

2017-J734

Senate Resolution No. 734

BY: Senator MARCHIONE

COMMEMORATING the 40th Anniversary of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that the continuing welfare of the citizens of the State of New York is greatly enriched and reliably served by the purposeful endeavors of organizations which are committed to the preservation of our natural environment and the enhancement of the appreciation of the distinctive features of our surroundings, and to the economic well-being of the areas in which they exist; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Encouraging the preservation of its past to protect its future, the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation drives community stewardship of its heritage through educational programs, technical assistance, preservation projects, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, The historic preservation movement in the United States is often said to have begun with the fight to save Pennsylvania Station in New York City, which was demolished in 1963; and

WHEREAS, For Saratoga Springs, the watershed moment took place in February of 1968, when concerned residents came together to halt the attempt by a chain called Dutch Inns of America to build a 150-room hotel in the city's beautiful Congress Park; and

WHEREAS, During this time, the Aesthetic Zoning Board, now the Design Review Commission, was created to oversee additions to and subtractions from the cityscape; city native Bea Sweeney and city historian Evelyn Barrett Britten led the fight against the Dutch Inn, and within a year, the legislation was repealed; the preservation movement in Saratoga Springs was underway; and

WHEREAS, On January 4, 1977, the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation was organized with a four-fold mission of education, technical assistance, advocacy and physical restoration; one of its early successes was the receiving of a grant towards the restoration of the former Verrazano College buildings; and

WHEREAS, The Foundation also secured funding to save such important structures and features as a row of Second Empire houses on Clinton Street, the Adirondack Railroad terminal on Grand Avenue, the Gasholder Roundhouse on Excelsior Avenue, the Putnam Burial Ground, the Spirit of Life, and the Regent Street Theatre; and

WHEREAS, In addition, this vital organization gained federal recognition for seven historic districts, adding to three secured by Beatrice Sweeney; its education program developed many components, including technical assistance, color charts, a marker program, organized tours, lectures and publications; and

WHEREAS, The Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation opened a city

visitors' center in 1978, and in 1986, transformed it into a unit of the statewide Heritage Areas program, capitalizing on the growing phenomenon of heritage tourism; and

WHEREAS, By the late 1990s, historic preservation was widely acknowledged to be the foundation of the city's resurgence, both as a livable city and as a popular tourist destination; and

WHEREAS, The Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation has been the recipient of three national awards granted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation: the Great American Main Street Award (1996), the Great American Places Award (1997), and the Dozen Distinctive Destinations Award (2002); these were followed by federal designation as a "Preserve America Community" (2004); and

WHEREAS, Today the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation is completing restoration of the historic Gideon Putnam Cemetery, and continues to shine a spotlight on new opportunities for community growth and economic development through preservation; and

WHEREAS, The success of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation is in direct correlation to the efforts of its members, whose involvement is, and always has been, characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all endeavors on behalf of the organization and the community it serves; and

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon all citizens to recognize and applaud the efforts of organizations such as the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, which work tirelessly on behalf of protecting our natural surroundings for the benefit of present and future generations of New Yorkers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation.