

## 2015-J6435

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Neighborhood of Middle Village, Queens, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating its 200th Anniversary

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor the history of our state and the counties, cities, towns, villages and

neighborhoods that together make up the whole of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Middle Village, Queens, had its real genesis as an area physically located between the settled farmlands of Jamaica, Queens, and the town of Williamsburgh in Kings County, where the ferry to Manhattan was located in the early 19th Century; and

WHEREAS, In 1816, a private wooden-plank toll road, known as the Williamsburgh and Jamaica Turnpike, opened after several years of construction by brothers Stephen and Samuel Masters, running along an old Indian path and colonial route; and

WHEREAS, At this time 200 years ago, a small hamlet grew up along the new turnpike and was dubbed Middle Village, owing to its location half-way between Jamaica, Queens and the Brooklyn ferry docks; and

WHEREAS, Restaurants, inns, stores and blacksmiths opened in Middle Village to cater to travelers along the turnpike, many bringing their wares to the ferry to sell in Manhattan markets, and the neighborhood continued to prosper around the newly constructed road; and

WHEREAS, The Masters brothers ended their personal involvement with the Williamsburgh and Jamaica Turnpike in 1834, but their company continued to operate the toll road, with improvements in 1849 and later efforts in 1869 to reconstruct the deteriorating roadway with train tracks and a trolley after the end of the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Middle Village became home to many German immigrants in the 1840s, which increased the size of the town; the opening of Lutheran Cemetery in 1852 also brought an influx of new companies related to the

funeral business to the area, which was further bolstered in 1879 by the opening of St. John Cemetery and the Fresh Pond Crematory in 1884; and WHEREAS, In later years, Middle Village saw a number of important changes: James A. Herriman, the president of the Turnpike company, sold the roadway in 1873 to the Town of Newtown for \$15,000 in bonds, creating a public road still known as Metropolitan Avenue; electricity and gas lighting came to the hamlet in the late 1800s; the gigantic Juniper Swamp peat bog was filled in and ultimately became the extraordinary Juniper Park; and an electric substation was constructed in 1923 to serve the whole Queens Community Board No. 5 area; and WHEREAS, In the intervening years, Middle Village, which also attracted a sizable Italian population, has continued to grow and thrive, is an integral part of Queens, and is an exceptional, close-knit neighborhood where residents are able to happily live, work, do business and raise their families; now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Neighborhood of Middle Village, Queens, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating its 200th Anniversary; and be it further RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the residents of Middle Village, Queens, New York.