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Excitement Brews for New Indoor Sports Venue in SoNo



SOUTH NORWALK - Under construction since May of this year, the SoNo Field House is slated to become the premier sport activities venue for Fairfield County. Designed by JGRA, the Field House will be the largest indoor sports complex of its kind in the region.

"The vision is to have the region's most comprehensive indoor sport and recreation facility," comments Jim Quinn, president of Q Properties and developer of the project. Regarding the value of the Field House to the community, Quinn remarks, "The Fairfield County area is very passionate about youth and high school sports...The feedback has been very positive because youth and high school sports organizations view [access to the SoNo Field House] as a great opportunity to enhance their sports and leadership skills."

This 52,000 square foot structure boasts a 42,000 square foot athletic field, a 30 foot high rock climbing wall, and a ropes course. It will accommodate such indoor activities as soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, and rock climbing. Additional amenities include corporate conference meeting rooms, rooms for parties and events, a coffeehouse, and a video lab. The facility is expected to attract youth and adult athletic groups, corporate teams, and prospective members hosting special events.

Undertaking the project was not without its challenges. "Finding an appropriate site in the city of Norwalk was one of the key issues faced when designing this project," explains Tony Panza, LEED AP, project manager for the SoNo

Field House. "Whenever a large building such as the Field House goes into a developed area, code regulations tend to restrict site availability." Access to public transportation and major highways proved crucial to the decision to locate the sporting center within the heart of Norwalk.

In harmony with the current movement of sustainable design in architecture, JGRA has taken measures to ensure that the Field House is environmentally sensitive. Of particular note is the high percentage of materials with recycled content. Steel, which has a very high recycled content ranging from 30 to 95%, is used for the structure, the standing seam metal roof and the pre-insulated metal wall panels that surround the athletic field. Other environmentally sensitive design features include a low emissivity roof, low flow plumbing fixtures, fluorescent lighting fixtures, and clerestory glazing to allow natural light into the Field House.

Construction of the SoNo Field House began in May 2009 and is expected to be complete by October 2009. Progress of construction can be tracked via <http://oxblue.com/pro/open/lciconstruction/qproperties> as well as via the SoNo Field House website <http://www.sonofieldhouse.com>.