

TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD



RESOLUTION NO. 168-19

RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE COUNTY OF ESSEX BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO HALT EXPANSION OF THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN RECREATION COMPLEX INTO THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN RESERVATION

WHEREAS, the South Mountain Reservation is an important community resource treasured by the residents of Maplewood and Essex County, as well as visitors to our area; and

WHEREAS, the South Mountain Reservation is the only access many residents have to natural space; and

WHEREAS, the forest of the South Mountain Reservation sequesters carbon from the atmosphere, playing an important role in the sustainable future of Essex County (the "County"); and

WHEREAS, South Mountain Reservation provides habitat for wildlife, and its reduction is causing increases in wildlife entering residential and commercial areas endangering themselves and residents; and

WHEREAS, the considerable increase in traffic congestion from the expansion projects of recent years has negatively impacted the community, environment and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, covering additional acreage of the South Mountain Reservation with impervious surfaces will exacerbate storm water runoff issues, including flooding and water pollution; and

WHEREAS, despite several attempts to access a supposed Master Plan for the Turtle Back Zoo, none has been shared with the public; and

WHEREAS, projects for the South Mountain Reservation are not properly vetted with the public prior to planning and executing them, often holding open meetings during hours of the workday when most people cannot attend and not considering input from the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that:

The Township of Maplewood calls on the Essex County Board of Freeholders to be considerably more transparent with plans for future projects, to listen to the public's concerns before any further development occurs and to suspend plans to expand the Zoo and the Recreation Center into the South Mountain Reservation.

I, Elizabeth J. Fritzen, Township Clerk of the Township of Maplewood, in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, at a regular meeting of said Committee held on August 6, 2019.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Township of Maplewood in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, on this 6th day of August 2019.

EIZABETH J. FRITZEN, R.M.C.
Township Clerk