

**RESOLUTION NO. 390 -2015, CREATING AN EDUCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE SUPPORT INITIATIVE (EASI) PILOT
PROGRAM IN COOPERATION WITH MOUNT SINAI HERITAGE
TRUST**

WHEREAS, Long Island is one of the largest producing agricultural counties in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Long Island's farm community is vital to Suffolk County's economy, bringing in over \$150 million annually for farm products and contributing to the County's \$5.6 billion tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, pollinator species support our agricultural communities by improving harvests and helping maintain a sustainable agricultural industry; and

WHEREAS, pollinator habitats have been diminishing due to resource extraction, as well as urban and suburban development; and

WHEREAS, the number of pollinator species, such as monarch butterflies, have decreased by 90% in the past 20 years; and

WHEREAS, community gardens provide needed habitats and a source of food for pollinator species, which include native milkweed plants; and

WHEREAS, community gardens provide an educational benefit to students and families, and give residents the opportunity to become engaged with environmental and conservation projects; and

WHEREAS, the Mount Sinai Heritage Trust owns land identified as Suffolk County Tax Map No. 0200-141.00-03.00-003.001, commonly referred to by locals as "the Wedge", which now houses a recreation center, playground, parks, ball fields and gardens; and

WHEREAS, the land maintained by the Mount Sinai Heritage Trust is an excellent site for an educational garden; and

WHEREAS, the Mount Sinai Heritage Trust is interested in partnering with the County to expose residents of the County to native plants and pollinator species and to increase community awareness of the ecological importance of native habitats; and

WHEREAS, the Long Island Native Plant Initiative will provide native plant material at no cost to the county, through their local grant program; and

WHEREAS, the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County and Long Island Native Plant Initiative have resources and materials dedicated to the education of school aged children on invasive plant species, beneficial environmental propagation and farmland sustainability; now, therefore be it

1st **RESOLVED**, that the Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation and the Department of Public Works are hereby authorized, empowered and directed to collaborate and partner with the Mount Sinai Heritage Trust, the Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, and the Long Island Native Plant Initiative to establish an Educational Agriculture Support Initiative (EASI) at Mount Sinai Heritage Trust Park on Suffolk County Tax Map No. 0200-141.00-03.00-003.001; and be it further

2nd **RESOLVED**, that Mount Sinai Heritage Trust shall provide the garden location and all necessary supplies, with the exception of the plant materials, for the implementation of this initiative; and be it further

3rd **RESOLVED**, that the Long Island Native Plant Initiative shall provide the local plant materials for the garden; and be it further

4th **RESOLVED**, that the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation and the Department of Public Works shall be involved for the purposes of determining whether additional gardens would be appropriate in other locations on County property and where such locations may be; and be it further

5th **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(20), (21) and (27) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW as a promulgation of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, and legislative decisions in connection with continuing agency administration, management and information collection, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: May 12, 2015

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: May 28, 2015