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## **2008 will see the expansion of manufacturing and distribution in Wallingford**

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With one of the lowest electric rates in New England and one of the lowest mill rates in New Haven County, Wallingford continues to be a desirable location for manufacturing and distribution. According to Wallingford's Planning & Zoning Commission, 2008 will see the expansion of several Wallingford manufacturers/distributors and the relocation into Wallingford of others. Strain Measurement Devices, a manufacturing facility located within the region, is constructing a 12,000 s/f building at 55 Barnes Industrial Rd. North. SMD develops load cell and strain gauge sensors used in medical, industrial, aerospace and other applications. SMD employs 21 people and expects to be up and operational by summer. CD Universe, an internet retailer currently located in Wallingford, received P&Z approval to construct a 31,000 s/f office/warehouse on Fairfield Blvd. Established in 1996, CD Universe is a leading internet retailer specializing in the sale of domestic and imported music, movies and video games. Their new facility is currently under construction. Sensor Switch, Inc., also of Wallingford, announced plans to lease an additional 8,000 s/f at its current location. The company designs and builds lighting control systems that utilize sensors to automatically turn lights on and off. Much of the additional space will house \$2.5 million of automated equipment necessary to produce lighting sensors that can be monitored remotely.

Other manufacturers/distributors that plan to expand or recently expanded include: Mikco Manufacturing, Infra-Metals, BYK-Chemie, United Concrete, Polylok, All Molded, Sycamore Networks, Hall Industries and Connecticut Hypodermics. Route 5

The Skate Factory, a hockey and ice skating training facility that uses a half-inch thick polymer plastic surface instead of ice, recently opened at 2 Toelles Rd. The 15,000 s/f training facility has two plastic rinks and a 10-person staff. The facility offers individual and group lessons in hockey, skating, goal tending and weight training. According to the owner, Doug Preston, skating on plastic helps skaters build endurance more quickly because it is more difficult than skating on ice, making it a good surface to train on. Skaters who train at The Skate Factory wear traditional ice skates.

A second business, Sports-In-Motion, opened in January in The Skate Factory facility. The business specializes in three-dimensional biomechanical testing. Through the use of sensors and computers, the testing can determine whether athletes are using their muscles properly to avoid injury.

Other new/expanding businesses along Rte. 5 include: Goodwill Industries, Unger Floor Covering, AA Lockserv, Higgins Writing, Semper Pie and Puzzle Pizza.

### **Downtown**

Recent improvements to Wallingford's downtown, including new signage and plans to improve public parking areas, are having a positive effect on downtown rentals. Within the past several months, six new businesses opened/plan to open within the downtown. Christian Rao, owner of the

popular Caf   Ra at 1163 South Broad St., announced plans to open a second location at 9 No. Main St. in downtown Wallingford. Christian, who also runs a catering business, was particularly interested in a downtown location. He plans to open the new caf   in the summer of 2008.

A local record collector, Gary King, recently opened Oldies and Goodies Records at 681/2 Quinpiac St. Started as a hobby, the business includes 4,000 used records and 20,000 45-rpm records, as well as cassettes, eight tracks, CD's, concert memorabilia, and even "poodle skirts". King will transfer any type of musical format onto CDs and will download the top 100 songs in any year, starting with 1950, onto a customer's iPod or MP3 players.

Other new downtown businesses include: Fresh on Five, Institute of Martial Arts, Kingdom Realty, and Impact Partners Group.

#### Commercial Development

Within the past six months, five commercial establishments have relocated into/expanded within Wallingford. The Marlin Company, a workplace communications company located within the region, announced plans to lease 24,000 s/f at 10 Research Pkwy. Marlin will have 60 employees in its new location and has an additional 60 person sales force located throughout the U.S. and Canada. According to Frank Kenna, Marlin's president, the company liked the location's proximity to airports, the town's low electric rates and the availability of nearby hotel space which can serve employees coming for training.

Other new commercial businesses within Wallingford include: Mission Real Estate, The Branding Company, CRS Environmental and Kirtas Technologies.

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