

The Timeless Beauty Of Two-Inch Insulation

By JOAN WALDEN

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Long before utility prices began their skyward ascent, a Farmington Valley developer and builder were constructing surpassingly energy-efficient homes in communities such as Bradford Walk and Somersby.

When EnergyStar was introduced, they were among the very first builders in Connecticut to sign up for the program.

“As conservative people, in general we don’t like waste,” explained developer Ron Janeczko, who is the partner of builder Chris Nelson in Landworks Development LLC.

Since 1995, the men have received numerous awards from the Connecticut Home Builders Association for excellence in design and construction.

When Building America, a private/public partnership that develops energy solutions for new and existing homes, was established by the U.S. Department of Energy, Janeczko and Nelson were quick to comply with its specifications yielding even higher levels of efficiency. “Energy Star doesn’t go as far as some people would like to go,” Janeczko said.

As it turned out, many of Landworks’ methods and materials were already in line. With some tweaking, they met or surpassed the Building America guidelines.

Janeczko loves describing the special processes they use to build a house.

Take the foundation, for example. “There are two inches of foam insulation suspended in the center of the poured concrete,” he said. Also, two inches of insulation are in the floors before they are poured. “It really helps to keep cold air from migrating into interior spaces,” Janeczko said.



Artist rendering of one of the home models available at Hamilton Way

For years, these builders have expressed a deep appreciation and commitment to the community. When they build a house, they build it as though their families or friends were going to move in. The tradition carries on at Hamilton Way.



As a result, homeowners get substantially reduced energy bills. Landworks houses conserve natural resources and ensure healthful indoor air quality.

They also are designed to age well. Engineered lumber and other select building materials, including recycled products, mean resource efficiency.

At Hamilton Way, a compact neighborhood of 10 single-family houses, seven are under contract. Because of the company’s reputation for high quality and craftsmanship, and despite the current downturn in the real estate market, these homes are in demand.

The location is across the road from Batterson Park, close to I-84, Route 6, the UConn Health Center and the centers of Farmington, New Britain and West Hartford.

There are two cul-de-sacs in Hamilton Way. Plans call for sidewalks to line both sides of the street.

“Our vision was a tight-knit cluster of homes,” said Janeczko. “I wanted to create a West Hartford Center feel.”

He admits to being sentimental for his childhood, spent in a neighborhood where sidewalks were commonplace. Hamilton Way residents will be able to traverse the entire neighborhood on sidewalks.

Two of the three home styles are still available -- the Ridgewood, with a total floor area of 3,300 square feet, and the Sedgwick, 3,540 square feet.

Both models have three-car, two-door insulated garages with one standard and one tandem bay.

Finishing touches are being made to the model home. It will be ready for viewing beginning Sunday, Aug. 3.

Both home styles have an entry foyer, a large deck measuring 12 feet by 16 feet, a pantry and a mudroom. They also have a first-floor family room, a study, a spacious kitchen with a breakfast area, a powder room and a dining room.

Upstairs, both models have a master suite with a dressing area, three more bedrooms and three bathrooms. Basements are unfinished. The model has a walk-out basement. The other two remaining homesites are designed for basements with an oversized window well for abundant natural light.

In a departure from the traditional colonial style, these homes have an attractive full

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story above the garage for use as a family room or a master suite.

Landworks' Bradford Walk, a neighborhood of condominium homes, is nearby, and Somersby, a larger community, is a few miles away off Meadow Road at the edge of Memorial Forest.

In 2001, Somersby was named Community of the Year by the Connecticut Home Builders Association. In 2004, Bradford Walk was named Best Attached Community and Janeczko was named Developer of the Year.

Of the 52 sites at Somersby, only seven lots and one on-speculation home are available. Priced at \$1,059,000 and up, these homes are distinctive, superbly energy-efficient – and fully customizable.

"We'll do anything within reason," said Realtor Gary Emerito, an integral member of the Landworks team.

"Somersby has been well received by the marketplace and by our peers," Janeczko added.

Despite a five-year hiatus between phases, the new phase "looks consistent," he said, meaning the homes being built today fit in well with the established look of the community.

Janeczko and Nelson said they are eagerly anticipating the completion of their new company headquarters at 340 Main St. in Farmington, set to open in early fall. They have renovated, expanded and rebuilt a 19th-century house using 21st-century

energy-saving techniques. These include a "flash and batt" insulation system that uses expanding foam to seal air leaks, and rolled cellulose batting, which is treated recycled newspaper.

"We took a very drafty, impossible-to-heat-or-cool old house and brought it up to 2008," Janeczko said.

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Joan Walden is a free-lance writer based in West Hartford.

- Hamilton Way, Farmington
- Builder: Landworks Development LLC and C. Nelson Construction
- Price: \$717,900 and up
- Styles: Classic New England colonial
- Rooms: 9-plus
- Bedrooms: 4
- Baths: 2.1 or 3.1
- Sizes: 3,300 square feet and up
- Lot sizes: .5 to .7 acres
- Tax rate: 19.47 mills
- Best feature: Ultra energy efficiency in a peerless location
- Contact: Gary Emerito
- Landworks Realty 860-674-8850
- www.landworksrealty.com