

BY: M. of A. Steck

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of the
Incorporation of the Village of Menands on June 1,
2024

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to honor and commemorate the proud and distinguished histories of the communities which comprise the essence of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and fully in accord with its longstanding traditions, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Village of Menands; and

WHEREAS, The Village of Menands was incorporated after a special election was held in the Old Menands Hall on Lyons Avenue on August 15, 1924; rumor has it that the City of Albany was looking to annex the lands of Menands since the area was rich in industry, recreation facilities and fine homes; the residents of the village voted 167 to 47 for incorporation; and

WHEREAS, The City of Albany and its surrounding area played a vital part in both the French and Indian War and the American Revolutionary War; many troops would camp and march through areas which would become part of Menands; and

WHEREAS, After the wars, one of the first major developments north of Albany and through what would later become Menands, was the construction of the Erie Canal; and

WHEREAS, New York Governor DeWitt Clinton strongly supported the construction of the canal; the canal was completed in the Menands area in 1823; the Erie Canal would prove to be an important part of Menands history; and

WHEREAS, The construction of one of the area's first railroads to be built north of Albany would be the next major project; the Albany Northern Railroad was incorporated on February 20, 1851, and was intended to run from Albany through the town on Watervliet and eventually connect with the Rutland Railroad at Eagle Bridge; after several delays, the railroad was completed in 1856; and

WHEREAS, Menands takes its name from one of the area's early residents, Louis Menand; Louis Menand was born on August 2, 1807, in Burgundy, France; when he was quite young, he formed a love growing things and turned to that avocation for a livelihood; he reached that ambition when he was employed at the Botanical Gardens in Paris; and

WHEREAS, Being an ambitious man, Louis Menand was anxious to improve his stature and in 1841 he left France for America; in 1842, he and his wife traveled to the Albany area where they rented a plot of ground at

the site of the Home for Aged Men (now the Center Manor, part of the Center for the Disabled); he specialized in growing orchids and decorative plants; and

WHEREAS, By the time Louis Menand came to this area, the Erie Canal was in full swing, the Watervliet Turnpike was still nearly brand new; Louis Menand continued to gain notice in the communities surrounding Albany; the many people who traveled the turnpike would make it a point to visit what would become known as "Menands Gardens"; and

WHEREAS, Louis Menand's business would continue to grow as the population of Albany and the surrounding area grew; a large railroad station would eventually be built at the crossing where his gardens were planted; this would later become known as the Menands stop, or Menands Station; and

WHEREAS, As Albany began to expand, and the area of the Town of Colonie still largely farmland, it was natural for business enterprises to look toward the Menands area to establish themselves; after all, the area had four major methods of transportation by the mid-19th century - The Hudson River, the Erie Canal, the Watervliet Turnpike, and the Albany Northern Railroad which were all well-established means of transporting people and goods throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, Some of the early businesses located in the Menands area were the Albany Felt Company, a producer of paper makers felts, established in 1895 and eventually grew to international proportions with their world headquarters located here in Menands; Albany International and the Albany Felt Company are probably the longest continuously operating companies in Menands today; and

WHEREAS, Many other businesses would locate along the Watervliet Turnpike in the late part of the 19th and early part of the 20th Centuries; these would include the: Crane Co., Albany Steel, Ramsey Chain, Simmons Machine, Morgan Linen Company, Albany Car Wheel Co., Taylor Electric Truck Co., Williams Press, International Harvester, J.B. Lyon Printers, Boyertown Casket Co., Hawkins Baseball Stadium and Mid City Park; of these, Simmons Machine, Morgan Linen and Albany Steel are still in business here in Menands; and

WHEREAS, Built in an art deco style popular in the 1920s, Montgomery Wards chose Menands because of its location between Albany and Troy; the ease of bringing customers to the store by means of the trolley route and paved road, currently Broadway; and the direct access to the railway were definite pluses; and

WHEREAS, Another major addition to the business community in Menands was the construction of the Capital District Regional Market in the mid-1930s; as the areas surrounding the cities of Albany and Troy were still largely rural in the early to mid-1900s, the farming industry was as important as heavy industry; and

WHEREAS, The regional market was formed so that local farmers had a large and spacious area in which to sell their produce; the Capital

District Regional Market also had a rail spur to the Delaware and Hudson Railway which brought in produce from all parts of the country; fresh produce was even flown into the market by small airplanes; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the years Menands has boasted many firsts in the capital area; Menands was one of the first to have a horse racing track (Island Park Association formed in the 1860s); a second horse racing track was located near present day Rt. 378 and Broadway; and

WHEREAS, A town of quiescent, yet noble history, a region of scenic natural beauty, the Village of Menands today stands as impressive and promising as it undoubtedly appeared in the eyes of its Native Americans and early settlers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Village of Menands on June 1, 2024; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitable engrossed, be transmitted to the Village of Menands.