

Dear Council Members

I recently learnt of the proposal to change the spelling of the place name Waaxens to Waaksens. I wish to express my very strong opposition to this proposal.

I have family connections to Waaxens. On my wall as I write is a painting of the church in Waaxens, done by Abe Gerlsma. My family name, Ypma, can be found on the gatepost of the nearby farm Ypma Sathe, and appears on the wooden sign reading 'Ypma's Verdriet' on the small house adjacent to the church. My forefathers lived in the historic farmhouse directly across the main road from that house, with their view being blocked by that house, hence the local dispute commemorated by the sign. The remains of my father and grandfather lie on the terp, as do the remains of several earlier generations of my family.

I understand that the proposed spelling change is an attempt to promote the use of the Fries language, with the 'x' apparently being insufficiently Fries. Do the proponents of this proposal also intend to inform the Van Harinxma thoe Slooten family that their name is insufficiently Fries? I consider myself a proud Fries, as did my forefathers, and I am sure they would share my extreme distaste for this proposal to change the name of the place they loved, with its unique and distinctive spelling – a spelling that appears in many documents over the centuries. The proposed name change is destructive of a proud local heritage, and its acceptance would constitute a dishonour to my forefathers and to my family.

I add my voice to the unanimous voice of the current inhabitants of Waaxens, in an urgent request to the Council to reject this no doubt well-intended but utterly misbegotten quest for linguistic purity.

Yours sincerely