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**newsman38**  
 Senior Member



Reged: 03/21/01  
 Posts: 813

**Seneca-Cayuga Indians buy land for casino?**

#97438 - 11/21/02 12:15 PM

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Quote:

Originally posted at:

<http://www.syracuse.com/news/poststandard/index.ssf?/base/news-0/1037871305260670.xml>

**The Oklahoma-based Seneca-Cayuga Indians - which has been looking for possible casino sites - are acquiring 240 acres in western Cayuga County.**

The land, just north of Cayuga Lake, was purchased for \$738,544 by Caywill New York, a company hired by the tribe to acquire land, according to Larry Leventhal, an attorney working with the Seneca-Cayugas.

Caywill, a Rochester company formed Nov. 2, 2000, may have ties to Wilmorite Inc., a mall and development company that owns several malls in Central New York. The two companies have the same address, 1265 Scottsville Rd., Rochester, according to state records.

Wilmorite has been retained by the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe to look for sites for possible casino development, Thomas C. Wilmot, chairman of Wilmorite, confirmed in April. At the time, Wilmorite was looking at four sites in Cayuga and Seneca counties, all within the 64,027-acre claim area on Cayuga Lake, Wilmot said.

The land purchased by Caywill, at the intersection of state Routes 20 and 90 in the towns of Aurelius and Montezuma, was being developed into an 18-hole golf course by Todd Mirabito. In the heart of the Cayuga Indian land claim area, it is virtually next door to the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, and about 8 miles west of the Fingerlakes Mall.

Leventhal would not say specifically what the Seneca-Cayuga's plans were for the property.

"The tribe is interested in keeping its options open as to what would best serve the tribal interests regarding the utilization of its lands," Leventhal said.

In Oklahoma, the Seneca-Cayugas own and operate a high-stakes bingo hall, a gas station and a cigarette factory. Tribal officials have not discussed whether they will pay property taxes on the land, he said.

**Clint Halftown, a spokesman for the Cayuga Indian Nation of New York, had no comment.**

**Mirabito, who is vice president of Finger Lakes Press Inc., said the golf course project became too much for him.**

**He purchased the property 10 years ago for \$200,000, received town approval for the project this year and paid to have a turning lane added to state Route 5 & 20.**

**"It got a little overwhelming to me, and I had to let go my share of the deal," Mirabito said.**

**Barry Stevens, regional traffic engineer for the state Department of Transportation, said the state did not pay for the road widening this summer.**

**"The impacts on a highway system are borne by private developers in each and every instance," he said.**

**He acknowledged hearing rumors of an Indian development, and said that if the proposed project changed after the road work was completed, "we would try to work with them."**

**The Seneca-Cayuga Indians, based in Miami, Okla., and the Cayuga Indian Nation of New York sued the state in federal court for return of 64,000 acres of ancestral homeland and have been awarded \$247.9 million in damages from the state, an award the state is appealing. Arguments are scheduled to be heard in January.**

**The Seneca-Cayuga tribe has about 3,200 members. About half of them live in Miami, Okla., near the Kansas and Missouri borders.**

**The purchase is the second in recent weeks by an out-of-state Indian tribe in a New York land claim area.**

**The Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican Indians of Wisconsin, thwarted in its attempts to build a casino in the Catskills, bought 122 acres in the Madison County town of Stockbridge.**

**Tribal representatives said they hadn't decided what to do with the land, but weren't ruling out a casino. The tribe runs a casino in northern Wisconsin.**

**In Cayuga County, news of the Seneca-Cayuga's land purchase prompted mixed reactions by people with interests in the area.**

**Connie L. Talcott, of Union Springs, co-chairperson of the anti-land claim Seneca-Cayuga Chapter of Upstate Citizens for Equality, said she was not surprised.**

**"We've heard rumors that there was interest in a casino on that site," Talcott said.**

**She said the UCE will continue to oppose the land claims, the establishment of a reservation or sovereign land in the 64,027-acre claim area.**

**Ed Ide, supervisor of Aurelius, said he has concerns if a casino goes up or if the tribe intends to claim the land as sovereign, tribal land.**

**"If they have purchased it and intend to make it tribal lands, I see that as a**

problem," Ide said. "Obviously, it goes off the tax rolls. There are a lot of privileges that they have on the reservation that the rest of the people in the town will not have, both economically and the way they handle their affairs. You just set up two classes of people."

Raymond E. Lockwood, R-Aurelius, Cayuga County legislature chairman, said he was unaware that the Oklahoma tribe has acquired the land.

He said he wants to see what the Seneca-Cayugas have planned for developing the land before commenting but did say he would oppose any plan to open a gambling casino.

Gregory Greenfield, president of Gregory Greenfield and Associates Ltd. in Atlanta, Ga., owners of the Fingerlakes Mall, was in town Wednesday. He said he was unfamiliar with the Indian issues of this area.

Nevertheless, he said, given the amount of retail here "with our mall and the Waterloo Outlet Center, a casino or some sort of entertainment facility, that would be a great use. We'd be all in favor of that.

"It would seem a casino would be a logical choice," he said. "The more activity and more reasons that people would have to drive long distance to this area - the better."

Post Extras:   

**licketysplit**  
Senior Member

Reged: 07/08/01  
Posts: 295  
Loc: East Bumbuck

 **Re: Seneca-Cayuga Indians buy land for casino?**



#97457 - 11/21/02 06:02 PM

    
Edit Reply Quote

Who paid for the road to turn off into the field like it does?? It seems really strange that a road was built going to no where. If someone requested that with the promise that they were going to build a golf course there then I hope they are liable for the cost. It just seems crazy!!

Post Extras:   

**MomRN**  
Senior Member

Reged: 02/18/02  
Posts: 691

 **Re: Seneca-Cayuga Indians buy land for casino?**



#97459 - 11/21/02 06:21 PM

    
Edit Reply Quote

If you read the entire post it tells you that the original owner of the land paid for widening and turning lane, because he was going to build a golf course there. It became to much for him so he sold the land. From the looks of it, the turning lane will eventually turn into something.

Post Extras:   

**stewart20**  
Senior Member

Reged: 11/29/01  
Posts: 189  
Loc: Geneva



 **Re: Seneca-Cayuga Indians buy land for casino?**



#97460 - 11/21/02 06:27 PM

    
Edit Reply Quote

I heard MONTHS ago that a casino was going in there when they were building the turning lane...How do they explain that one-a coincidence? doubt it

Post Extras:   