



* Late item received FZ *

February 15, 2022

To the Town of Bristol,

Please consider this letter as an expression of support for the Bristol Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Marker Project's effort to place a memorial marker on public land near the State Street dock.

Bristol's waterfront is an undeniably important site in the town's history. As we walk along the waterfront in Bristol, we encounter a number of markers, memorials, historic plaques, and signs, many of which address the town's past. Whether to remember the hurricane of 1938, Revolutionary War soldiers, Christopher Columbus, or a WWII submarine net float, these objects visibly mark the landscape in honor of the people who have been a part of this community.

Equally as important, yet underrepresented, is the history of enslavement in Bristol. Through research on primary source documents, we have been able to identify close to 600 enslaved people who lived in Bristol from 1680 to after 1820. These documents reveal the stories of people of color who were important members of this community and their lasting impact on this place.

Linden Place and the DeWolf Tavern, both of which are privately operated, recently installed Rhode Island Slave History Medallion (RISHM) markers acknowledging their sites as having a direct relationship to the business of slavery. We feel the placement of a Port Marker in Bristol is one more step in that process of remembrance, reconciliation, education, awareness and celebration of the resilience of those who survived the Middle Passage and the contributions they and their descendants made to our community. It is also one that acknowledges the role the Town itself played in this history.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on this important project. We hope you will take action to support this effort.

Sincerely,

Nancy Kellner, Kendall Reiss, Lynn Smith, Catherine Zipf
East Bay BIPOC Research Project Volunteers

2022 FEB 28 AM 9:04
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East Bay BIPOC Research Project

TOWN COUNCIL
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MEETING