

Town draws up park grant

Board OKs asking state for pocket- park funding

By ROB IRWIN

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At a meeting of the Guilderland town board on Tuesday, Dec. 19, the board voted to authorize Supervisor Kenneth Runion to sign a contract with the state office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for a grant to fund the construction of a park at the McKownville Reservoir.

The grant, drawn up by town's chairman of economic development Don Csaposs, would provide the town with \$99,000 for the park with no cost to the town. Typically, grants of this nature are completed with a match by the town, but in this instance, said Runion, the town was able to use the value of the land as a match.

The money, said Runion, will go toward general clean-up, putting in walking paths, a pavilion and a small footbridge in the park, which will be located near Stuyvesant Plaza off of Western Avenue.

"It's an area you can walk around and sit around," said Runion, who referred to the area as a pocket-park.

The park will be situated around a pond that's there, which once served as water supply for

Park

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the McKownville area.

According to Don Reeb, president of the McKownville Improvement Association, the area once consisted of eight to 10 ponds about 40 years ago, before the construction of Stuyvesant Plaza and other developments in the area.

At one time, said Reeb, people in the area used the pond areas

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Don Reeb

for recreation.

“One development or another... ended up affecting the use, and the quality of the water in the reservoir kept going down,” said Reeb. “When the water was

no longer being used as a reservoir, we were interested in restoring the historic role of that area as a recreation area.”

Reeb compared the future park to Buckingham Pond along Berkshire Boulevard in Albany. That area also has a park situated around the small lake.

“We’re not talking about a Great Lakes phenomenon here,” said Reeb, about the future park and pond, an area he estimated to be 10 acres. “It’s a place to sit down and have a cup of coffee.”

Runion said the town had been looking into the park project for about two years.

“We’ve had a lot of interest from the McKownville Improvement Association in creating a recreational area around the reservoir,” said Runion.

“I’m very pleased,” said Reeb. “This has been a long, long process.”

Runion estimated that the park should be complete in the fall of 2007.