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UB Stratford develops new facility slated for Net Zero

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Stratford, CT UB Stratford I, LLC (UB Stratford) recently constructed a new self-storage facility utilizing nearly \$400,000 in energy efficiency incentives to save an estimated \$40,350 in annual energy costs. Energy engineers from AVANGRID, Inc. subsidiary United Illuminating (UI) and development and construction consulting firm Chandler, LLC optimized existing plans for the new 130,000 s/f building, leveraging incentives available through Energize CT to enhance the already energy and environmentally-conscious design and increase solar energy readiness. The new facility is part of an open-air shopping center, which aligns with UB Stratford's renewed interest in developing and renovating like properties.

"This was one of those situations where economic decisions and environmental benefits aligned. The availability of the UI energy incentives were really important to the success of this project," said Stephan Rapaglia, the COO of UB Stratford's parent company, Urstadt Biddle Properties Inc. (UBP). "Without the generous UI incentives, it may not have made economic sense for us to move forward with the project and build this new facility."

UBP has a long history of retrofitting and improving existing open-air community shopping centers across the NY-CT-NJ metropolitan area. To guide UBP through energy efficiency measures and incentives available for this new construction project, they tapped the expertise of UI energy engineers, including Brandon Mark, and Steven Chandler Hall, founder and managing director at Chandler, LLC.

"My job was really to implement ideas and use alternative equipment that would push the efficiency to 37.5 percent better than code," said Hall. "Any developer should be using integrated project management teams that include energy efficiency expertise. Taking advantage of those incentives really helps with the bottom line and provides a great return on investment." Hall's years of experience in project management for high performance building construction has focused on implementing energy-efficiency solutions. In this project, his company's role was to initiate the incentive application, identify energy modeling resources and guide the team through the conclusion of the review and award process.

The newly constructed UB Stratford facility, which houses a self-storage business, is an emerging Net-Zero Energy building, meaning the amount of energy produced by on-site renewable energy sources is intended to equal the amount of energy used there. The benchmark is expected to be achieved through the environmentally-conscious design of the building, the implementation of specific technology within the building, such as heat pumps, energy-efficient LED lighting and

energy-conscience heating, cooling and ventilation systems, and the use of renewable energy from a rooftop solar project.

Exterior efficiency measures taken include LED parking lot and canopy lighting.

Rapaglia shared that much of what UBP can achieve in terms of environmentally-conscious projects throughout its portfolio depends on municipal buy-in. He noted, for example, that while some municipalities are already very much in favor of the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at UBP's shopping centers, other municipalities have been a bit slower to embrace EV charging stations. Rapaglia also noted that the town of Stratford was very supportive of UBP's energy efficiency efforts in connection with this new self-storage facility.

"This emerging Net-Zero Energy building project is a testament to the success that can be achieved when a UI energy engineer, UI-approved contractor and our customers work together before, during and after a new construction or retrofit of an existing building," said Elizabeth Murphy, supervisor at AVANGRID, Inc. "These incentives are available to help make these transitions into cleaner operations easier and more cost-efficient for our customers."

Businesses looking for more information on energy efficiency programs provided by UI and Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG) can visit BusinessEnergyCT.com.

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