

Office Tower Sold for \$15 Million

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MANCHESTER -- Local real estate developers Shane D. Brady and Arthur W. Sullivan have purchased New Hampshire Tower, 1750 Elm St., from a Kentucky-based investment group for \$15 million.

Brady-Sullivan Properties bought Elm Street LLC from First Southern Funding LLC, Millard V. Oakley, and Ronald H. Hyder, all of Stanford, Ky., who granted a \$12 million mortgage loan to the new owners.

The transaction closed March 11, according to records on file at the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds.

"We truly felt this is one of the most significant office buildings in the state of New Hampshire to own," Sullivan said in a telephone interview yesterday.

"We're going to continue to do some additional upgrades to all the common areas to make sure it is in the top first-class condition it can possibly be," he said.

"The location is second to none," Sullivan said. The Amoskeag Circle interchange off Interstate 293 is nearby and parking is plentiful. "There is also future expandability potential there. Unlike City Hall Plaza or some of the other downtown buildings, we have great, great parking there." He also suggested the building's name may change.

After City Hall Plaza and Hampshire Tower, the New Hampshire Tower is the third tallest building in downtown Manchester.

The \$15 million pricetag is an indication property values in Manchester are increasing, said William J. Jabjiniak, Destination Manchester coordinator.

The previous owner did a good job of renovating and maintaining the landmark building, which anchors the North End of downtown on Elm Street, he said.

"It's great to get some local ownership, people who have the ability to get things done," said Jabjiniak.

Bernard V. "Ben" Nardi, president of Tower Realty Group, which managed the property for First Southern and will continue in the same role for Brady-Sullivan, said First Southern bought the

property in December 1996 for \$3.2 million. He said the owners put \$7 million to \$8 million into improvements, which included a sprinkler system throughout the building.

The First Southern group will continue to own Hampshire Plaza and Tower at 1000 Elm St., which it purchased in October 2001 for \$9 million, Nardi said.

Prior to First Southern's acquisition, the 220,000-square-foot New Hampshire Tower building had a single tenant, the AIG insurance firm. The tower has 12 stories of office space and a 13th floor devoted to the building's mechanical services.

For the last several years, the top floor has housed a nesting box for peregrine falcons in conjunction with the New Hampshire Audubon Society and others. Archived images of the falcons can be seen at www.nhaudubon.org.

Sullivan said New Hampshire Tower is 92 percent occupied. The building sits on 8.3 acres and has more than 680 parking spaces. Health Dialog Inc. currently is the largest tenant.

About 430 people work in the building, Nardi said. "We hope to reach 100 percent occupancy in the very near future," he said.

Brady-Sullivan Properties also owns and manages the Brady-Sullivan building, 1228-1230 Elm St.; the Jefferson Mill, 670 Commercial St.; the Allegro MicroSystems building, 955 Perimeter Road near Manchester Airport; and the Polaris Direct building, 300 Technology Drive, in Hooksett.

Sullivan said the purchase of the New Hampshire Tower property was a private transaction. "They knew that we're easy to do business with and we do things quickly and our due diligence is usually minimal and we put up hard cash, and when we say that we are going to do a deal, we do it," he said. "That was their motivation in coming to us to buy the building."