

**MEDIA ADVISORY: NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

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## **MORRIS TOWNSHIP TO BE FOURTH TOWN TO RESOLVE TO SAVE THE DREW FOREST**

**WHO:**

The Morris Township Committee will follow Chatham Township, Chatham Borough and Madison in passing a resolution supporting efforts to save the 53-acre Drew University forest through a conservation sale. Madison, where the Forest is located, passed the first resolution in May 2021. The Chathams passed similar resolutions in February 2022. Because of the environmental and economic significance of New Jersey forests—and local universities—the region is concerned.

**WHAT:**

The resolution being considered states Morris Township's support of public conservation sale to save the 53-acre Forest, a primary aquifer recharge area located on the Drew University Campus. Such a purchase would preserve the Forest for public and educational use, as well as provide needed funds for Drew.

**WHEN:**

Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 7PM

**WHERE:**

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84358121300?pwd=VmpvY3hwR3ZuM2MrWm9EQkZkSUgxZz09>  
Passcode: 318078

**VISUALS (B-Roll) & SOUNDBITES:**

- Hear Drew student/alum comments on how the Forest, a "living laboratory," has shaped their education and career choices.
- See what 11,466 [petition](#) signatures—we'll have a printout on hand.
- Photos are available at [www.friendsofthedrewforest.com/photosvideos](http://www.friendsofthedrewforest.com/photosvideos)

**WHY:**

- Funds from a public conservation sale would directly benefit Drew, whose students, professors and approximately 500 employees support area restaurants, shops, businesses and medical services.
- The 53-acre Forest connects to other public parks—Giralda Farms Preserve (purchased with the support of county, municipal and other funds), Loantaka Brook Reservation and the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.
- The Forest is a critical aquifer recharge area for Morris County, purifying drinking water for 30 towns. This ecosystem service is valued at \$1,532,336 per year, according to the NJ Dep. Along with other benefits. Intact forests also remove Carbon Dioxide from the air and store it, thus mitigating climate warming. The [change.org](#) petition lists other benefits.

**Resources and media coverage:** [www.friendsofthedrewforest.com/blog/category/In+the+Media](http://www.friendsofthedrewforest.com/blog/category/In+the+Media)



TOWNSHIP CLERK  
(973) 326-7430

## TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS

50 WOODLAND AVENUE  
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CONVENT STATION, NJ 07961  
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### RESOLUTION NO. 60-22

#### SUPPORTING THE CONSERVATION OF THE 53-ACRE PROPERTY KNOWN AS DREW FOREST, LOCATED IN MADISON, NEW JERSEY

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 Township Committee of the Township of Morris 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 IT RESOLVED, that the Township Committee of the Township of Morris support working with Drew University to conserve the 53-acre property known as Drew Forest.

I, Danielle M. Lewis, Township Clerk of the Township of Morris, Morris County, New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution as adopted by the Governing Body at a Regular Meeting held on March 16, 2022.

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Danielle M. Lewis, RMC, CMC  
Township Clerk  
Township of Morris, Morris County  
State of New Jersey