Andy Van Hazinga - Ward 4 City Councilor
16h · 🌐

On Wednesday Mayor DiNatale participated in a ceremony raising what was referred to as a "nuclear family" flag at Riverfront Park. When I asked the Mayor to provide an explanation of the context of this ceremony, he replied that the flag was raised in response to the City previously flying the gay pride flag at the park.

In his post about the event and his response to my inquiry, the Mayor did not provide an explanation of the intent or message of this flag, or the group that petitioned that it be raised. However, it appears to resemble a "straight pride" flag that was previously raised in 2018 in Chipman, New Brunswick, but removed after only one day following a strong backlash in the community.

It is incorrect and insensitive to equate the gay pride flag(s) to this "straight pride" flag, and this ignores their history and intent. The gay pride flag emerged as a symbol saying that it is okay to be gay, trans, or different than the "norm". It seeks to provide legitimacy to a segment of our population that has been legally discriminated against, socially excluded, and often violently attacked in our society.

The "straight pride" movement rose in direct opposition to the idea that all people deserve equal protection under the law, no matter what their sexuality. It is not a movement that promotes equality, but seeks to deny rights to those who are different.

As a City Councilor and resident of Fitchburg, I am significantly concerned that the City of Fitchburg and its Mayor have endorsed homophobia by holding a ceremony to raise this flag in Riverfront Park. Raising the issue of fairness or equal opportunity does not justify endorsement of a group seeking to discriminate against others.

I do not agree with the Mayor's decision and the flag should be taken down.