

June 2, 2024

Dear Town Council,

I am incredibly grateful for the recent interest in supporting the minority communities in our town. It has been a challenge for the children of our schools to express themselves as, in a small rural town, it is easier for them to try to "blend in" instead of proudly displaying their cultural differences. Children learn from the community, and our community has recently shown incredible strides in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Thank you to the (previously named) Community Relations Committee and (recently renamed) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee. Communities are stronger when the minorities are celebrated and treated as equals. It is difficult for the white heterosexual male majority to understand that minorities need to be lifted up to level the playing field. A person in a position of privilege can certainly feel threatened when they are no longer able to hold onto that previously established generational advantage, and I am truly sorry for those councilors who feel threatened by the upcoming pride month celebrations.

I support CRC/DEI organizing a Pride event because Pride month is a celebration of a historically oppressed community, and we should not be threatened by this.

I think it's important that our town government shows support for the LGBTQIA+ community in hosting events and I appreciate that CRC/DEI is taking steps to do so.

Being gay is not a lifestyle choice, and I do not appreciate those in a position of power stating this falsehood in official town correspondence.

I would like town council and CRC/DEI to commemorate Pride Month by making our LGBTQIA+ communities feel welcome, appreciated, and valued.

Those holding positions of power in our community should remember that they represent everyone in our community. There are clearly growing pains regarding the way in which to celebrate our community, but a healthy dialogue is the way forward. I respect that the town is cognizant of the town budget and the cost of pizza for a community event. Perhaps if the cost of the pizza is too high, there may be people in the community willing to donate funds to show support for Pride Month. I am willing to contribute funds to this and I would like the community to know that I celebrate and honor my LGBTQIA+ neighbors.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Parad

Ledyard resident