

Town of Chapel Hill

Proclamation

WHEREAS, currently about 300 million tons of plastic are produced each year to make bags, bottles, packages, and other commodities for people all over the world; and

WHEREAS, only about ten percent of this plastic is properly recycled and reused while the rest ends up as waste in landfills or as litter in our natural environment; and

WHEREAS, in response to the threat posed to our planet by the "exponential growth of plastics", Earth Day 2018 is dedicated to "providing the information and inspiration needed to fundamentally change human attitude and behavior about plastic"; and

WHEREAS, the Earth Day 2018 Campaign calls on local leaders to "inform and activate citizens to take personal responsibility for the plastic pollution that each one of us generates"; and

WHEREAS, the average American goes through six shopping bags each week which means that 1.8 billion bags are used and discarded in America every year; and

WHEREAS, single-use bags made from low-density polyethylene (LDPE) or high-density polyethylene (HDPE) can take from 15 to 1,000 years to break down and, in landfills, paper bags do not do much better; and

WHEREAS, only 5-10% of these bags are recycled, and

WHEREAS, a substantial quantity of these bags end up on our roadsides, in our trees, in our storm drains and, consequently, in our waterways; where they can be devastating to marine life; and

WHEREAS, plastic bags are made from a non-renewable resource and the manufacturing process of single-use paper bags is water-intensive; and

WHEREAS, each of us can help reduce plastic pollution by "rejecting, reducing, reusing and recycling plastics; and

WHEREAS, one reusable bag saves: 6 plastic bags a week which equals 24 bags a month, 288 bags a year and, 22,176 bags in an average lifetime; and

WHEREAS, adopting other "single use swaps" including reusable coffee cups and water bottles will also significantly decrease our waste stream.

NOW, THEREFORE we the Chapel Hill Town Council declare April 22nd, 2018 to be

Earth Day

in Chapel Hill and call on our businesses, residents and visitors to take personal responsibility for reducing plastic pollution by using reusable bags, cups and bottles and taking other steps to eliminate single use plastics where possible.



GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL ON THIS THE EIGHTEENTH DAY OF APRIL IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND SEVENTEEN.

Ram Hemminger