



VERONA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
600 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE
VERONA, ESSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION No. 2025-01

A motion was made by Walter Steinmann; seconded by Sarah O'Farrell that the following resolution be adopted:

**A RESOLUTION URGING THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE
TO PRESERVE THE 120 ACRE FOREST AT THE SECOND WATCHUNG
MOUNTAIN AND RIDGE**

WHEREAS, the 120-acre property at Block 179, Lot 32, known as the "West Essex Highlands" is a core forest; a critical environmental facet of Essex County, New Jersey providing essential habitat and water resources; and

WHEREAS, residential neighborhoods surrounding and adjacent to this core forest are flood prone, experience repeated flood events, and exist in the 0.2% annual chance (500-year) FEMA floodplain; and

WHEREAS, open space properties and parklands downstream from this property contain floodways, and or exist in the 1% annual chance (100-year) FEMA floodplain, and experience repeated flood events; and

WHEREAS urban flooding can occur in places that are well outside of mapped floodplains and can be caused by rain falling on increased amounts of impervious surfaces overwhelming the capacity of drainage systems; and

WHEREAS, this forest contains tens of thousands of trees, providing green infrastructure for stormwater management as well as providing for the absorption of carbon dioxide, the production of oxygen and relief from heat island effect and essential ecological habitat; and

WHEREAS, the proposed removal of untold numbers of trees will exacerbate flooding, degrade the core forest and displace hundreds of native species; and

WHEREAS, the applicant is not adhering to the most current stormwater rules and as such are not planning onsite stormwater management that would act to better protect all surrounding properties; and

WHEREAS, waters from this forested land feed the Canoe Brook tributary and replenish critical aquifers that contribute to the NJ American Water, providing drinking water for 2.9 million New Jersey residents, in more than 190 communities.

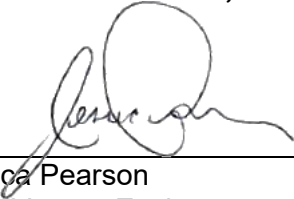
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Verona Environmental Commission does hereby urge the Township of West Orange to reject the proposed 496-unit development on said lands and to preserve the 120 acres of forested land in perpetuity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Township of West Orange Mayor McCartney and Council, Verona Township Mayor Tamburro, Verona Town Council members, and Township Manager O'Sullivan.

ROLL CALL vote taken on June 11, 2025 at a regular Verona Environmental Commission meeting

Member	Y	N	Abstain	Absent	NE		Member	Y	N	Abstain	Absent	NE
Jean Deo (Alt. 2)				X			Walter Steinmann	X				
Kelly Pena				X			Sarah O'Farrell	X				
Adam Bulger	X						Vice Chair Sean DiBartolo	X				
Fuad Dahan				X			Chair Jessica Pearson	X				

We hereby certify the foregoing to be a true resolution adopted by the Verona Environmental Commission on June 11, 2025.



Jessica Pearson
Chair Verona Environmental Commission



Sean DiBartolo
Vice Chair Verona Environmental Commission