

DRAFT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE PROPOSED CARGILL MINE SHAFT #4 CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

RESOLUTION #__ of 2017:

WHEREAS, Cayuga Lake and its subsurface lands are owned by the People of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroline recognizes the importance of Cayuga Lake as a drinking water source, recreational resource, and wildlife and fishery habitat that adds to our quality of life and the thriving tourism economy of the Finger Lakes Region; and,

WHEREAS, the environmental, public health and safety risks associated with mining are generally acknowledged to be significant; and

WHEREAS, the State of New York passed the State Environmental Quality Review Act in 1975 in order to establish a process to systematically consider potential risks in the planning stages of proposed projects such as mining; and

WHEREAS, if the lead agency (NYSDEC) when reviewing documentation submitted with regard to such a project, finds one or more potentially significant adverse environmental impacts, it must file a positive declaration and require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and if the lead agency instead issues a Negative Declaration, it must be able to demonstrate that the action will not have any significant adverse environmental impacts; and

WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the Town of Caroline that an application has been submitted by Cargill, Inc. to the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) for permission to construct a new mine shaft adjacent to Cayuga Lake (ID#0-9999-00075/00001 -- Cargill Mine Shaft #4); and

WHEREAS, despite generally acknowledged mining risks, in none of the permitted expansions or other projects at the Cayuga Lake Cargill salt mine approved since 1975 has the NYSDEC ever required the preparation of an EIS; and

WHEREAS, credible concerns have been expressed, with substantial supporting scientific documentation provided to the NYSDEC, demonstrating the potential for significant adverse impacts to Cayuga Lake and/or the local environment from this proposal, including but not limited to:

- (a) impairment to the view-shed of seven miles of Cayuga Lake and its shoreline,
- (b) increase in local greenhouse gas emissions,
- (c) storage of Shaft #4 leakage water in the mine which could negatively impact long-term mine stability, resulting in the collapse and flooding of the mine and posing

risks to miners, riparian residents and to the lake,

(d) subsurface intersection of the mine shaft with an aquifer which could cause mine flooding and the subsequent salinization of Cayuga Lake in a manner analogous to the 1994 Retsof Mine disaster in Livingston County; and

WHEREAS, the above potential significant impacts could adversely affect the economic, social, recreational, and ecological health of the surrounding municipalities, including the Town of Caroline; and

WHEREAS, NYSDEC, prior to any public announcement, or receipt of relevant information from interested stakeholders, of the environmental review of the proposed project, issued a “Negative Declaration”; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of Caroline respectfully requests that the NYSDEC:

- (1) rescind its negative declaration of June 30, 2016 for Cargill, Inc.’s Mine Shaft #4 construction project,
- (2) require a full and transparent disclosure of all information (including seismic studies) critical to an analysis of the above potential risks to the environment and the future health of Cayuga Lake,
- (3) require submission and public review of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed project, thereby encouraging a full public discussion of these important concerns,
- (4) delay issuing a permit for the construction of Shaft 4 and any further mining of the connecting tunnel until an adequate DEIS has been accepted by DEC; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, NYSDEC Commissioner Basil Seggos, Senators Patricia Helming and Thomas O’Mara, Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan, Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Assembly Minority leader Brian Kolb, Assemblyman Steve Englebright, Village of Trumansburg Mayor Martin Petrovic, Town of Lansing Supervisor Ed LaVigne, City of Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick, and Tompkins County Legislature Chair Michael Lane.

DATE ADOPTED: _____