

Resolution 132 of 2015, Promoting Effective Actions on Climate Change

Whereas a principal responsibility of the Town Board of Caroline is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community; and

Whereas the 2014 Fifth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change finds that climate change is a result of fossil fuel combustion and other human activities, and that it poses a serious threat to human and natural systems that calls for immediate actions to curtail greenhouse gas emissions¹; and

Whereas New York State Executive Order #24 of 2009 establishes a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050²; and

Whereas Tompkins County has committed to a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% of 2008 levels by 2050, with an interim target of 20% reduction by 2020³; and

Whereas energy conservation and build-out of renewable energy sources both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide opportunities for sustainable economic growth, individual economic gains, and good jobs, as has been demonstrated in the past three years by the volunteer-led efforts of the Solarize Tompkins Southeast (SE) and Solar Tompkins programs; these programs have resulted in 500 solar electric systems for residents, adding 3.7 megawatts of clean solar power to the grid, while eliminating 2,840 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from power plants annually, creating 70 full-time jobs, and lowering energy bills; and

Whereas collaboration among individuals, local governments, and businesses can stimulate successful effective local actions by providing complementary support in their respective roles as community-builders at little or no monetary cost to taxpayers, as has been demonstrated by the Town of Caroline (for Solarize Tompkins SE) and then the Tompkins County Planning Department (for Solar Tompkins) in providing assistance in planning and as fiscal sponsors to our volunteer-based solar programs;

Therefore, be it Resolved that the Town Board of Caroline recognizes that developing and implementing effective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is of the highest priority to minimize physical, social, and economic impacts to the town from future climate change;

Be it further Resolved that the Town Board of Caroline calls on individuals, businesses, and governments to work together to promote effective measures to limit climate change. By rapid achievement of Climate Smart Community goals (**Resolution #47 - 2012**), collaborating with other levels of government, and working together with citizens and businesses, we commit to:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- fostering energy-efficient communities and lifestyles
- promoting renewable energy sources
- enhancing the economic prosperity of the town and its residents
- directing efforts and investments toward efficiency and renewable energy
- promoting cost-effective measures to make our communities resilient to expected climate-change impacts;

Be it further Resolved that this resolution be sent to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State Senator James Seward, New York State Senator Michael Nozzolio, New York State Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, the Tompkins County Legislature, all Tompkins County municipalities, Chair Audrey Zibelman of the New York State Public Service Commission, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Tom Reed, Congressman Richard Hanna, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy, and President Barack Obama.

Sources:

1. IPCC. 2014. Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp.
2. Executive Order #24 (2009, issued by Gov. David A. Paterson). Establishing a Goal to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions 80% by the Year 2050 and Preparing a Climate Action Plan. <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/71394.html>
3. Tompkins County (N.Y.). Comprehensive Plan: Planning for Our Future. Ithaca, NY: Planning Department, 2015, p. 76. <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/files/compplan/documents/FINAL-March%2012-low%20res.pdf>

Adopted Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Seely: Aye