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Energy conservation means tenant savings ... and a protest against OPEC

August 13, 2008 - Connecticut

Not too long ago I had the good fortune of spending time with experts in the Middle East and listened to the sobering truth of how our nation depends on foreign oil production specifically from that region. Our petrol dollars can be translated as energy expenditures here at home. The more we can do here to save on our energy consumption saves us many times over irrespective of the savings to me as an owner or even my tenants that benefit in pocket. We must do everything we can even when there isn't an immediate payback to lessen our dependence and conserve even if you're not an environmentalist. It's a no lose situation.

280 Trumbull St., located in downtown Hartford, has been awarded the prestigious ENERGY STAR, an achievement marking superior energy performance and efficiency. After a multi-year collaboration with ENERGY STAR, Connecticut Light and Power, and other agencies to make 280 Trumbull more energy efficient, Grunberg Management is proud to announce that 280 Trumbull St. has earned an unheard of 91% Energy Performance Rating. This energy savings means countless advantages to the owners and tenants of 280 Trumbull St. The benefit of reducing our environmental footprint translates to significant cost savings for all parties involved. I have often said, "Reduced operating costs are the bottom line for bringing in tenants." I want to let you know how well our building competes with the buildings next door in the Hartford CBD and even in the suburbs.

As a first step, the Grunberg energy team sought to assess The 280 Trumbull St.'s baseline energy performance and to pursue the efficiency gains that could be accomplished through improved operations, maintenance and other low-cost practices.Â The Grunberg Management energy team undertook a building-wide lighting retrofit involving our fluorescent lighting and inefficient magnetic ballasts as well as outfittingÂ common area hallways and restrooms with occupancy sensors. The team replaced over 90% of the building's incandescent lighting with compact fluorescent bulbs. Upgrades such as these lower operating costs and free up cash flow for greater opportunities and leads to improved tenant retention.

To maximize tenant comfort, The Grunberg energy team has adopted an Energy Management System for the mechanical systems to control the building environment. The outdated original Building Automation System (BAS) was replaced with a new state of the art system, thereby improving building engineers' ability to limit, set and change building parameters.Â This enhanced control allows the building to operate at levels that mirror actual demand while reducing the building's energy footprint. In addition, variable frequency drives (VFD) were installed throughout the building's air distribution system as well as the heating and cooling water distribution system. Inefficient motors and compressors have been replaced with new high efficiency motors and high efficiency DDC controlled screw compressors, drastically reducing the electricity consumption and

demand. This greatly improves the ability to accurately bill tenants for after hours use. The added benefit of this revenue stream along with the reduced costs makes the expenses linked to energy efficiency upgrades a non-issue. Being energy efficient also gives some flexibility in rental structure, allowing Grunberg Realty to lease at lower rates than less energy efficient neighbors and still achieve higher returns than others can at higher rates. As energy costs decrease our tenants will enjoy lower percentage rent/expense increases.

To reduce building heat gain from direct sunlight, window films were installed on windows throughout the south, east and west exposures in conjunction with the installation of updated blinds throughout the building. Energy-efficient tankless water heaters (Insta-hots) have also been installed when possible. Water consumption has been reduced through the installation of low-flow flush-o-meters and flush sensors in the restrooms and we have adopted environmentally safe cleaning products for all our cleaning needs. Being a more responsible citizen of our planet is a very important factor in making these changes, hopefully other owners will follow suit.

As part of Grunberg Management's ongoing commitment to become more environmentally-friendly in its operations, we continue to investigate, implement and achieve new and better ways to reduce energy use and our impact on the environment.Â Improved indoor space boosts employee well-being, which has been linked to reduced absenteeism and increased productivity. We look forward toÂ delivering low utility costs to tenants and ensuring that 280 Trumbull St. continues our ENERGY STAR designation while maintaining a lower carbon footprint.

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