

As seen in



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New Boutique Law Firm Takes Off Flying

Cohen & Perfetto LLP are contenders, to be taken seriously in the New York City's real estate world. In less than a year, the newly formed boutique real estate law firm has taken off and exceeded its goals. In the upcoming year, Cohen & Perfetto intends to double its staff of nine and expand its newly constructed, polished 444 Madison Avenue office --- all proof that on Madison Avenue --- size does matter.

Today, Cohen & Perfetto is spearheading a trend: boutique law firms that stress big firm quality together with extraordinary service and accessibility to their clients. "We walk through walls for our clients" says Louis Perfetto who, along with partners Marshall Cohen and Jennifer Padnick, all left the same major NYC real estate law firm last summer to do things their own way. "It's an attribute that has been lost due to the growth of the mega firms," explains Perfetto. "Larger firms are not servicing their clients as they used to," says Cohen, who is energized these days with a strong sense of entrepreneurship and venturing forth with his two younger partners. "In our firm we put tremendous expectations on each other. Every client gets partner level attention, no matter what size the deal," adds Cohen. "Marshall trained Louis, Louis trained me, and now I am teaching the next generation of Cohen & Perfetto lawyers" says Padnick. "It's the best way to ensure that while we build the firm, the foundation is strong as a rock".

The partners share the same drive, work ethic and dedication to their clients. The firm is focused entirely in all aspects of real estate including development (residential and commercial), lending and borrowing, ground leasing, space leasing (office and retail), sales and acquisitions for investors and owners, government incentives and zoning. Clients span the gamut from major private and corporate developers, to Fortune 500 companies, to middle market lenders and borrowers, to mom-and-pop shops and first-time developers.

"We are lawyers who have a business understanding, in addition to the legal background, to partner with our clients and get them results," says Perfetto, who spends time educating many of the firm's "newcomer developer" clients embarking on their first foray into this volatile market. "We often quarterback complex development projects for our clients" says Perfetto, pointing to some recent examples such as NYC churches selling air rights for record high prices and self storage companies with voracious appetites for acquisition.

Cohen points out that the firm is expanding outside the New York metropolitan area, as far as Las Vegas, where they represent the developer of a luxury mixed-use residential and retail project near the Las Vegas strip. They are also working on similar projects in Massachusetts, Texas, Phoenix and Atlantic City.

Cohen, Perfetto and Padnick each bring the kind of talent and experience clients are seeking. Cohen, who brings a rich, inquiring mind to real estate law – has worked with prominent clients throughout his prestigious career which started at Fried Frank. In recent history, Cohen led the team that negotiated the development agreement and condominium site around the Museum of Modern Art's expansion and renovation. He also

negotiated a long term lease with the City for the Bridge Market development under the Queensboro, 59th St. Bridge.

Perfetto was made the youngest partner in the history of his previous firm and served with Cohen as its co-managers. Perfetto led the team that acquired and—for the first time on Staten Island—rezoned industrial waterfront property for residential use. He is one of New York’s leading lawyers for development deals and is credited with originating and managing the banking practice of the firm.

Padnick began her legal career working in state government before making the transition to private practice, first at J.P. Morgan’s legal department, and later as an associate for Cohen and Perfetto at their previous firm. Padnick joined Cohen and Perfetto in founding the new firm and was made a partner at its inception.

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