

From: [Kathy Lawson](#)
To: [Lisa Slomke](#)
Subject: FW: Renaming of Colonization Road, Dec 14 Council Meeting
Date: Thursday, November 26, 2020 10:42:25 AM

From: Kevin Stewart <stewak2@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 24, 2020 1:57 AM
To: Town <town@fortfrances.ca>
Cc: Nancy Westover <nwestover@hotmail.com>; byronrs@hotmail.com
Subject: Renaming of Colonization Road, Dec 14 Council Meeting

Mayor and Members of Council:

With respect to the motion to rename Colonization Road, I have the following observations and requests for consideration at the December 14th Council meeting:

The stated objective is to further reconciliation between the Town and local indigenous population. It is possible that, in fact, this will not be achieved, as current residents along Colonization Road will object, on the following grounds:

Changing a legal and postal address is a considerable effort. Driver's licenses, Health Cards, and all other forms of identification need to be corrected, as do legal and financial records. The possibility exists that an overlooked update might have serious consequences. While there may be no direct financial costs, the time and effort is not inconsequential. This is particularly challenging for older residents, and even more so in the midst of a pandemic where in-office service may not be available.

Residents may disagree with that the word 'Colonization' is necessarily hateful, racist, or derogatory, despite some academic opinions. Clearly in this case, the meaning depends upon context. Colonization as subjugation is clearly not something to commemorate, but the open, tolerant, successful country of Canada today, home to immigrants from all over the world, would not exist today without colonization, it was an essential part of our history. Canada as a nation inspires pride in all of us, and some may consider that expunging this word is an attack on the basic legitimacy of the Canadian state – and consider this offensive.

On a basic level, some residents may legitimately object to their address being changed without their consent, irrespective of other factors.

There may be concern that many locations and addresses in Fort Frances relate to early explorers and non-indigenous immigrants. In other words, colonists. Lady Frances Simpson, the town namesake, was the wife of a colonial official. Is there a clearly defined demarcation of what is and is not acceptable? What precedent does this set?

With regard to the above, I request that

1. The town conduct a mail poll, by secret ballot, of residents and businesses along Colonization Road, make the results public, and consider said results in any final decision.
2. Further action on this matter be delayed until such time as the end of the pandemic allows an in-person public forum so that residents (and indigenous representatives) can provide input.
3. All options to maintain current legal and postal addresses while changing street signage be explored – this might be a workable compromise

The above would ensure that the decision is made in an open, public, manner and that the interests of all concerned parties get adequate consideration. This will increase the probability of achieving the goal of reconciliation.

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