don't oppose Indigenous Peoples Day, since I myself am one. What we oppose is to rename or eliminate Columbus Day when there is no legitimate reason for it, except for political opportunism or racial discrimination against Italian Americans.

If you still have doubts about Columbus' behavior, I'll be more than happy to answer you through email, phone, text, zoom, etc.

I'm available for discussions or debate.

Rafael Ortiz

Columbus Delta should remain

THOMAS DAMIGELLA <tdamigella@aol.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 8:57 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Subject: Watertown Delta Columbus

Dear Chairman and Watertown Board,

It has come to my attention via some mutual friends who live in Watertown that you are considering removing Columbus from the Delta rock that was put there by the honorable Knights of Columbus because of the misguide complaints by todays political entities such as BLM.

First, Columbus is being used as a scapegoat for atrocities and crimes against natives that were not his doing in a historical period that saw brutality to mankind in all civilizations and cultures. There are many books by true historians that tell the honest truth of Columbus such as Rafael Ortiz, Carol Delaney, and Mary Gruber that refute the hideous charges against Columbus. What happened to Native Americans in the 100 of years that followed 1492 is on the federal government of the United States, not Columbus.

Also, do you realize that the Knights of Columbus were formed as a Catholic Organization to fight against oppression, bigotry, and discrimination against Catholics in a mostly Protestant Nation in the 1800 and 1900. In fact the KKK purposely tried to destroy the Knights organization and they saw Columbus as a symbol of Catholicism. Now here is the ultimate irony of your decision to remove Columbus name. Your decision to remove Columbus from the rock is not only dishonoring the noble Knights of Columbus, but you will be helping or enabling the evil efforts of the KKK to oppress and attack the Knights and all Catholics. Therefore, todays political cancel culture ideology is doing exactly what they are against what was done to indigenous people.

Lastly, the idea of dismissing the heritage and cultural interests of Italian Americans is unjust. Fixing one wrong for one group by committing another injustice Against another group is immoral and unfair.

If you wish to discuss this further I am available to discuss this matter.

Thomas Damigella

VP of Italian American Alliance.

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Tuesday's Hearing on the Delta

Mishy Lesser <mishy@upstanderproject.org>

Mon 6/20/2022 10:17 AM

To: City Councilors <citycouncilors@watertown-ma.gov>

Cc: Jennifer Wolfrum <jenniferwolfrum13@gmail.com>

Dear City Councilors,

On August 10, 2020, I emailed the Council regarding the name of the delta and monument to Christopher Columbus in the center of our city. Tomorrow, nearly two years after sending that email, we will attend a hearing to share our reasoning and listen to other points of view. As you will see in my 2020 email below, we were concerned at the time about both the name of the delta and the monument, but decided to focus only on the name of the delta in our petition.

We, Pigsgusset Initiative members, are looking forward to tomorrow's conversation with you and our neighbors.

Mishy Lesser <mishy@upstanderproject.org>

to towncouncilors

Aug 10, 2020, 3:01

PM



Dear Members of the Town Council,

We hope this letter finds you and yours in good health. This is a request on behalf of a group of Watertown citizens for a hearing to discuss the future of the monument to Christopher Columbus in the town square. Eighty years ago your predecessors on the Town Council named the delta and authorized placement of a stone monument in the square. It is long overdue for those of us who live here to engage this name and the monument, and collectively decide their future. Here are images from the council's archives regarding the vote they took and of the monument they chose to place in the square, which honors Columbus:

Article 19. To see if the Town will vote that the delta in Watertown Square be named Columbus Delta, or take any action relating thereto. (Request of Henry L. Morley, and others).

On standing vote, 85 in favor, and 59 opposed, it was

Voted: That the delta in Watertown Square be named Columbus Delta.

COLUMBUS DELTA

HE GAINED A WORLD
HE GAVE THAT WORLD
ITS GRANDEST LESSON
ON SAIL ON
DEDICATED OCTOBER 12, 1940
BY WATERTOWN COUNCIL



As you know, Watertown Square is where hundreds of neighbors gather to make our voices heard about a variety of issues. It is also where most of you have stood with many of us, your supporters, holding signs, when you run for election and re-election. To some of us, the presence of this monument is upsetting and offensive, and we think its time is up. While it undoubtedly played a role many decades ago in supporting Italian-Americans to feel welcome and to affirm their standing here, some of those signing this letter are descendants of Italian-American immigrants and think it unfortunate that their grandparents choose to raise up a brutal architect of terror and genocide as their standard-bearer.

We do not mean to insult Italian-Americans with our concerns. How could we? They are part of our group and an important part of our community. When Italians came to the U.S., they experienced ethnic and religious discrimination, as well as violence and economic hardship. At the same time, we recognize that

Generations of Italian Americans embraced Christopher Columbus with little thought to the dark side of his legacy....

Now, some Italian Americans in Massachusetts are publicly casting the explorer as a symbol of white supremacy who touched off centuries of European oppression and the decimation of indigenous peoples....

"Our parents have told us stories about the level of discrimination they faced..." said Heather Leavell, 46, of Bedford, whose mother is of Italian descent. "We unfortunately allied ourselves with a white supremacist in our attempts to be recognized in this country." [abridged]
<https://www.wbur.org/news/2020/06/17/italian-americans-say-goodbye-columbus>

6/27/22, 6:12 PM

Mail - Piccirilli, Vincent J - Outlook

In addition, Christopher Columbus never set foot in what became the United States but he did leave a detailed account of his actions upon arriving in the Caribbean. "They ... brought us parrots and balls of cotton and spears and many other things.... They willingly traded everything they owned.... They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features.... They do not bear arms and do not know them.... They would make fine servants.... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want."

Just two years after Columbus landed on Hispaniola, half of the island's Taíno population had died by murder, torture, disease, or suicide. The Spanish priest, Bartolomé de las Casas wrote: "Our work was to ... ravage, kill, mangle, and destroy.... Who in future generations will believe this? I myself, writing it as a knowledgeable eye-witness, can hardly believe it."

To discuss our concerns and possible next steps, we request a hearing with the Town Council about the name given by the Town Council to the place now called the Columbus Delta and the future of the monument that was placed there eighty years ago.

Respectfully,

Mishy Lesser 42 Oliver Street
Joseph Rotella 157 Common Street
Aravinda Ananda 157 Common Street
A.Yaren Köse 157 Common Street
Holly Carroll Cachimuel 301 Lexington Street
Eileen Ryan 48 Pearl Street
Christopher Ives 42 Oliver Street
Jennifer Wolfrum 23 Clyde Road
Michael J. Bobbit Artistic Director, New Repertory Theatre

Gratefully,

Dr. Mishy Lesser (she/her/hers)
Learning Director, Upstander Project
upstanderproject.org / dawnland.org /
Co-director, Upstander Academy
Education Fellow, Dodd Human Rights Impact
Emmy-Award Winner (2018), *Dawnland*
(617) 721-7254

All teaching and learning takes place on Indigenous Lands. I live on land of the Massachusetts People near their neighbors from Wampanoag Nation and Nipmuc Nation in Ckwuaponahkik, now called New England. The word means the land of the people where the sun first looks our way.

Save Columbus

Luciano Russo <lsrusso71@gmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 10:31 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Mr. Piccirilli,

I am a member of the Watertown Sons of Italy and I ask that you perform your due diligence on the truth regarding Columbus as there are numerous scholars who have already debunked the falsehoods amplified by the media and the enemies of American culture. Rafael Ortiz and Mary Graybar Ph D. are just two of the prominent experts who are more than willing to debunk any and all claims made by Howard Zinn's book which has widely agreed upon to have no credible sources. Today its Columbus and tomorrow it will be Washington and Jefferson as has already been demonstrated. Please encourage your board to hear all sides and then "follow the facts" not the hearsay.

Luciano S. Russo

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Columbus Day

WINIFRED CARFAGNO <win25vic@verizon.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 11:34 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

I am getting very concerned about the direction our elected officials are taking our country. It seems that many of these officials are bukying into Socialism. Some how you think that by erasing our history that will make things right. Not so.

I am an Italian American. I am proud of my heritage as you should be. I am very concerned for my country. Columbus deserves to be recognized for all that he did for America and the world. Many books have been written historians about all the good that he has done. So why are you listening to the few naysayers such as Howard Zinn. Rafael Ortiz has written several books praising Columbus. I pray every day that America stays free.

Please consider voting against the bill to remove Columbus Day from your town Calendar.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email
W. Carfagno

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Renaming of the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square

Brian Patacchiola <bpatacchiola@gmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 12:20 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Councilor:

I write to you as an attorney and member of our local Italian-American community, in order to express my grave concern over the renaming of the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square. Over the last couple of decades, an increasing amount of misinformation has circulated regarding the historical account and legacy of Christopher Columbus, along with the symbolism of his namesake to the American and Italian-American communities, which has been utilized as part of a misguided attempt at being more inclusive and respectful to all peoples and cultures. Not only does renaming the square constitute a sophomoric effort producing the opposite effect intended, but they will also fan the flames of an already growing cultural division in our community. All the while the Italian-American community is still trying to overcome mafia, criminal, and other racist and bigoted stereotypes and continue integrating into accepted American life^[1]. To that end, instead of further dividing our community, I encourage you to not support this bill and to join with me and the Italian-American community in celebrating the unique culture and contributions of other minority groups, by recognizing and dedicating new monuments in Watertown in honor of Watertown's increasingly diverse community.

Integration remains all too real as fellow members of the Italian-American community are still writhing in pain and disbelief as rioters and looters have either toppled or vandalized Christopher Columbus monuments throughout the country, including the vandalism and removal of the Christopher Columbus Statue in Boston in June of 2020, or worse being that some local politicians work to eliminate the Italian-American community's hard won civil liberties by the stroke of a pen; striking Columbus Day from the list of recognized holidays. The irony of all of this wanton destruction and hate, against statues of Christopher Columbus' likeness and the desire to eliminate this holiday is that not only was Christopher Columbus not the genocidal maniac and marauding rapist slave trader that detractors claim that he was, but he was an advocate and supporter of the indigenous peoples that he met.^[2] Over time, because of these attributes as well as his oceanic navigational prowess, entrepreneurial spirit, and sincere Catholic virtues, Christopher Columbus became an intimately intertwined symbol of the Italian-American community; whereby attacks against statues of his likeness and the elimination of Columbus Day in favor of those of other ethnic groups constitute a racist and discriminatory assault against the Italian-American ethnic group. To that point, Columbus Day, or Discovery Day, was proclaimed a national holiday in 1892 by President Benjamin Harrison.^[3] This was in response to the mass lynching of 11 Italian-Americans in New Orleans in 1891, who were massacred by an unruly Jim Crow mob.^[4] These people were the victims of prejudice and examples of widespread violence widely suffered by Italians at the time.^[5] That shameful event evoked so much righteous indignation from the Italian government that President Harrison sent a special delegation to Rome to promote peace between the two nations. Part of that effort included his support of Columbus Day as an American apology to our country's growing number of Italian immigrants.

The 1891 lynching was by no means an isolated attack against the newly arriving Italian immigrants. When the Ku klux Klan was reestablished in 1915, Italian-Americans became a target for Klan members.^[6] They championed violently suppressing the newly arrived Catholic Italian immigrants as a non-white threat to America and would target acts of violence against them including burning crosses at Knights of Columbus halls.

By no means was the treatment of Italian-Immigrants, in the more "tolerant" north any better than in its southern sister states. In Boston, the state sanctioned false execution of two Italian-immigrants took place in 1927.^[7] Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were two Italian immigrants, living in Boston who were violently and

wrongly executed by electrocution, for crimes that they did not commit.^[8] Much like the reasons that started the Black Lives Matter protests, the only crimes that Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were guilty of was being in the wrong place at the wrong time and the color of their skin. To this day, The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts still feels the pain of this grave injustice. No amount of words can ever right the wrong of an innocent person suffering and paying the ultimate price for crimes which he or she did not commit, but in a sincere and courageous effort to heal this deep wound, the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts has instituted a memorial to Sacco and Vanzetti within its hallowed halls as a permanent reminder of the injustices of the justice system and the desperate treatment of a minority group.^[9]

Even in light of continued violent discrimination against Italian-Americans, it still took decades before Italian-American immigrants were treated as equals. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Congress took a courageous leap, towards equality and social justice, by establishing October 12, 1934, as the first permanently recognized Columbus Day federal holiday.^[10] It should also be noted that not long after President Roosevelt recognized Columbus Day that, on December 8, 1941, pursuant to President Proclamation No. 2527, approximately 600,000 Italian-American immediately became "enemy aliens" seeing numerous rights and liberties indiscriminately trampled on.^[11] Despite the heavy handed and discriminatory actions of the United States government against Italian-Americans during the World War II era, Columbus Day would eventually become law when on June 28, 1968 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed federal legislation creating the holiday.^[12] In so doing forever intertwining the symbolism of Columbus to not only the Italian-American community, but also the American public, and brought about long sought credibility and acceptance to Italian immigrants as Americans.

In a further ironic twist of fate, the proud actions of these protestors and other organizations, in standing up for racial justice and social equality, claim that Christopher Columbus, committed horrific acts of violence, and even genocide, against the indigenous populations he encountered. Had these organizations attempted even minimal research they would have found that the source they quote, constituting the crux of their citations, which allege the misdeeds of Columbus, derive from the self-proclaimed Marxist author Howard Zinn; who has been routinely and roundly discredited by modern researchers and scholars like Dr. Mary Grabar in her book Debunking Howard Zinn. Moreover, even Zinn's Leftist academics peers, such as Georgetown University Professor Michael Kazin proclaimed Zinn's publication as "polemic disguised as history. Even the self-proclaimed Marxist historian Eugene Genovese declared Zinn's work to be "incoherent left-wing sloganizing." The reality of the matter is that, modern scholars have made clear that genocide is the deliberate action of a government to eliminate an entire group of people. Genocide is NOT the accidental clash of microbes.

On the charge of slavery, historians note that native indigenous people had been enslaving each other for many hundreds of years before Columbus ever left Spain. Ryan P. Smith, writing for the Smithsonian Magazine reminded us that at Indigenous tribes, most notably the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole, openly practiced chattel slavery and held African slaves.^[13] Choctaw Chief Greenwood LeFlore owned over 15,000 acres of land in Mississippi and held over 400 African slaves.^[14] Cherokee Chief John Ross was not only a slave owner, but after the events of the Trail-of-Tears, he and many other tribal chief's joined the Confederate States of America and fought with the South in order to preserve their economic and cultural ability to participate in slavery.^[15] To contrast this and as clearly laid out in Stanford Professor Carol L. Delaney's book Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem Columbus not only never owned a slave, he also never participated in the institution of chattel slavery. Further, it is well documented that Christopher Columbus supported the indigenous peoples he met and advocated on their behalf to the King and Queen of Spain and the Pope.^[16] When other Spanish Hildago's arrived after Christopher Columbus' initial voyage and began their mistreatment of the indigenous peoples, Columbus created an underground railroad whereby on his return voyages to Spain, he would bring back as many

willing native's to be christened.^[17] This is because under the law of Christendom, followed by Spain at the time, Christians could not become slaves.^[18] Furthermore, Christopher Columbus's support of the indigenous tribes was so sincere, and particularly that toward the Taino peoples, he even adopted a Taino boy as his own son, who would later act as his personal interpreter.^[19]

Columbus is worthy of celebration by not just Italian-Americans but by all Americans; for his actions, in joining the two hemispheres and for his entrepreneurial and egalitarian spirit which laid the corner stones of America. His journey in 1492 was not just one of foolish desire of self-grandeur, but one of navigational genius that has only been matched by the *return* flight of the Apollo 11 crew where the command module was named *Columbia*.

^[20] Even still, the impacts of the Apollo 11 mission fall short when compared to the joinder of two completely unknown and isolated peoples. The navigational skill of Columbus is in many ways still without equal. To this day, the Transatlantic Crossing that Columbus discovered is still the most utilized shipping route across the Atlantic Ocean.

In closing, just like the newly established holiday of Juneteenth, the likeness of Christopher Columbus symbolizes unity and a fight against racism and discrimination against all immigrants and minorities living in the United States. Columbus was an advocate of the indigenous peoples, against the Hildago aggressors, and has rightly

become the patron saint of America's immigrants.^[21] I urge you and ask you to support the continued recognition of Watertown Square in the honor of Christopher Columbus and to consider honoring new monuments and public spaces in recognition of Watertown's new immigrant and expanding ethnic communities.

Very truly yours,

Brian J. Patacchiola, Esq.

bpatacchiola@gmail.com

(978) 340-5783

^[1] See: *Italian American Stereotypes Are Still Perfectly Acceptable – Why?* Found at <https://orderisda.org/culture/news/italian-american-stereotypes-are-still-perfectly-acceptable-why/>

^[2] See generally Delaney, Carol *Columbus and the Quest For Jerusalem*, New York, Free Press – a Division of Simon & Schuster, 2011.

^[3] See: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-335-400th-anniversary-the-discovery-america-columbus>; and <https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/october-12/>.

^[4] See <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/new-orleans-apologizes-1891-lynching-italian-americans-180971959/>

^[5] Id; see also: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/new-orleans-apologizes-1891-lynching-italian-americans-180971959/>.

^[6] See <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/the-ku-klux-klan-in-the-1920s>

^[7] See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/sacco-vanzetti-justice-on-trial>

^[8] Id.

[9] Id.

[10] See Supra 4.

[11] See *Secrecy and Injustice: Exposing WWII Italian Internment Camps* at <https://orderisda.org/culture/la-nostra-voce/secrecy-and-injustice-exposing-wwii-italian-internment-camps/>

[12] See <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41990.pdf>

[13] <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/how-native-american-slaveholders-complicate-trail-tears-narrative-180968339/>

[14] Id.

[15] Id.

[16] <https://video.ibm.com/recorded/129869169>

[17] Id.

[18] Id.

[19] <https://www.americanindianmagazine.org/story/shadows-history-taino-vatican>

[20] See https://www.si.edu/object/command-module-apollo-11%3Aasm_A19700102000

[21] See *Courage and Conviction: The True History of Christopher Columbus* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJligj1k0s>.

renaming Columbus Delta

teresamacnutt@verizon.net <teresamacnutt@verizon.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 3:59 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Cc: 'Tony Mastantuono' <tvtony@comcast.net>

I think this discussion should be approached from the perspective of losing the reasoning and history of the current Columbus Delta. The request to be all inclusive should not be approached from taking away history. And this history does include all on the land. In ways it is disrespectful to the history of the Columbus Delta.

I researched and these are my thoughts in support of the Columbus Delta. Teresa

Teresa MacNutt

Member, Watertown Sons and Daughters of Italy

Columbus Delta

jo ovoian <jovoian1@gmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 4:27 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Vinnie,

I emigrated the USA at a young age. I have resided in Watertown for almost 70 years. You know how I feel about all the progressive changes to our town. This one hits close to home and feels like the push for destroying all history is too much. The Italians have been a great part of the population of Watertown. This erasing of everything in history is a horrible trend. History is what it is! People need to deal with the town's history as they need to deal with their own family history. This canceling of everyone without proof is a horrible thing. Don't let them Vinnie!!

Jo Ovoian

Columbus Delta

Ridge, James <Ridge-James@Aramark.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 7:28 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Vincent - We Should Still Celebrate Columbus. Please keep the Columbus Delta in Watertown.

Columbus was one of the best navigators and explorers the world has ever seen! Columbus undertook his first voyage facing the prospects of great danger. Many people are blaming Columbus for the things he didn't do. It was mostly the people who came after him. The settlers that followed him caused many of the issues attributed to Columbus. If you read Columbus's own writings, he was very much on the side of the Indians and, reportedly, even adopted the son of an American Indian he had befriended.

It is best to learn from history and not destroy history as the Muslim ISIS militants did destroying statues at Nineveh, in northern Iraq in 2015 or when the Afghan Taliban destroyed the ancient, giant Buddhas of Bamiyan using explosives and artillery to do just that in 2001. We should continue to celebrate Columbus and hold on to our history. We benefit from our forefathers building the first steps of our country. Holding on to our history and preserving the Columbus Delta is instrumental to this effort.

Americans need to learn from our history even it is romanticized as it's still far better to remember history than erase it. While it isn't spotless, to pretend something didn't happen, or to degrade the forefathers who created our remarkable nation, is counterproductive and dangerous. Columbus was a man whose approach to the native people he met during his first voyage was exemplary, taking delight in their friendliness and happy demeanor. He even ordered his men not to abuse them in any way, and severely disciplined those who disobeyed. He was less pleased with those from other tribes he encountered later, such as the warlike Caribs, who practiced cannibalism.

It should be noted, that slavery was a well-established practice in the Americas long before Columbus arrived. The Spanish monarchs, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who agreed to fund the voyage in August of 1492, forbade slavery of the indigenous people of the Americas, granting them same rights of citizenship enjoyed by the people of Spain.

And on a recent Columbus Day, Barack Obama said, "More than five centuries ago, one journey changed the trajectory of our world — and today we recognize the spirit that Christopher Columbus's legacy inspired." That's the real Columbus.. The man should be celebrated. And this man who practically defines our understanding of the spirit of discovery is himself worth rediscovering, and worth teaching, with both truth and objectivity. In reality, Christopher Columbus is an American hero, and he should remain as such. Here are five reasons we should honor Columbus and keep the Columbus Delta.

1. Columbus was one of the best of his time. He sailed to numerous places beginning his career as a merchant marine. He sailed to Iceland and Ireland in 1477, and to Madeira in 1478. Between 1482 and 1485 Columbus traded along the Guinea and Gold coasts of tropical West Africa and made at least one voyage to Elmina, Ghana. After all of this, he made four transatlantic voyages to the 'new world' beginning with his first famed voyage in 1492.
2. Columbus treated the Native Americans kindly and brought them gifts in order to win their favor and undertook is exportations to be able to win their affection so they might become Christians and inclined to love our King and Queen and Princes and all the people of Spain.
3. If Columbus is not worthy of being honored with the Columbus Delta, what about the barbaric genocide perpetrated by Native American tribes from Mexico to Peru against other Native Americans before the arrival of Europeans. Even the Iroquoian peoples, located in our area, often took slaves of other tribes. Yet, despite all the gruesome sacrifice and slavery, some would wish to celebrate Indigenous People's Day.

4. Columbus was not perfect, no one is, but he is innocent of most of his alleged crimes. Columbus did not engage in the savage acts that have been pinned on him. In fact, history says Columbus strictly told the crew not to do things like maraud, or rape, and instead to treat the native people with respect. There are many examples in his writings where he gave instructions to this effect.

5. Columbus and all historical figures should be viewed in light of their great achievements, not their 'mistakes' identified in hindsight. Historical figures should be honored by their great achievements, and not their mistakes or weaknesses.

In short, Christopher Columbus was a great man involved in the early steps of the creation of our country and he should be celebrated and honored.

If we cannot honor anyone in human history that had flaws or imperfections, we wouldn't be able to honor anyone at all. Columbus was a great man with an adventurous spirit, sailing the seas taking the first step in establishing the 'new world.'

Please keep the Columbus Delta.

Thank you

Jim

M: 508.439.0387

6/21/22, 3:07 PM

Mail - Piccirilli, Vincent J - Outlook

Please keep it the way it is. There is too much history being Eliminated...

robert.martins <robert.martins@comcast.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 8:47 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

The Delta

JOSEPH IODICE <harley68@comcast.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 10:16 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Cc: Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; John Airasian <jairasian@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>

To the Council,

I am asking the Council to please use common sense in voting to rename the Delta. Please do NOT change the name. It is time that someone stiffens their spine and stands up to the people who are trying to revise history. They want to pull down statues, rename schools and also sports teams. History is history. Leave it alone. If you give in to these revisionists they will not be satisfied, they will surely come back at you for more changes. Is this special meeting even necessary? What a waste of time, money and energy. Groups like this are constantly trying to foment trouble. It is never ending. How about publishing the names and addresses of these people so that we may write to them and politely ask them to be reasonable. Maybe light will shine on Marblehead. This nonsense has been going on since the nineties. It is never ending.

STAND UP AND VOTE THIS DOWN!!!

**Joe Iodice
67 Lincoln St.
Watertown**

Comments on Columbus Delta

Marissa Babin <marissababin@yahoo.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 10:30 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; John Airasian <jairasian@watertown-ma.gov>; Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear City Council Members:

I am writing to express my opposition to the petition to rename the Columbus Delta in Watertown Square. Both as an Italian American and as a person who loves history, I find it extremely hurtful and upsetting that such an action is even being considered.

First of all, Christopher Columbus is a hero to many Italian Americans, including myself. Despite the bad rap that he gets lately, Columbus had many positive qualities that make him worthy of being celebrated. Although not perfect, he was incredibly brave, independent-minded, intelligent, and determined. Columbus is also a symbol of immigration and of Italian Americans' accomplishments. Therefore, honoring Columbus is important to the Italian American community. The removal of memorials to Columbus is harmful and discriminatory towards Italian Americans.

Additionally, as a person who loves history, it is important to me to live in a world in which a wide variety of historical figures are honored. The statues, plaques, and memorials in our public spaces should reflect a wide range of viewpoints, cultures, stories, and perspectives, and that includes the amazing story of Christopher Columbus and the Italian American community that he represents. Renaming the Columbus Delta would accomplish the opposite of this.

Actions such as getting rid of Columbus Day and Columbus statues, while done in the name of diversity and inclusion, are actually the opposite of diversity and inclusion, because these actions exclude Italian Americans and reflect a narrow view about which historical figures ought to be celebrated. Renaming the Columbus Delta would also fall into this category. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to leave the Columbus Delta as is.

Sincerely,

Marissa Babin

Save Columbus !

Richard Sauro <abtechrich@verizon.net>

Tue 6/21/2022 10:48 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

I am urging you not to let this mistake happen, there is no need or corrective action needed to set anything right when it comes to Columbus, everyone I know on his side supports indigenous people, however I have not met one indigenous supporter support Columbus! Let history remain this is catering to an angry element that has no legitimate bearing on facts or considers about our beloved Columbus. Thank you for reading and please do the right thing here. Thank you, Rich

"Life is what happens when your busy making other plans" John Lennon

Rich Sauro
abtechrich@verizon.net

The Columbus Delta

Dom. Amara <domamara@aol.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 11:37 AM

To: Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>



*An open letter
to the Watertown City Councilors
Discussing and voting on the
Elimination of Columbus Delta
In Watertown.*

You Know What's Right

History is our foundation;
there is no stronger tie
It has no expiration.
but martinets do try

Why, I ask
Reach they to Hell
to shape the past
Having what to sell?

A better "Heaven"?
Perhaps for them
That's the lesson
For you Council#en

6/21/22, 3:12 PM

Mail - Piccirilli, Vincent J - Outlook

You know what's right,
and our frustration
No Heritage tonight
needs elimination

The time to measure;
you've decided
Now, bring us together,
Undivided.

Domenic Amara
Boston, MA

Watertown Delta

Dom. Amara <domamara@aol.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 2:45 PM

To: Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>

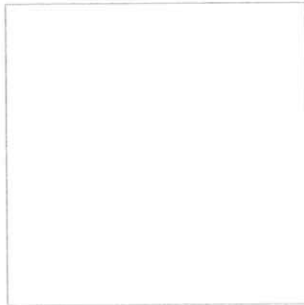
Date: June 21, 2022

To: The Watertown Town Council

From: The Pirandello Lyceum

RE: Columbus Delta

The **Pirandello Lyceum**, an Italian American Cultural organization in Massachusetts, wishes to express its concern that once again the name of Christopher Columbus is being besmirched.



As Italian Americans we reject the attacks that are based not only on faulty scholarship but on what we recognize as an agenda that seems designed to destroy the very foundations of America.

We believe the Watertown Councilors should take time to do some of their own research about Christopher Columbus. There is significant literature by creditable scholars which debunks the anti-Columbus propaganda should anyone wish to see it. Clearly, you have an opportunity to stand firm against the anti-American agenda which has proven so destructive to our Nation.

We should make it clear that we support the belief that Indigenous People should be recognized for their contributions. However, we are not so naïve that we do not recognize that that their cause has been hijacked by some who have another agenda.

Please note that although our heritage is Italian American we are first and foremost Americans. We, as our parents and our parents' parents before them, have suffered through many indignations, yet our faith in America is stalwart.

America is still the best Country on Earth, but we - Italian Americans, Irish Americans, Jewish Americans, Indigenous Americans, et al - must work together to reject division from any and every quarter. You have an opportunity to make take a courageous step to that end.

Abraham Lincoln said it best. A Nation divided against itself can not stand.

Domenic G. Amara, Ph.D. President

Rosario Cascio, Chairman

Columbus Delta Hearing

David Russo <oilman6714@yahoo.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 3:57 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Councilor Piccirilli, I am urging you to vote NO on changing the Watertown Columbus Delta name. This name is a tribute to all Watertown residents of Italian heritage. The local Sons & daughters of Italy Lodge supports many local charities and [activities.in](#) this great City.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David A. Russo
86 Lovell Road

Columbus Delta

Ann-Marie and Mark Pettiglio <pettiglio@yahoo.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 4:43 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

All,

In no way do I support the proposal to rename Columbus Delta. As an American of Italian heritage and a lifelong resident of Watertown just like my mother I find this idea insulting and disrespectful and disgusting. My Father also of Italian American heritage who served on the WPD for 38 years would feel you were a disgrace for even tabling this "discussion". My wife Ann-Marie and I are both officers for Lodge 1036 Watertown Sons and Daughters of Italy who recently held a fundraiser for the Watertown Food Pantry which raised \$5K and has an ongoing food collection every Thursday. Please hear our plea not to cave to faux outrage society. Thank you.

Sincerely

Mark Pettiglio

Sent from my iPhone

Re Columbus Delta

Irene Santoro <santoroirene9@gmail.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 5:00 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Dear Council Pres Piccirilli,

I am in opposition to the petition to rename the Columbus Delta. As my Grandfather, James Vincent Santoro, was 3rd Vererable/Pres 100 yrs ago of the Watertown Sons of Italy and a builder of many homes east and west of this city I am sure he would be devastated in the present attempt to erase this simple reminder of the contribution he and so many of his compatriots made to improve their quality of life and the lives of so many others in this country and this town, now a city. As a member of the Sons and Daughters of Italy I ask you to stop this attempt and to keep this wonderful reminder of those who came before us and who contributed to making our town, now city a better place for all of us.

Thank you,

Irene E. Santoro

SOI Watertown Ladies Lodge, Past Pres

Watertown Sons and Daughters of Italy, Member (Lodge Piave Fiume)

Sons and Daughters Member Watertown

My Letter to Watertown Councilors

ralphjcaruso@verizon.net <ralphjcaruso@verizon.net>

Tue 6/21/2022 5:36 PM

To: Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>; Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>; Bays, Caroline <cbays@watertown-ma.gov>; Gannon, John <jgannon@watertown-ma.gov>; Palomba, Anthony <apalomba@watertown-ma.gov>; Nicole Gardner <ngardner@watertown-ma.gov>; Feltner, Lisa <lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov>; Izzo, Emily <eizzo@watertown-ma.gov>; ralphjcaruso@verizon.net <ralphjcaruso@verizon.net>

msideris@watertown-ma.gov
vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov
cbays@watertown-ma.gov
jgannon@watertown-ma.gov
apalomba@watertown-ma.gov
ngardner@watertown-ma.gov
lfeltner@watertown-ma.gov
eizzo@watertown-ma.gov
=====

June 21, 2022

Dear Watertown Councilors,

Although I'm not from Watertown I do wish to express my concern that Watertown may decide to change the name of a park that celebrates Christopher Columbus.

The Italian American Community of late has been concerned over the attacks on Christopher Columbus as well as comments besmirching Italian culture. That is disturbing enough. However, what bothers me even more is that this tactic is also an obvious assault on the foundations of America. This has to stop.

I am a proud Italian American that has served my great country as a U.S. Army combat engineer officer for several years including in Vietnam. It pains me to see that there are those who are defaming our heritage in order to advance their political agenda.

I'm not unaware of political realities, but there are times when one must act with knowledge, wisdom and courage simply because it's the right thing to do. I believe each of you has an opportunity to demonstrate the character that made America an example for the world. America needs to be reunited or else all we've achieved will be for naught.

Sincerely,

Ralph Caruso
1st Lt. US Army , Ret.

Please make sure that my letter be attached to Tuesday night's Council meeting

Russ Arico <russarico@comcast.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 5:42 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

 1 attachments (14 KB)

Columbus Delta June 2022 (3).docx;

Thanks,

Russ

617-680-4965

Mr. President and City Councilors,

Tonight's agenda lacked transparency. It failed to disclose the reasoning behind changing the name of the delta. The petition stated in 1941, the delta was named after Columbus. In recent years, left wing extremists have distorted American history.

Columbus's record has been distorted with false accusations. Let's put this into its proper perspective. In the early years of the 20th century, many Italians came to this country legally. They were treated like 2nd class citizens. They were given dirty low paying jobs. They were called guineas, WOPs, spaghetti benders, garlic eaters and other derogatory names. Their hard work and strong work ethic, devotion to god, family and new country, they knew due to their sacrifices, their children and grandchildren would have a better life here in America.

Italians have made major contributions moving this great country forward. In the late 1930's and the early 1940s many joined the military. In World War 2, more Americans of Italian descent served than any other ethnic group in the United States.

Naming the delta after Columbus was a way to thank them for their sacrifices for our country. This petition is motivated by ignorance of distorted history. Any American of Italian descent who supports this change, if your grandparents were alive today, they would call you disgraziata – which means

ungrateful for all their sacrifices. To the non-Italians who support this change I ask was Columbus the Guinea, the WOP, the spaghetti bender, the garlic eater or some other derogatory name.

My grandparents took a lot of abuse and were afraid to speak up. Thanks to their sacrifices, I'm not afraid to express my first amendment rights which you all well know.

Do not disgrace yourself, vote no on changing the name of the delta.

Russ Arico, Fayette St

Columbus

Carol L Delaney <cdelaney@stanford.edu>

Tue 6/21/2022 5:43 PM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Might try to join the meeting but if unable please refer them to my book, Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem. He was a good guy and not at all the man whom people are now accusing him of being. He was definitely not going to enslave people and did not do so. Not sure where people are getting these ideas ... carol

Fwd: Letter in opposition to the replacement of Columbus Day wit Indigenous Peoples Day

DIANE MODICA <diane_modica@aol.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 6:00 PM

To: City Councilors <citycouncilors@watertown-ma.gov>

Please see edited letter from CSJ

Time 5:59 PM June 21, 2022

Thank You

COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE® Massachusetts Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America®

June 21, 2022

Watertown City Council
All Members
EMAILED:Watertown City Councilors

RE: Opposition to any Proposal to Replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day in Watertown or remove the Columbus Delta Monument

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Watertown City Council:

My name is Diane Modica and I am the Chairperson of the Commission for Social Justice (“CSJ”) which is the anti-defamation arm of the Massachusetts Order of Sons and Daughters of Italy in America (OSDIA). There are over 5000 members of the Sons and Daughters of Italy in Massachusetts with 51 local lodges statewide. The mission of the CSJ is to ensure equal concern respect, treatment and opportunity for all Italians, Italian Americans and those of other ethnic and racial origins. It responds to acts of bias, bigotry, defamation and prejudice; works diligently to eliminate stereotyping and to promote a positive image of Italians and Italian Americans; and to carry out the programs and policies set forth by the National Commission for Social Justice. Therefore, it is imperative that our organization go on the record to **oppose as proposal to Replace Columbus Day with Indigenous People’s Day in Watertown or the removal Columbus Delta Statue .**

As Chairperson of the CSJ, it has been my observation that many of the actions taken to eliminate Columbus Day in Massachusetts communities have occurred unilaterally without any opportunity for the largest Italian American organizations in Massachusetts to be heard on the matter. This may well be the case in Watertown . However, it is critical in a democratic society that all sides be heard from before decisions are made affecting the history and culture of specific ethnic groups. Italian Americans have a history in this nation that must be understood and appreciated. In addition, the complexities of history cannot be ignored and set aside when such matters are at the core of such a substantial action.

I hope the Watertown City Council will give due consideration and deliberation to those Italian Americans who believe that the elimination of Columbus Day or the removal of the Columbus Delta

monument is a grievous assault on, not only the man, but the ethnic group which helped build and defend this country. We offer the following arguments to support our position:

- Our efforts seek to address the malicious false narratives and deceptive claims that are being promoted in order to tarnish, destroy and undermine the reputation of Christopher Columbus. Hoping to erase any reference to this brilliant navigator and explorer in American and World history, special interest groups persist in relentless attacks and vandalism with impunity. Defacing, defaming and removing these symbols, including Columbus Day that we feel so passionately about denigrates and disrespects our hard won recognition, and the contributions that we have made to the Commonwealth and to this nation.
- We recognize the numerous wrongs done to Indigenous Peoples by the egregious policies of the United States government. We support the efforts of the Indigenous Peoples to force a redressing of these inequities and the long term ramifications of such policies. We also support Indigenous Peoples Day but not as a replacement for the celebration of Columbus Day. With only 12 recognized federal holidays that leaves 353 possible days to recognize the contributions of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples presently have 2 holidays (August 9th and the day after Thanksgiving) and the entire month of November that celebrates their heritage.
- Italian Americans have no fight with the Indigenous peoples. We recognize their historic mistreatment and the problems that arose from it. We acknowledge the psychological and economic impacts of repeated, unfair and egregious policy decisions by the United States government towards them. We support their continued efforts to correct the injustices that remain. But it is misguided for them to place at the feet of Christopher Columbus all the abuse and oppression inflicted upon them by others. Moreover, it fosters division because it separates people who can identify common ground; who can unite against acts of bias, bigotry, defamation and prejudice and who can fight for social and economic justice.
- This distorted narrative of Columbus that has been advanced without any attention to the facts would have the public believe that every act of inhumanity and cruelty throughout history of our Nation began with Christopher Columbus and all the ills of mankind should be laid at his feet. However, there are numerous scholarly articles, books and original sources that address and debunk claims made against Columbus of slave trading, racism, genocide, theft of native lands, opportunism, ruthlessness, greed violence and thirst for glory.
- For decades Christopher Columbus has been the symbol through which we Italian Americans have celebrated our ethnicity. Columbus Day is the only day that our nation recognizes the heritage of an estimated 18 million Americans of Italian descent, who are relentlessly stereotyped by the entertainment, news and advertising industries the other 364 days of the year.
- Italian Americans were the largest ethnic group to serve in the US Armed forces in World War II. Yet Italian Americans were designated enemy aliens with significant restrictions placed on them throughout the war. To rectify this egregious action, the United States government chose Columbus Day of 1942 to remove the label of "enemy aliens" that was applied to Italian Americans during World War II. It has enduring significance in that respect.
- For much of its history, the United States has considered Columbus a man worthy of admiration and rightly so. The commemoration of this great explorer, who was Italian by birth, was based upon his singular achievements in the discovery of the Americas. Courage, superior navigational skills in crossing the Atlantic and religious devotion motivated his voyage and he was universally admired and respected. To this day, sailors still use the route Columbus devised to cross the Atlantic.
- Columbus proved that it was possible to safely cross the Atlantic. His transatlantic route lay the foundation for future navigation in the region. He was the first European to realize the full importance of the Atlantic wind pattern called the prevailing Westerlies, which blew steadily east. His maps were used

by Amerigo Vespucci. Imagine, Columbus' route across the Atlantic Ocean, charted in the 15th century, is still used by sailors today.

- Columbus was an extraordinary man whose navigational skills, courage, religious convictions and persistence began the cultural exchange between America and Europe. After Columbus, millions of European immigrants brought their music, art, science, medicine, philosophy and religious principles to America, principles that have helped shape the United States including a belief that all persons are created equal. Subsequent immigrants from Asia, South and Central America, Africa and the Middle East enthusiastically embraced these principles.

- Even looking at it with a revisionist eye would suggest that, on balance, (a criteria by which all historic figures must be evaluated), Columbus was an extraordinary man whose navigational skills and talent, courage, religious convictions, and persistence . At the end of the day, two wrongs do not make a right. It makes no sense to take away from one group to solve the problems of another group.

In closing, the CSJ respectfully urges the Watertown City Council to vote against any Proposal Rename Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day or to remove the Columbus Delta Monument .

Respectfully submitted,

Diane J. Modica Chair

**CITY COUNCIL ROLL CALL VOTE
MEETING DATE: JUNE 21, 2022**

	YES	NO	PRESENT
CAROLINE BAYS	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
LISA J FELTNER	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
JOHN G. GANNON	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NICOLE GARDNER	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
EMILY IZZO	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
ANTHONY PALOMBA	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
VINCENT J. PICCIRILLI	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
JOHN M. AIRASIAN	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
MARK S. SIDERIS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>

MOTION TO REFER THE PETITION TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS TO RECONSIDER THE NAMING OF THE DELTA IN WATERTOWN SQUARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 2019 – R – 85

From: [Sideris, Mark](#)
To: [City Councilors](#); [Magoon, Steve](#)
Subject: Fw: Historic District Process
Date: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 1:29:28 PM

Here is a memo I requested from Mark Reich for our discussion tonight.

Mark

From: Mark R. Reich <MReich@k-plaw.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 10:44 AM
To: Sideris, Mark <msideris@watertown-ma.gov>
Cc: Matthew V. Sirigu <MSirigu@k-plaw.com>
Subject: Historic District Process

Mr. President –

In advance of tonight's special meeting of the City Council, which includes a hearing on a petition to create a Historic District, we wanted to provide you with the following outline regarding the process for creating such a District. The process for creating a Historic District is governed by the provisions of G.L. c. 40C. Pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 40C, sec. 3, the creation of a Historic District will require passage by a two-thirds majority vote of the City Council of an ordinance creating the District. However, there are a number of steps to be undertaken prior to consideration of an ordinance creating a Historic District.

The steps required in advance of and including consideration of such an ordinance are as follows:

1. **Study Authorization:** The City Council votes (simple majority) to investigate the desirability of establishing a historic district. G.L. c. 40C, §4.
2. **Investigation and Report:** The Historic District Commission (HDC) conducts an investigation and report "on the historical and architectural significance of the buildings, structures or sites to be included in the proposed historic district or districts"
 - By statute, when creating a new district in a municipality where other districts already exist, the HDC conducts this study. However, the HDC may recommend a separate study committee be established. G.L. c. 40C, §3 (¶2).
 - If the HDC recommends an alternative study committee, the City Council may create a historic district study commission of 3-7 members with 3 members to come from nominations by certain groups (local historical society, board of realtors and AIA).
 - Per the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), the study should take at least 18 months and involves (1) creation and justification of district boundaries, noting what is inside and outside of those boundaries, and (2) completing a historic inventory form for each property, which documents the historic significance of all assets in the proposed district.
 - The boundaries should be easily discernible and justifiable; the initial proposal or concept of the district does not need to remain if investigation reveals different boundaries are more appropriate.
3. **PB/MHC Comments:** The initial report is transmitted to the Planning Board and MHC for review and comment.
 - The MHC generally will vote on comments to send back to the municipality.

4. **Public Hearing:** Not less than **sixty days** after the transmittal of the report to the Planning Board and MHC, the HDC must hold a public hearing on the report. If the report is deemed complete, the MHC will date stamp the cover letter submitted with the report and return it to the HDC. The HDC can hold the public hearing 60 days from the date of that date stamp.
 - **14 Day Notice to Owners:** The HDC must provide written notice (“mailed postage prepaid”) to the registered owners (i.e. those appearing on the most recent real estate tax list) of all properties to be included in the proposed district at least 14 days prior to the date of the hearing.
 - **Newspaper/OML:** MHC also recommends publication of notice of the public hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the community, and notice should, of course, be provided consistent with the OML.
 - As a practical matter, it is recommended that several informational public meetings be held in advance of the public hearing, so that concerns can be addressed in advance.
5. **Final Report:** The HDC then submits a final report with its recommendations, a map of the proposed district (suitable for recording), and a draft of a proposed ordinance to the City Council
6. **City Council Approval:** The City Council must approve the ordinance by a two-thirds majority vote. Since the new district would be created by ordinance, it must be passed consistent with state and local procedures for passage of ordinances, including first reading, newspaper publication, and final passage (City Charter, §2.8; Council Rule 10).
7. **Recording:** Before the ordinance may become effective, a map setting forth its boundaries must be placed on file with the City Clerk and recorded in the Registry of Deeds.
 - Though not required by law or to be effective, notice of passage of the ordinance should be provided to the MHC as well. MHC explains: “Local historic districts are automatically listed on the State Register of Historic Places. However, the additional protection afforded by State Register listing will not go into effect until the district is actually placed on the register by the MHC.”

If you have any additional questions concerning this process or with respect to potential legal challenges thereto, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you.

Mark

Mark R. Reich, Esq.

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Historic District on Main Street is a mistake

Tom Gorman <tgorman123@comcast.net>

Sun 6/19/2022 11:30 AM

To: Piccirilli, Vincent J <vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov>

Hi Vinnie.

I am writing to oppose adding a Historic District on Main Street in Watertown.

This is not in line with the current master planning.

Regards,

Thomas Gorman

473H Arsenal Court.

Watertown

**CITY COUNCIL ROLL CALL VOTE
MEETING DATE: JUNE 21, 2022**

	YES	NO	PRESENT
LISA J. FELTNER	_____	__X__	_____
JOHN G. GANNON	_____	__X__	_____
NICOLE GARDNER	_____	__X__	_____
EMILY IZZO	_____	__X__	_____
ANTHONY PALOMBA	_____	__X__	_____
VINCENT J. PICCIRILLI	_____	__X__	_____
JOHN M. AIRASIAN	_____	__X__	_____
CAROLINE BAYS	_____	__X__	_____
MARK S. SIDERIS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT	_____	__X__	_____

MOTION TO CONSIDER MAKING A HISTORIC DISTRICT FOR THE ADDRESSES STATED IN
THE PETITION: 98-224 MAIN ST. AND OTHER PARCELS A HISTORIC DISTRICT

**CITY COUNCIL ROLL CALL VOTE
MEETING DATE: JUNE 25, 2022**

	YES	NO	PRESENT
NICOLE GARDNER	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
EMILY IZZO	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
ANTHONY PALOMBA	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
VINCENT PICCIRILLI	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
JOHN M. AIRASIAN	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
CAROLINE BAYS	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
LISA J. FELTNER	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
JOHN G. GANNON	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
MARK S. SIDERIS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

MOTION TO APPROPRIATE THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 IN THE AMOUNTS RECOMMENDED BY THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE