

2013-J4639

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize those special places within the Empire State which provide recreational opportunity for residents and which have become a part of the history of our State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club; and

WHEREAS, In 1860, approximately 60 settlers were granted title to land in an area called Manhasset, New York; the rolling terrain, later to become Strathmore Vanderbilt, was part of the vast Spreckel's Estate belonging to a wealthy farmer in the sugar business; and

WHEREAS, Records indicate that title was conveyed in 1906 to William Chester; he subdivided the property by selling it for use as country estate to people whose names appeared prominently on the society lists of New York City; this marked the beginning of an elegant period that featured weekend country leisure such as riding and entertaining, and the homes were well-staffed by domestic help from abroad; and

WHEREAS, In 1914, William Chester sold the remaining part of his holdings, a French Chateau, to an ice cream and candy entrepreneur, Louis Sherry; he was enamored with the well-balanced architecture, and proceeded to redecorate the house to resemble the Petite Trianon, a cottage of Marie Antoinette at Versailles; and

WHEREAS, The formal garden, replete with aromatic boxwood and rare foliage provided opportunities for relaxing evening walks, and a complete library, paneling and books, was purchased in France and

installed next to the foyer of the house; in 1923, after Louis Sherry passed, the house with 700 acres was sold to Frank Munsey, owner of THE NEW YORK SUN, THE BALTIMORE SUN, and the Munsey Trust Company; and WHEREAS, An art connoisseur and patron of the arts, Frank Munsey undertook a grandiose remodeling which lasted two years; he extended the house with two wings of pink brick, imported stone trim around the arched windows, and added an octagonal tower; to achieve his idea of a true Louis XV Chateau, he imported French marble fireplaces and mantles, brass fixtures for the windows and doors, and commissioned a hand painted mural for the ceiling of the Marie Antoinette dining room; and WHEREAS, Unfortunately, Frank Munsey never formally occupied the house; he died a bachelor and his entire estate was left to the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and WHEREAS, Graham Fair Vanderbilt, a scion of the Vanderbilt family and fortune, offered to purchase the house with 100 acres from the Metropolitan Museum of Art; for a decade, the property provided a gracious setting for lawn parties and social festivities to which New York's top "400" eagerly responded; and WHEREAS, The property was ultimately inherited by Consuelo Vanderbilt whose interests were focused abroad; she sold the house and the 100 acres to architect/builder, William Levitt, who was gaining prominence in developing various "Strathmore" communities in Manhasset, naming his new acquisition Strathmore Vanderbilt; and WHEREAS, William Levitt's plans for Strathmore Vanderbilt centered around the presence of the French Chateau at the end of the long and winding tree lined drive; he conceived the idea of an association of property owners who would share its continued maintenance, and who in turn would benefit from its facilities, its elegance, and its convenient location; and WHEREAS, His decision to maintain the structure as a resource to be enjoyed by future generations is a testimonial as much to his talent as

an architect as it is to his talent as visionary; and

WHEREAS, Today, 75 years later, Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club continues to welcome its members and families to enjoy all it has to offer; and

WHEREAS, It is a great pleasure to thank and acknowledge Outgoing President Kurt Holweges for his hard work and service, and welcome 2014 President Mike Mondiello; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to those establishments and institutions within the State of New York whose historic significance has contributed to the culture and traditions of our citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club.