

Law Firm Real Estate Report

By James Boyle

Law360 (February 29, 2024, 4:01 PM EST) -- The expansion of law firm footprints in North Carolina and Florida, a couple of homecomings in Minnesota and Sarasota, Florida, and the completion of a multimillion-dollar renovation in Houston were among some of the biggest real estate moves for law firms in February.

Regional firms Brooks Pierce McClendon Humphrey & Leonard LLP and Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial LLC announced they'd be adding square-footage to offices in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Orlando, Florida, respectively.

In Minneapolis and Sarasota, meanwhile, Maslon LLP and Williams Parker moved their respective offices to familiar locations, returning to areas where they first launched.

And the reduction of paper files allowed Chamberlain Hrdlicka White Williams & Aughtry to add additional offices and collaboration areas as part of a \$6 million renovation of its Houston headquarters.

Here, Law360 Pulse takes a look at some of the big real estate moves by law firms over the last month.

Brooks Pierce Expands Raleigh Office

The North Carolina-based Brooks Pierce increased its footprint in Raleigh this month by adding an extra 5,915 square feet to its office at the Wells Fargo Capitol Center. The firm now occupies 43,047 square feet at 150 Fayetteville Street, where the firm's Raleigh office has been located since 1995, according to a firm spokesperson.

Brooks Pierce hosts 48 attorneys and 24 staff members in Raleigh, taking up the 16th, 17th and about a third of the 18th floor of the Wells Fargo Capitol Center, the spokesperson told Law360 Pulse. Managing partner Reid Phillips said in a statement that the firm's presence in the state capitol enables it to be in the best place to serve clients.

"The power of presence is so important to the work we do for our clients, and as we continue to grow, we are committed to providing space to work alongside our colleagues and clients," Phillips said. "We love our offices in the Wells Fargo Capitol Center overlooking the grounds of the North Carolina State Capitol, steps away from the Supreme Court of North Carolina and North Carolina Court of Appeals and centrally located between the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina, the Wake County Courthouse, and the North Carolina General Assembly."

Weinberg Wheeler Expands Orlando Office

The Atlanta-based firm Weinberg Wheeler has added office space to its location at the Citrus Center in Orlando, Florida. Weinberg Wheeler grew the office at 255 South Orange Avenue by 2,149 feet, and now hosts 12 attorneys plus staff in a 7,587 square-foot space. The expansion added five attorney offices and two paralegal offices, according to a release from the firm.

Chamberlain Hrdlicka Completes \$6 Million Renovation of Houston HQ

Attorneys and staff at Chamberlain Hrdlicka's office at Two Allen Center in Houston are enjoying the results of a major \$6 million, six-month renovation, including a new staircase connecting the firm's two floors, redesigned common areas, increased natural light, and more space created by the significant reduction of paper files and storage.

A lease extension in 2022 prompted the renovations, according to Chamberlain Hrdlicka's announcement. The firm first moved into the Two Allen Center office tower at 1200 Smith Street in 1985. The office's 92 attorneys and 84 staff occupy 55,178 square feet on the 13th and 14th floors.

"With our office lease extension in 2022 came a vision for a refreshed workplace and an elevated experience for Chamberlain Hrdlicka's team members," Chief Operating Officer John Meredith said in a statement. "The recent Allen Center campus renovations and added amenities created an inviting work environment for our team, clients and visitors. Renovating our office further enriches our employees' experience and takes our culture of excellence and collaboration to the next level."

Haynes Boone Moves Woodlands Office

Haynes and Boone LLP did not have to go far to find a new home for its Houston-area location. The Dallas-based firm opened a new office this month in a mixed-use development in The Woodlands, just outside of Houston, where it hosts six attorneys and three staff members in the eight-story Two Hughes Landing building. Haynes and Boone occupies about 7,500 square feet on the fifth floor of a building overlooking Lake Woodlands at 1790 Hughes Landing Blvd.

The firm originally opened an office in The Woodlands in 2018, occupying a similarly sized space at Waterway Plaza Two at 10001 Woodloch Forest Drive. The 66-acre Woodlands campus hosts several major energy and oilfield services companies and is a key location for the firm's energy practice group.

"We are excited to transition to a new state-of-the art building in a growing area of The Woodlands," said Craig Stahl, managing partner of Haynes and Boone's Woodlands office, in a statement. "We look forward to continuing to deliver exceptional legal services from our new office space, perfectly positioned to serve our clients in the energy and business sectors."

Williams Parker Moves Headquarters in Sarasota

Florida firm Williams Parker has moved its Sarasota headquarters for the first time in 50 years as it cut the ribbon this month on a new office at the Plaza at Five Points at 50 Central Avenue in downtown Sarasota. The 35,000-square-foot office on the eighth floor of the Plaza is a bit of a homecoming for the nearly 100-year-old firm. Williams Parker opened in 1925 at the former First Bank and Trust Building, which occupied the same space as the Plaza at Five Points.

The move to the Plaza at Five Points is the fourth in Williams Parker's history. The firm's headquarters was previously located at 200 South Orange Avenue, where it moved in 1973.

"We miss our brick building at 200 South Orange," Williams Parker president Mike Wilson said in a statement. "While it was a terrific home for five decades, we needed new space to support our growth strategy and enhance our ability to serve our clients and the community."

The headquarters hosts 46 attorneys and 62 staff members, according to a spokesperson. Williams Parker opened a second location in July just outside Sarasota in the Waterside Place mixed-use development in Lakewood Ranch.

Maslon Moves to Capella Tower, Returning to Site of Its Original Building

Minnesota firm Maslon also experienced a bit of a homecoming by recently moving to new offices at Capella Tower in Minneapolis. The firm opened the new location in January, taking up 35,000 square feet on two floors at 225 South 6th Street in Minneapolis. The building sits on the same block that hosted the building where the firm launched in 1956 as Maslon Kaplan Edelman Joseph & Borman. The structure was demolished in 1985 and replaced in 1992 with the current building.

Maslon moved approximately 140 attorneys and staff to Capella Tower after residing at the Wells Fargo Center since 1992.

"We are thrilled to move into a space designed to better serve our clients and our firm members into the future — and we believe the best place for us to do business remains downtown Minneapolis," said Keiko Sugisaka, Maslon's board chair, in a statement. "The fact that we have returned to the site of our original building is a serendipitous reminder of our roots and the legacy of Sam Maslon."

Pillsbury Relocates Offices in Houston, London

International firm Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP recently announced plans to relocate its offices in Houston and London.

Pillsbury will move its Houston operations this spring to a 28,000-square-foot space in the 48-story 609 Main at Texas building in the city's downtown area. The move comes after spending 20 years in its current home at Two Houston Center at 909 Fannin Street. The Houston office currently hosts 30 attorneys and 20 staff members, according to a firm spokesperson.

Across the Atlantic, meanwhile, Pillsbury has found a new, slightly larger home for its London office. The firm expects to move to a 14,500 square-foot office at 100 Bishopsgate before the summer, relocating 34 attorneys and 25 staff from the current, 12,385 square-foot space a few blocks away at 25 Old Broad Street in the NatWest Tower.

Crowell & Moring Unveils New York Office at Two Manhattan West

Crowell & Moring LLP has become the first tenant to move into the 58-story Two Manhattan West building in Manhattan's Hudson Yards development. The firm has more than doubled in size in New York over the last five years, according to the announcement of the office launch. Crowell & Moring fills 71,000 square feet on two floors with approximately 170 lawyers and staff after previously operating in

75,000 square feet at 590 Madison Avenue for 15 years.

"We have moved to a better space to suit our growing needs," said Glen McGorty, managing partner of Crowell & Moring's New York office, in a statement. "This is an office that speaks to the caliber of our clients, the sophistication of our matters, and the client service excellence that we deliver across our entire firm."

Greenspoon Marder Moves to Larger NY Office

Florida-based Greenspoon Marder LLP moved to a larger space in midtown Manhattan this month to better accommodate the firm's recent growth in New York. The firm moved to a 41,000-square-foot space in the Sixth Avenue building at 1345 Avenue of the Americas, expanding from its former 25,000-square-foot office at 590 Madison Avenue.

Greenspoon Marder will occupy the entire 22nd floor with approximately 35 attorneys and additional staff, taking over a sublease with nine years left on it from CBS Sports' legal department.

"We will be diligently working toward an additional expansion in that office," firm co-founder Gerald Greenspoon previously told Law360 Pulse. "We moved into this space partly because of the expansion opportunities that were available."

Ellenoff Opens LA Office

The addition of a four-lawyer labor and employment team from Krieger & Krieger has led Ellenoff Grossman & Schole LLP to open a second office in California. Linda Guthmann Krieger wound down operations of her firm to bring the team of four attorneys and three legal assistants over to Ellenoff. They will continue to operate out of their offices at 249 East Ocean Blvd. in Los Angeles. Ellenoff also operates an office out of Orange County in California.

Adding the Krieger lawyers to the Ellenoff Grossman team provides us with an opportunity to offer expanded service to our employer clients in California's challenging legal and employment environment." Amanda Fugazy, head of the firm's labor and employment law group, previously told Law360.

--Editing by Adam LoBelia.