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Please note a rendering of the Stepping Stones planned expansion is available for download at <http://steppingstonesmuseum.org/press-photos/expansion/SSMC-BuildingFacade.jpg>

Stepping Stones Museum Children to Launch \$15 million “Green” Expansion Project

Norwalk, CT, December 18, 2008 – In 2010, Stepping Stones Museum for Children will celebrate its 10th birthday and open a multi-faceted, environmentally conscious building expansion that will catapult the museum into the future.

The \$15 million expansion will include the addition of 22,000 square feet to the east side of the building in Mathews Park, the addition of new exhibits and exhibit space with a focus on energy-themed education, and outdoor features to teach visitors about the sources and purpose of renewable energy.

“As we approach our 10th birthday in 2010, a transformation is underway, driven by community interests, needs and the museum’s early success,” said Rhonda Kiest, executive director, Stepping Stones Museum for Children. “This expansion is a wonderful opportunity to forge an even deeper connection with Norwalk and our surrounding cities and towns. We are very thankful to the city of Norwalk for its ongoing support and look forward to the continued collaboration with our community partners as we grow into the next phase of the museum’s lifecycle.”

“With the current economic conditions, it’s even more important to invest in our most valuable resource, our children,” added John Foster, chair of the Stepping Stones Board of Directors. “The enhanced and expanded facility will offer a broader array of educational opportunities, interactive experiences and enrichment activities for all of the children and their families in our community.”

The museum will break ground in March 2009. Construction is planned for completion by the end of December 2010.

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Expansion Overview

Current Museum	19,000 sq. ft.
Addition	22,000 sq. ft.
TOTAL	41,000 sq. ft.

Upper Level Plan

- New outdoor *Celebration Courtyard* to feature a twilight concert series this summer and a themed-maze in the Fall
- New **Energy!** exhibit in the *Waterscape* gallery
- Expanded **Toddler Terrain** exhibit (designed for children three and under)
- Interactive, state-of-the art, multi-media gallery for performances, special events, interactive exhibits and distance learning
- New 2,500 sq. ft. **Traveling Exhibit** gallery to accommodate different exhibits throughout the year
- New Family and Teacher Resource Center to provide resources for parents, caregivers and educators
- New learning labs for early childhood classes, a science lab and an art studio
- Dedicated birthday party room
- New visitor amenities to include an enhanced food services and larger seating area and an increase in parking spots
- New administrative space, including a dedicated board room

Lower Level Plan

- New administrative space
- New storage
- New mechanical rooms

Growing Greener

- Solar energy sources
- Demonstration wind turbine
- Building enhancements and expansion will achieve LEED gold certification
- Green building materials will be used
- New building celebrates the use of natural, renewable energy sources
- New pathway will be created to connect Waypointe and Mathews Park

Energy-themed Education

- Energy-themed exhibits, programs, classes and special events will showcase the museum's commitment to environmental stewardship and conservation.
- A green signage system will call attention to energy-efficient building materials and energy saving practices located throughout the museum
- An expanded food service will promote healthy choices, including locally grown and organic food selections

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Stepping Stones Museum for Children, a 501(c)3 private non-profit, is an award-winning children's museum committed to broadening and enriching the lives of children. Museum exhibits, educational programs and special events complement efforts in schools, childcare centers and homes. With four main galleries, a toddlers-only gallery and more than 100 hands-on activities, Stepping Stones offers children ten and under plenty to explore and discover. Stepping

Stones Museum for Children is a non-profit organization. To learn more, visit www.steppingstonesmuseum.org.

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