

Resolution \_\_\_\_\_ of 2020. Recommendation of Hands-off Policy to Promote Old-growth Forests on County Lands.

Whereas, forests provide many benefits to our residents and the environment, and old-growth forests (those that are undisturbed by human intervention for centuries) are among the rarest habitats and pieces of biodiversity, and

Whereas, forests are in a natural state of flux where trees get sick and die, insects kill trees, wind blows trees over, and fire sometimes burns forests, and

Whereas, none of these natural phenomena need automatically trigger human intervention, and

Whereas, strategies of proforestation, the practice of purposefully growing an existing forest intact, benefit nature-based biological carbon sequestration and ecosystem services such as biodiversity enhancement, water and air quality, soil health, flood and erosion control, public health benefits, low impact recreation, and scenic beauty, and

Whereas, a proforestation policy is a low-cost/low-effort approach that avoids the impacts of logging on the landscape and the related erosion and costs to the County and Town of Caroline, and

Whereas, Tompkins County's Environmental Management Council has produced a draft report with different management options, noting, among them, that the forests will naturally develop to an old-growth state, and

Whereas proforestation will sequester quantitatively more carbon over the critical next few decades than cutting and regrowing forests,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Caroline Town Council requests that Tompkins County allow the land it owns to grow intact toward its full ecological potential without commercial logging.