NEW CANAAN ADVERTISER

48 Pages • 3 Sections • 100th Year • No. 1

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Local LEEDs building trend

By Kimberly Nevas Reporter

ust how "green" can an 8,000-square foot luxury home, complete with a movie theater and wine cellar, actually be?

The answer: Green enough to be the first house in Fairfield County certified by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, program - a vigorous third-party evaluation proto minimize waste, local and sustainable sourcing of materials, as well as all-around efficiency.

That title belongs to Cumbria, the first model home at Windermere on the

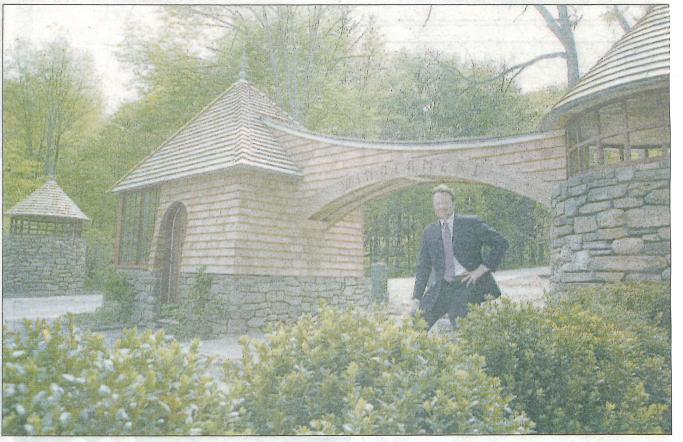
Lake in North Stamford, a 74-acre, upscale eco-villagein-progress, headed by New Canaanite and National Realty & Development Corp. (NRDC) Residential division President Mark H. Robbins.

With four finished levels and a footprint of just 2,500 square feet, the home uses half the energy of a code-built house of the same size, and less energy than his 250-square-foot construction trailer, he said.

"LEED looks not at how big or how small, it looks at how good. It's about building cess that encourages building a better product, rather than building a smaller one," he continued. "If you're going to have a large home, why not do it like this?"

Combining a local prefer-

See WINDERMERE on Page 9



NRDC Residential President and New Canaanite Mark H. Robbins stands at the entrance to Windermere on the Lake in North Stam an environmentally minded development that includes the first LEED-certified home in Fairfield County.

Windermere: New Canaan executive builds green

Continued from page 1A

ence for big houses with post-"Inconvenient Truth" consciousness. NRDC Residential's inaugural green development is to feature 24 luxury homes on halfacre lots, ranging in size from 4,000- to 8,000 square feet, and clustered in an "English country village-inspired community of lakefront homes and gardens."

Prices range from \$3.2 to \$4.8 million.

"I hope this will serve as a showcase for sustainable development ... that this is the standard for elegant and sophisticated, socially responsible development," Robbins said. "Green doesn't have to be a concrete bunker with a windmill on it."

Buyers choose from varying "shades of green" by selecting sustainable building materials, carpets and paints low in volatile organic compounds — such as carcinogens benzene and formaldehyde - and geothermal heating and cooling systems.

Building to LEED standards is optional, and often adds cost.

"It's not something you can just get into half-way into construction," he said of the certification process. "You have to get started early on."

please

All the houses are to be Energy C. F. A. Voysey. Star-qualified, a LEED prerequisite for energy efficiency.

standards progressively raise the es "before it was vogue" made threshold for houses in excess of Voysey an early part of the green 2,850 square feet, getting homes building movement, Robbins like those in Windermere certi- said. fied is no easy task - "It's like getting a hybrid tractor-trailer," the executive quipped.

able energy system that takes light. advantage of the earth's constant temperature of about 55 degrees. ented to maximize southern In the winter, heat is absorbed through underground pipes and light-emitting diode bulbs that used to warm the house; in sum- may never need replacement, mer, the pump works in reverse. but the green aesthetic extends

the indoor environment fresh by reclaimed-wood gazebo to a trading stale air from inside with solar-heated clubhouse swimfresh air from outdoors. It saves ming pool. energy by transferring heat from the outgoing exhaust air to the tat management plan that forbids incoming fresh air, before it's the use of pesticides, herbicides tilation system.

Environmental pedigree aside, Robbins said what he's building is habitat, 25 contiguous, wooded "not your typical McMansion."

Lake District, Windermere's were donated to the Stamford four home designs — Cumbria, Land Conservation Trust, the Durham, Lancashire Westmorland -- are inspired by trust's history. turn-of-the-19th Century Arts and Crafts movement architect are breeding habitats for newts

His use of reclaimed wood. Because LEED for Homes in his English country cottag- agement.

Cumbria's cedar-shingled roof scrolls down to hip-height garden walls, bringing down the model The Cumbria model makes home's mass and creating a pri-

exposure and use low current Aheat recovery ventilator keeps far beyond, from a lakeside

Residents must agree to a habi-foundations. distributed to rooms via the ven- and fertilizers, and encourages drought-tolerant plants.

Rather than fragment wildlife acres of Windermere are to remain off three times a day. Named for locales in England's as open space. Another 25 acres

Wooden pallets placed in ponds

and thousands of wetland plants green home building is set to stone and unpainted surfaces provide natural storm water man- account for six to 10 percent like those at Windermere aren't

> units and bio-filters are part of a and \$20 billion in sales, and dou- architect Steven Winter, Instead. drainage plan he said will emit bling over the next five years. drinking-quality water, "so any storm water discharged onto the percent of the market in 2005, health-conscious families with property is cleaner than when it with sales of \$7 billion, accord- children, who want constant air got here."

"They're not buying just that up for its size with geothermal vacy screen. In other designs, house, but a fractional interest Karla Donnelly of Steven Winter and mildew. heating and cooling, a renew- towers are used to let in natural in a 74-acre estate," he said. Associates in Norwalk, whose Individual homes will be ori- style that exceeds the bounds of tal consulting for Windermere, so much work in our lives," he Central Park, it's like living in marketing tool that helps differ- Green is the flavor of the year." the park. This is the amenity.'

To minimize fuel consumption, all of the stone used for walls and chimneys was gleaned from existing farm walls on-site. Roads are being built with earth that was displaced by building

worth of aquatic plants will be Town Hall is open for business. dealt with humanely — Robbins

market, Robbins said earlier this ber of people" who have trouble month he already has contracts completing their municipal tasks July 22 presentation by Manager and largest single gift of land in the out for some of the home sites, before or after work. and the earliest move-in could be just weeks away.

According to a report by with Rob Mallozzi dissenting — this story

and salamanders, Robbins said, McGraw-Hill Construction, entiate them from the norm." of the housing market this year, likely to be driven by rising ener-Van-sized, underground vortex generating between \$12 billion gy costs, said firm President and

ing to the company.

"It's a holistic approach to a life-firm provided environmen-cial trouble, but we've never had any lot. It's not like living near "Builders are looking at it as a said. "Green is carrying the day.

People in the market for homes he said, prospective buyers tend Green homes were just two to be environmentally concerned, circulation and vapor barriers to "Green is booming," said keep their homes free of mold

"A lot of architects are in finan-

Continued from Page 1

Even the geese that ate \$60,000 ally expand the amount of time

"I've been asking for a long said he signed a one-year con-time to figure out how can we tract for a man in a kayak and do a better job of extending sertwo border collies to chase them vices," he said, comparing Town Hall to Nordstrom and saying Despite the bleak housing that he has heard from "a num-

> The Board of Selectmen last Jones. week approved - two to one,

giving the four-day week a try. A progress report will be presented after one month.

The primary motivation for this trial period, Walker said, is to "put us in a position to give better service" and be more efficient.

"And," he added, "we may save a few dollars."

Benefits are an estimated \$30,000 in savings and boosted employee morale, according to a of Human Resources Cheryl

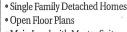
- Colleen Flaherty contributed to

NEW MODEL HOME NOW OPEN! MON-FRI 9AM-3PM • SAT & SUN 12-4PM



RiverBend Estates 55+ Adult Community

Prices Starting at Upper \$300K Route 34 • Oxford, CT



· Main Level with Master Suite



where beauty meets sensibility...

Special Savings Now on all Platinum Series Custom Cabinetry

