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Choate Rosemary Hall plans \$10 million expansion in Wallingford

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Choate Rosemary Hall, the internationally known preparatory school, announced plans to construct a \$10 million expansion to its Wallingford campus. Choate plans to break ground next month on the 31,000 s/f Kohler Environmental Center. The building was designed to include rows of photovoltaic solar panels which will provide power to the building. The environmental center will be connected to the Wallingford Electric Division and sell excess power back to the grid when the panels collect more electricity than is used. The center is named in honor of Herbert Kohler, chairman of the school's board of trustees as well as chairman and CEO of the internationally known bathroom fixture company that bears his name. Choate's target completion date for construction of the center is the spring of 2012.

Dell Healthcare and Life Sciences Services, a division of nationally known, Texas-based Dell Computers Inc., announced plans in January to acquire InSite One, a Wallingford-based digital archiving business. Founded in 1999, InSite One, located at 135 North Plains Industrial Rd., manages digital medical archives that include nearly 55 million clinical studies and more than 3.6 billion medical images. InSite One is the first company to bring "cloud technology" to the medical archiving field, meaning its archived information is internet-based and its databases can be accessed by medical professionals, regardless of their location. Dell plans to extend the archiving capabilities of InSite One to other industries beyond the medical field.

Also announced in January, Toll Brothers of Connecticut, a local builder of high-end, homes, purchased 28 acres on North Farms Rd. in Wallingford and submitted plans to the town to construct 29 single family homes. To be known as The Estates of Wallingford, the homes will range in size from 2,000 - 3,000 s/f. According to company officials, demand appears to be increasing for new construction of modest-sized homes, a departure from the large, luxury homes previously built by Toll Brothers. Today's consumers express more concern for energy conservation and maintenance costs.

Other announced developments in Wallingford include: 14,000 s/f for a new CVS, area car wash and 12,000 s/f retail center at 865-895 North Colony Rd., and the construction of a 25,000 s/f office building on Research Pkwy. for a Wallingford-based insurance company.

Recently Completed Developments in Wallingford

Wallingford is now home to SunHydro, Connecticut's first public hydrogen automobile fueling station. SunHydro recently opened for business at 10 Technology Dr., the home of its partner company, Proton Energy Systems. It is one of many stations the company hopes to open to promote hydrogen fuel as an alternative to gasoline. The station will service a fleet of, among other vehicles, 10 Toyota Highlander SUVs powered by fuel cells.

According to Robert Friedland, president of Proton, the Highlanders get 60 miles/kilogram.

Hydrogen fuel is equal to \$3 - \$4/gallon of gasoline and is a cleaner alternative to fossil fuels. Solar panels mounted on the roof of the Proton building power the generating equipment. The solar panels generate compressed hydrogen and the only emission from the vehicles is water. There are currently 500 fuel cell vehicles in the U.S. The station was built with private sector funding, without any taxpayer money.

Practical Energy Solutions, an engineering, design and installation company founded 10 years ago in Wallingford, recently relocated to a newly constructed 25,000 s/f facility at 2A Research Pkwy. The building was constructed to achieve Energy Star and LEED Platinum accreditation and will use one third the energy of a typical building in the region. Practical Energy Solutions assists businesses, schools and hospitals become more energy-efficient. They currently employ 82 people and plan to hire 50 to 70 more employees during 2011.

Other recently completed developments in Wallingford include: United Concrete Products - construction of a 60,000 s/f building at 494 Main St., Yalesville; Rowland Technologies - purchase of 320 Barnes Rd. (43,424 s/f); Servpro - purchase of 1254 South Broad St. (11,780 s/f); and Clean Sweep Restoration Services of New England - leasing 20,000 s/f at 30 North Plains Industrial Rd.

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