

**RESOLUTION OF MORRISTOWN SUPPORTING THE CONSERVATION
OF THE DREW FOREST**

WHEREAS, consistent with the goals of preserving and protecting New Jersey’s unique cultural and historic sites in order to strengthen community assets; preserving natural systems and environmentally sensitive areas for the community and the wildlife it supports; protecting the Buried Valley Aquifer; and creating opportunities for additional resource-based recreation while fostering the growth and sustainability of a rare urban forest; and

WHEREAS, Drew University is a significant contributor to the economic, cultural, historical and educational well-being of our region; and

WHEREAS, its 53-acre, intact Forest is a significant element of the campus and educational life; and

WHEREAS, the Shade Tree Commission of Morristown also recognizes the benefits of this unique public space to Morris County and the Drew University community for the following reasons:

- The Forest provides biodiversity, groundwater recharge, clean air and carbon storage;
- The Forest is a living classroom for teaching and research for Drew students and the wider community;
- For the past 13 years, 22 acres of the 53 forested acres known as the Zuck Arboretum and the Hepburn Woods have been restored through the Drew Forest Restoration Project, removing invasives and creating a rare understory of native plants and native trees;
- In 2012, Drew University received the Governor’s Environmental Excellence for Healthy Ecosystems for this work;
- Habitats for pollinators, birds and other wildlife have been restored;
- A portion of the Forest lies in the Passaic River Watershed that serves approximately two million people;
- The Forest recharges the Buried Valley Aquifer, which serves clean water to municipalities accounting for over 450,000 people in New Jersey and nearly 200,000 people in Morris County, and reduces flooding and soil erosion; and
- The Forest serves as a major cooling zone to offset the urban heat island effect.

NOW THEREFORE BE RESOLVED, that the Shade Tree Commission of Morristown supports working with Drew University to conserve the entire 53 acres of the Drew Forest.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED
4.19.2022

_____ Kristin Ace, Chairperson