

Contact

Keith R. Barnett

Partner

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Keith Barnett is chair of the Firm’s Real Estate Department and Head of the Firm’s Boston office. He advises international, national, and local clients in all aspects of commercial real estate, including real estate finance, development, acquisitions, sales, and leasing. With more than 30 years in the industry, Keith has represented a wide variety of clients, including private equity fund sponsors, developers, life insurance companies, commercial banks, and some of the world's largest publicly traded and private retailers through the successful completion of numerous large and complex real estate transactions. Recently, Keith has led numerous high-profile deals and developments which include, amongst others: luxury hotel and condominium projects, multibillion-dollar retail anchored mixed use developments, large distribution centers (including for some of the world’s largest online businesses) and multi-family residential projects.

As a leading commercial real estate attorney, Keith counsels clients on a wide range of legal and business real estate matters across industries and sectors. He represents United States-based retailers in all their real estate needs, including acquisitions and dispositions, leasing, permitting and development. He also advises clients in connection with numerous major real estate developments, such as hotel projects, retail developments, office buildings, biotechnology and high technology facilities, residential developments, warehouse and industrial facilities and academic

buildings.

In addition, Keith has an active practice representing owners and tenants in connection with leasing transactions as well as buyers and sellers of real estate across asset classes.

In the area of real estate finance, Keith has significant experience with traditional mortgage loans, mezzanine loans, preferred equity investments and so-called "bond leases," "synthetic leases" and other accounting and tax sensitive transactions. He also advises clients in various positions with respect to options and opportunities, including loan workouts, foreclosure advice, and debt and equity restructurings.

Keith regularly teaches and speaks on issues related to real estate law. For more than a decade, he conducted graduate-level seminars for business, architecture and real estate students at MIT, New York University and Columbia University. He has also frequently taught Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education courses on real estate law and has presented to many in-house business and legal groups.

Matters

Representative matters Keith has handled include:

- Representation of developer of a 33 story, $500 million redevelopment in New Orleans, Louisiana; consisting of a Four Seasons Hotel, Four Seasons-branded condominiums and a museum dedicated to the history of New Orleans
- Representation of one of the nation’s largest supermarket chains in connection with its nationwide “trophy project program,” namely the strategic re-use of various properties, including the sale of air rights and the development of mixed-use projects, thus allowing some of the company’s older stores at “best in class” locations to be replaced with more modern and profitable stores while unlocking the value of such air rights

- Representation of a developer in connection with the acquisition,development, joint venturing, and financing of millions of square feet ofdistribution centers in the Northeast
- Representation of a closely held business in connection with several large multi-family development projects, including acquisition, joint venturing, entitling, financing and sale
- Representation of white knight investor who provided both common equity and preferred equity as well as management expertise for a luxury hotel in Hawaii
- Representation of developer of a luxury hotel and condominium project in Dallas which will include a 240 key hotel and approximately 100 luxury residential units
- Represented a closely held business in the sale of 9 supermarket anchored shopping centers in the Northeast for approximately $400 Million.
- Represented a large online retailer in the negotiation of a lease to backfill a vacated 200,000 square foot anchor store with a flagship “bricks and mortar” outlet at a prestigious regional mall
- Representation of developer of a 700-foot (approximately 60 story) tower in Boston's Back Bay which includes a Four Seasons Hotel and Four Seasons branded condominiums
- Representation of international NYSE retail company in acquisition, permitting and development of several new stores and expansions throughout New England*
- Representation of developer in the acquisition, development, and operation of the first and only five-star hotel in Iceland with 250 rooms located just steps from the harbor on Reykjavik's waterfront*
- Representation of developer of a luxury 300 room hotel in Boston, Massachusetts, financed in part by state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, a pension fund venture partner, and a construction to mini-perm mortgage loan*
- Representation of owner of a mixed-use commercial property in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in a $160 million financing*

- Representation of institutional mortgage lender in approximately $200 million construction financing of high profile Boston development anchored by a major national big box retailer with separate residential and office towers above*
- Representation of owner/developer in the restructuring and recapitalization of the debt and equity positions in a luxury hotel*
- Representation of white knight who provided bridge financing and then purchased a majority of the assets in the mixed-use development of a championship golf course and luxury residential community in north suburban Boston*
- Represented a regional real estate owner/operator in its formation of a joint venture with a pension fund-backed real estate capital partner for the acquisition of a 14-building, approximately 800,000 s.f. portfolio of commercial properties in the greater Boston area. Eight of the properties were acquired in a first-in- Massachusetts federal receivership sale of failed commercial mortgage backed securities collateral. Acquisition financing was provided through the joint venture's equity and acquisition and construction loans from regional banks*
- Representation of two international life sciences companies in connection with the development and operation of their campuses and facilities in Cambridge, Massachusetts*
- Representation of private equity funds in the acquisition of multiple assisted living facilities, residential, retail and office projects*
- Representation of clients in the acquisition, financing, and disposition of approximately $250 million of property in sale/leaseback transactions*
- Continued pro bono representation of The Walden Woods Project in connection with the preservation of almost 200 acres of environmentally sensitive land in Concord and Lincoln, Massachusetts

*at prior firm

Practices

Real Estate, Asset-Based Lending, Borrower Finance, Financial Restructuring and Special Situations, Real Estate Development, Real Estate Leasing

Industries

Real Assets, Private Capital, Real Estate, Life Sciences

Education

University of Michigan Law School, J.D.

magna cum laude

Michigan Law Review, Order of the Coif

Harvard University, A.B.

magna cum laude

Admissions & Qualifications

Massachusetts

Memberships

Member, Board of Trustees and the Medical Credentials Committee of The New England Baptist Hospital

Chair, The New England Baptist Hospital's Real Estate Committee

Fellow, The American College of Real Estate Lawyers (ACREL)

Member, NAIOP

Awards & Recognition

Best Lawyers in America 2007–2027

Chambers USA: Massachusetts: Real Estate 2016-2026

The Legal 500 United States Real Estate Practice 2016, 2017, 2019, 2022-2025

The Legal 500 United States: Real Estate: Finance: 2025

Lawdragon 500 Leading Global Real Estate Lawyers 2024-2025

"New England Super Lawyer" in Real Estate Law in Boston 2004–2005, 2008–2015, 2017–2025

Selected to Massachusetts Super Lawyers: 2004 - 2005, 2008 - 2015, 2017 – 2026