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Project of the Month: FoxRock Properties collaborates with Bowdoin Construction and Roth & Seelen Architects to complete 86,000 s/f build out for South Shore Educational Collaborative

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For almost 40 years, the South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) has provided specialized education, counseling, and therapeutic services for individuals with moderate to intense learning, intellectual, emotional, physical, and medical challenges. As a result of continuing growth in student enrollment and a school that was split between two buildings, the SSEC needed to make a change.

FoxRock Properties, a south shore company that acquires, develops and manages commercial real estate, was chosen to develop the new site. Through several meetings with Hank Perrin, executive director of SSEC, along with SSEC board members, FoxRock identified the most beneficial features to students and staff, now and for years to come. Over two years, FoxRock partnered Roth & Seelen Architects and Bowdoin Construction to complete the task. The 86,000 s/f project included a full renovation of an existing 60,000 s/f warehouse along with 26,000 s/f of new construction.

"With SSEC, we saw a great opportunity to improve upon an existing space and make a real impact on the daily lives of students and staff," said Jason Ward, manager, FoxRock.

When designing and building the facility, execution strategy became extremely important. For example, the project team took special care in laying the school's floor to ensure it would be smooth, accommodating students restricted to wheelchairs. Normally, flooring is laid after the walls are up, however over time, this can cause underground moisture to seep up into the concrete, causing the finished floor to ripple. To avoid this, the team did all the floor prep work prior to the walls going up, and installed a waterproofing compound on top of the concrete slabs before carpet and VCT flooring were installed.

The SSEC students were the driving force throughout this project. From designing classrooms with extra storage to installing a playground utilizing recycled tires for pavement so students wouldn't get hurt if they fell, the students and their education was always top-of-mind for the team. An important part of the SSEC curriculum is its vocational program, teaching life skills such as cooking and cleaning, so that students can eventually live independently. To help the SSEC better teach these skills, the team installed a specific vocational area set up like small apartments including a kitchen, laundry room, and bedroom so students may practice and improve upon life skills such as folding laundry and making the bed.

As a result of early meetings and extensive planning, the team successfully designed and built a school that exceeded the old facility in every way. New features included: a facility that was all on one level, wider hallways, a commercial kitchen, greenhouse, therapy pool, better storage for student equipment, more specialized space to accommodate different student behaviors, better student pick-up/drop-off accommodations and more outside passive recreation space.

In November 2013, SSEC dedicated the new building to Robert T. Hale, Sr. (the late father of FoxRock's owner Rob Hale), with a special recognition and appreciation for the FoxRock Properties team. The plaque currently hangs in the main lobby of The Community School, SSEC's day school serving students ages 3-21.

Project team includes:

- * Developer: Foxrock Properties
- * Architect: Roth & Seelen Architects
- * Construction Manager: Bowdoin Construction
- * HVAC: B&B Mechanical Services Inc.
- * EIFS: Exterior Designs Inc.
- * Plumbing: Dan-Cel Company, Inc.
- * Roofing: RCH Roofing Corp.

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