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## **Clarion Partners, LLC and Marcus Partners lease 49,259 s/f at Merritt 7 to Frontier Communications and Real Estate University**

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Norwalk, CT Clarion Partners, LLC and Marcus Partners said that Frontier Communications (Frontier) and Real Estate University both signed leases at Merritt 7 at the end of Q1 2021, with transactions totaling 49,259 s/f. Frontier will occupy 48,000 s/f in Building 401, and Real Estate University will occupy a 1,259 s/f suite in Building 101. David Block of CBRE represented Frontier, while ownership was represented by Thomas Pajolek and Ned Burns of CBRE, along with David Fiore and JoAnn McGrath of Marcus Partners.

“Frontier is excited to have our headquarters remain at Merritt 7. After touring the market to find the best fit for our firm in the post-pandemic office world, Merritt 7 stood above all the competition” said Jim Campbell, GVP of Frontier. “The renovations to the outdoor plaza, new indoor-outdoor flex spaces and newly upgraded Metro North station on-site were key factors for us, as well as Merritt 7’s advanced dual air filtration system. All of these features confirmed that Merritt 7 was the best choice in the Fairfield county market.”

Merritt 7, a six-building, 1.4 million s/f office park, is in the midst of a comprehensive improvement plan designed by architectural firm Gensler. The upgrades include a new plaza, a new multi-purpose center offering tenants a versatile, open lounge space and relaxation area, as well as a conferencing facility that can accommodate a variety of meeting requirements. The space also provides direct access to the outdoor plaza via a retractable glass wall. Building 601 has a newly modernized lobby featuring curated art, with additional new flex spaces underway. The park has over 60,000 s/f of outdoor amenity space, including 30,000 s/f in the 501/601 plaza, as well as

10,000 s/f of flexible indoor meeting and conferencing space, providing tenants with a variety of different areas to utilize without expanding their footprint. Conference and meetings spaces can accommodate events from 10 to 250.

“We are delighted that Frontier Communications will be keeping its headquarters at M7 and are thrilled to welcome Real Estate University to our diverse array of tenants,” said Margaret Egan, Clarion Partners’ senior vice president of asset management.

“The renovation program and abundance of assorted meeting spaces and outdoor recreation areas have been well-received by tenants, and our state-of-the-art dual air filtration system and rigorous COVID re-entry protocols are giving tenants and prospects an added level of comfort and confidence in our property.”

Merritt 7’s advanced air filtration system, which had been in place prior to the onset of COVID, has become a focal point for users as they re-enter the market and seek to address their long-term occupancy needs. The system utilizes dual MERV-8 and MERV-15 filters, the latter being above and beyond current COVID-19 best practices. MERV-15 filtration is the same grade used in general surgery settings.

“As air quality and HVAC systems become higher priority, the advanced technology and comprehensive filtration process at Merritt 7 has impressed both prospective and current tenants. Our tenants were incredibly pleased to learn that the air filtration in all of our buildings is comparable to the air quality in a general surgery environment,” said John Busby, Marcus Partners’ head of property management. “Our system introduces 20% fresh air throughout the day and purges 100% of the air after hours. Current and prospective tenants feel re-assured once they learn about our system and process. The response has been phenomenal.”

Merritt 7 can accommodate a vast range of tenant requirements. Current opportunities include move-in ready units ranging from 2,123 s/f pre-built penthouses and fully built 40,000 s/f office-intensive installations with flexible lease terms. A contiguous block of up to 158,000 s/f is also available at Building 601, where additional renovations continue to make headway.

Merritt 7 is located off the Merritt Parkway in close proximity to Fairfield County’s amenities. The property has its own dedicated on-site Metro North station, which is undergoing upgrades and is slated to open in 2022. Major tenants at Merritt 7 include Hearst, Datto, EMCOR, Financial Accounting Foundation (FAF), Jarden, IPSOS, Mercer, Millward Brown, Aon, Xerox, and Siemens.

Located on a 22-acre campus setting along the Norwalk River, Merritt 7’s six buildings feature 60,000 s/f of curated outdoor amenity space, technologically advanced infrastructure, sustainable design features and extensive on-site amenities; including Starbucks Cafés, a fitness center, private commuter shuttle, multiple cafés and food halls, a hair salon, car wash, shoeshine services and nearly 10,000 s/f of indoor conferencing and meeting spaces. Merritt 7 has been recognized and awarded for its energy conservation efforts, including LEED EB certification by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) for buildings 101, 301, 401, 501 and 601, the EPA’s Energy Star rating,

and is currently pursuing Fitwel certification.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540