

TOWN BEGINS SPORTS COMPLEX PROJECT

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Town of Cortlandville

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Town Begins Sports Complex Project

Cortland, NY – Local and state officials gathered May 29 to officially launch Phase 1 construction of the Gutches Lumber Sports Complex, a \$15 million project that when complete will serve as the region’s premier multisport tourism destination.

The \$4.5 million first phase will comprise two baseball facilities and related amenities designed for both youth and NCAA play. Later phases will bring in two more baseball fields as well as a series of multipurpose fields accommodating lacrosse, soccer, and more. All of the fields will be constructed with the latest artificial surface technology, making them of greater appeal for tournaments and teams looking for reliable playing surfaces in the typically difficult springtime weather conditions.

“This is a major initiative for the town of Cortlandville but the opportunity presented itself thanks to a great partnership with Gutches Lumber Company,” said town supervisor Richard C. Tupper. “Job one was finding the right location, and thanks to the Gutches family we were able to do that.”

The town and the company essentially swapped parcels, with the town receiving 100 undeveloped acres near the Byrne Dairy Manufacturing facility in South Cortland and the company picking up about six acres adjacent to its facilities that the town had been using as a park and picnic facility.

Funding for the project so far has come from town financing, state assistance through the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council and New York State Sen. Jim Seward, and private support.

When complete, the events at Gutches Park will largely rely on the efforts of the Cortland Regional Sports Council, which over its 12-year history has lured dozens sports related events and championships to the community, including the state Senior Games. The overall economic impact of those events total more than \$25 million.

“We’re not new at sports tourism,” said Garry L. VanGorder, the county’s chief economic development officer and president of the CRSC board. “This presents us with a great new opportunity to drive the local economy forward.”