

Town Sports Park Gets Support

The results of a consulting firm's market and feasibility analysis have convinced local officials to take the next steps toward the construction of a major sports tourism and recreational facility in the town of Cortlandville. Proposed for more than 100 acres of land adjacent to Byrne Hollow Farm on Route 13 south, the Gutches Lumber Sports Complex would comprise multiple playing surfaces accommodating large-scale regional tournaments and competitions.

The study by Market & Feasibility Advisors of Chicago determined that such a complex, given its location near the center of the state and a general shortage of such facilities in the region, creates a "unique opportunity" to attract visitors and drive dollars into the community. "A dominant consideration for this has been the success of the Cortland Regional Sports Council in bringing tournaments and dollars to the community," said BDC executive director Garry VanGorder. The CRSC, which now primarily uses SUNY Cortland facilities for its events, has generated more than \$20 million in economic activity since it was formed 11 years ago. "This park would take us to the next level," VanGorder said. An additional benefit from the construction of the facility would be the ability to bring even more high-level events to the community. The CRSC currently relies primarily on SUNY Cortland for playing surfaces, but is often limited by scheduling conflicts with college events.

The town acquired the undeveloped property from Gutches Lumber in a swap for six acres of land it owned adjacent to the company's McLean Road operations center. The use of the former Gutches property is restricted to park development, and the town is now considering a variety of options for the replacement of Citizen's Park at the new Route 13 location.