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Connecticut's first commercial green building reduces tenant's energy costs by over 35%.

New Haven, CT -- March, 2008 "Go Green Plaza" is Connecticut's first commercial site to be registered with the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) and an decrepit eye sore has been transformed into prime real estate under the guidelines for environmentally sustainable construction known as [LEED](#) (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

The crumbling Overhead Door Company at 391 Boston Post Road, had been abandoned for decades. "It had to be done," said Kravitz, despite the speculative risk and the additional costs of following green guidelines.

An early tenant commitment from LCA-Vision Inc., provider of [LasikPlus](#) laser vision surgery, to lease half the property, bolstered the confidence of the new Go Green LLC partnership in its commitments to go green, "but we retained the right to abandon the idea if the costs became ridiculous" said Kravitz.

First step: education

"I thought they would tell me how to proceed," says Kravitz, "and let me know what tax incentives were in place." But everyone expected Kravitz to do the explaining—from local officials, to selectmen, to planning and zoning representatives, to building inspectors, to wetlands officials.

Through reading, workshops, and seminars, Kravitz became the green resource for everyone connected to the project—including architects, contractors, trades people, suppliers, landscapers, and even interior designers and painters. "LEED guidelines far exceed local requirements in every category," says Kravitz, "but people were inspired with the idea of dismantling a polluted eyesore and building an environmentally friendly building."

Dramatic increase in energy savings plus dramatic drop of green building costs

The group's moment of truth came when it learned the energy-efficient HVAC units were going to cost an extra \$64,000. Kravitz was ready to bow to his partners, he says, but they took just seconds to decide to buy them.

Smart decision. Savings in energy costs resulted in a 24-month payback, with continued savings for the life of the building (which Kravitz estimates at 100 years.) Our tenants are saving a minimum of 35% on energy costs because of the HVAC system, the unique roof, and efficient use of lighting and water.

More surprising to the developers, the cost of green building dropped dramatically over the three years of the project. They had estimated premiums well over 30%, but the final budget showed a mere 2% of total building costs to go green. "The competitive market is taking over," explains Kravitz. The additional building cost is covered by the fact that the building can command a slightly higher lease, while the tenant saves far more on energy costs.

Green from the ground up

To a visitor, nothing about the 9,000 square foot, single story building at 391 Boston Post Road, identifies it as green, other than perhaps the warmth of the old brick, the noticeably pleasant interior air quality, natural lighting, and overall cleanliness of the environment. Here's some of what qualifies it for LEED certification:

- **Demolition.** Value of the steel helped offset the asbestos removal and demolition. The [Cherry Hill Construction Company](#) methodically razed the building, separating its materials into piles of steel, concrete, wood, metal, glass, and asphalt for sale to recycling companies.
- **Construction.** Kravitz hesitated when [Pace Setter Construction](#) recommended a Butler building, but as it turned out, the [Butler Manufacturing Company](#) is among the many major suppliers Kravitz discovered along the way who have been tracking LEED requirements. "The building system was not only architecturally great, it used all recycled steel, with deep, substantial foundations and a Cool Roof system," says Kravitz. The steel, the roof, plus the use of recovered masonry brick, exceed the 80% recycled materials LEED requirements.
- **Windows.** Low E thermal windows block UV rays, let in 93% of natural light, and reduce lighting costs.
- **Heating and cooling.** The HVAC system is the single most important component affecting energy efficiency and costs and uses an environmentally safe refrigerant.
- **Cool Roof.** The [Cool MR-24 Metal Roof system](#) reduces surface temperature, keeps occupants cooler in warm weather, and does not contribute to the heat island effect of cities.
- **Water.** Up to 90% of rainwater drains directly from the pitched roof into four 16-foot wide dry wells, with no polluting effect upon the town sewer system or Long Island Sound.
- **Interior.** Half the interior was finished to tenant specifications and incorporates additional, environmentally friendly features such as low flush toilets, low energy hand driers, non-toxic wall paint, and more. The remaining interior 4,500 square feet will be completed for a like-minded, environmentally aware tenant, says Kravitz.

About Go Green, LLC

Go Green, LLC partners (<http://gogreenct.com>) are committed to environmentally friendly, sustainable development, for both commercial and residential properties. First to be registered with the U.S. Green Building Council, Go Green pioneered the application of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) guidelines in Connecticut. The green building system encompasses five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.