

2009-J1855

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Eleanor Fitchen, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community

WHEREAS, It is with great sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Eleanor Fitchen, noting the significance of her purposeful life and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, A long time resident of the Town of Southeast, New York, Eleanor Fitchen helped shape the region through her convictions on historic and open-space preservation; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, community opposition to Hoyts Cinemas' plans for a proposed 10-screen theater on Route 6 led to Eleanor Fitchen and others forming the Concerned Residents of Southeast; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Eleanor Fitchen founded Southeast Open Spaces with her husband, Paul, which was the predecessor of the Putnam County Land Trust, and the Landmarks Preservation Society of Southeast; and

WHEREAS, Devoted to safeguarding pieces of the past, Eleanor Fitchen once locked herself and a granddaughter in the Old Southeast Church on Route 22 to prevent its destruction; she also worked tirelessly rehabbing the Walter Brewer House, a Greek-revival mansion that was built by the founder of the village in 1850; and

WHEREAS, Eleanor Fitchen was born on October 9, 1912, in New York City; her father, Chester Beach, was a prominent sculptor who built the stone home on Starr Ridge Road; and

WHEREAS, In 1934, Eleanor Fitchen graduated from Vassar College in Poughkeepsie and married Paul Fitchen; the couple moved permanently to Southeast when he retired in the late 1960s; and

WHEREAS, Eleanor Fitchen is survived by two daughters, Ellen Tappan and Anne Burton, 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren, all of whom felt privileged to be a part of her life and rejoiced in her many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit, imbued with a sense of compassion, and comforted by a loving family, Eleanor Fitchen leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all she served and befriended; now,

therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Eleanor Fitchen, distinguished citizen and devoted member of her community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Eleanor Fitchen.