

## **Multi-Use Organizing Committee to hold informational meeting**

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### **Article Photos**



Dr. John Earshen

### **Fact Box**

#### **IF YOU GO**

1 **WHAT:** Multi-Use Organizing Committee public informational meeting

1 **WHEN:** Thursday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.

1 **WHERE:** Fredonia Central School

The Multi-Use Organizing Committee will be looking to take a quantum leap forward regarding the possibility of constructing a multi-use facility somewhere in Northern Chautauqua County.

The committee recently received a report back on the results of the recent fundraising study and will be presenting that information Thursday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. at Fredonia Central High School.

"It's going to be a summary of the fundraising study. Dr. John Earshen from The Madison Group is going to do a 20-minute powerpoint presentation, which is essentially something he gave to us last to week," said Don Horton, Multi-Use Organizing Committee president. "This will be his conclusions and recommendations for further action for our board of directors. He will discuss what we need to do to make this facility become a reality. It is going to be gray. It's not going to say do it or not to do it. It will say do it - if - this is all done."

As part of the report, Earshen interviewed over 50 people, which included elected officials, businessmen, community leaders and interested parties of the project.

"It's obvious from the recommendations that he gave us that we have a lot of work to do and we'll need a lot of help from the community to make this happen. It's not a candy-coated set of recommendations. It's some pretty big things that we need to do to make this go," Horton said. "It's about money and where potential funding streams might be; recommendations of where to apply for grants and some business people who have money."

Although available donations will be the ultimate key to the success of the project, Horton is urging all residents who have an opinion on the project to come to Thursday's meeting, speak their mind, ask questions and if willing, join the committee.

"There needs to be a lot of people there that night and there has to be a good sense that the community is behind it and they want to see it succeed and the key business people want to get behind this and make it happen. We're getting the sense that there are a few people ready to step up to the plate. We're hoping they come to the meeting because as a committee we can't do this ourselves," he said. "We'll take the comments the public is going to make and we're going to bring that to our meeting in October and ask, 'What do we do next? Do we go with his recommendations, do we not go, can we build this thing or not?' If we think we can, then we have a lot of work to do. When we meet during our Oct. 8 meeting, that's really when our board of directors is going to decide what to do next."

Multi-use facility talks began back in December 2001, taking place on WDOE's Adrenaline Sports Show, when Horton called in to speak with Mike Ferguson and Juan Vasquez. The committee has slowly built up steam over the past seven years, but hit its stride three years ago and is looking to do so again after Thursday's meeting, according to Horton.

"Three years ago we did a Paradigm Consultant report - the big feasibility study talking about community groups in the community behind it and is it a good idea to build an ice rink in New York state. It was a full report and it recommended us to apply for 501-c3 not-for-profit status," Horton said. "It gave us several marching orders and we took those to heart and in three years we've pretty much lived up to all of them. That's kind of what this new report card will be like and it will give us our action plan."

During Thursday's meeting, Earshen is going to give a dollar figure of how much money he has uncovered in the community in terms of donations available and he'll reference federal and state money that may be available as well.

What the finish line of the project has been viewed as being has evolved over time, but Horton says the scope of the project will be solely dependent upon how much money is available for Phase I, should the project move forward.

"What we can do from this point forward is going to be based on how much money we raise. This is make or break for us. ... The dollar figures are going to determine the scope," he said.

"What we have planned right now will cost between \$4 and \$6 million to build our phase I. If we can only raise \$2 million then the question is can we cut this back to a \$2 million project or not."

Talks right now include: two turf fields, an exercise facility, outdoor ice rink, a game room, walking track, concession stand, locker rooms and meeting space. There are still three possible sites, with a decision that will also be made dependent on the cost to purchase the land.

"We're appealing to the community to get involved and show us they want this to happen, and to show us some money streams ... and for business people to step up and say here's my check for \$500,000, I want my name on the building. We need someone to come up and do that and become a potential underwriter, essentially," Horton added.

The committee is recruiting new members. Anyone interested in the becoming a member or anyone who has questions, is encouraged to call Don Horton at 640-7457, or check the committee Web site at [www.cmusf.com](http://www.cmusf.com).

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