



[Chris M. Smith](#)

**Partner**

**HEAD, NEW YORK REAL ESTATE PRACTICE**

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Chris Smith is an internationally recognized real estate attorney experienced in every major type of real estate product and transaction. Mr. Smith has handled developments, financings, investment funds, acquisitions, dispositions and corporate style mergers and spin offs involving residential developments, office buildings, shopping centers, hotels and distribution centers, both nationally and internationally. A significant portion of his practice also includes the representation of clients in leasing, renovation and condominium development of commercial office space and mixed-use products, as well as real estate foreclosures and bankruptcies.

- Real Estate
- Finance
- Mergers and Acquisitions

- Hospitality and Leisure
- Financial Services
- Real Estate

Clients consistently affirm that he is the best of the best. These clients range from individuals to international corporate developers, private equity providers, corporate entities, family offices and financial institutions. Illustrative of his clients are AIG, Shorenstein Properties, SL Green, Fosterlane Realty and Solow Realty and Development Corporation.

Chris is an adjunct professor at St. John's University School of Law and has presented as an industry expert at seminars and conferences on various real estate topics, including joint ventures, ground leasing, public/private partnerships, acquisitions and direct investment in real estate.

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## REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- A European sovereign wealth fund in connection with its acquisitions through private REITS of a portfolio logistics facilities located throughout the United States; on 11-building portfolio located in the Hudson Square neighborhood of New York City; and 601 Lexington Avenue in New York City and the Atlantic Wharf Office Building and 100 Federal Street in Boston.
- SL Green Realty Corp. in a joint venture with Jeff Sutton affiliates with respect to an expansion of their leasehold in New York City and a simultaneous lease transaction with Nike, Inc.; the new space lease comprises the building's entire retail component consisting of the ground and five additional floors – an area of 70,000 square feet.

- Shorenstein Properties in the purchase and financing of the 2MC North Office and the 3MC Office, retail and parking elements within Miami Central Station, a nine-acre mixed-use railroad station development complex in downtown Miami.
- AIG Global Real Estate (AIGGRE) in the acquisition by a joint venture of Morgan Properties and AIGGRE of a portfolio of 86 multi-family properties from the Kushner Companies for US\$2 billion.
- SL Green Realty Corp. in a lease transaction with an affiliate of Citigroup Inc. extending Citi's triple-net leases of its world headquarters covering 2.6 million square feet at 388-390 Greenwich Street through December 31, 2035. The transaction is believed to be the largest lease transaction of its type in New York City history.
- Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation in the US\$355 million redevelopment of Brooklyn Bridge Park, an 85-acre sustainable waterfront park along the East River shoreline in Brooklyn, New York, including residential, retail, hotel and mixed-use properties.
- Major League Baseball and MLB Advanced Media, L.P. in the leasing of 400,000 rentable square feet of office space at 1271 Avenue of the Americas, New York City under a 15-year lease with the Rockefeller Group, Warner Music Group in its headquarters lease at 1633 Broadway and SportsNet in its headquarters lease at 4 World Trade Center.
- Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC the lease of 1.5 million square feet at 11 Madison Avenue for its world headquarters and the subsequent leasing of 1.4 million square feet at One Madison Avenue and 315 Park Avenue South, New York City.
- The Olayan Group in its US \$1.4 billion acquisition and US\$570 million financing of the property at 550 Madison Avenue, New York City.
- The US Department of Transportation as lender in the US\$526 million financing of the construction of the Moynihan Train Hall Redevelopment Project in New York City. The project will help transform the James A. Farley Post Office Building into a modern state-of-the-art train station and will deliver critical improvements and expansions that will ease congestion and delays in Amtrak's Northeast Corridor rail service.
- Solow Realty and Development as borrower in the leasing of and its US \$1.2 billion financing of 9 West 57th Street, New York City and US\$550 million financing of four residential towers in New York City.
- The owner in a US\$1.2 billion construction financing of 28 Liberty Street, New York City.
- SJM Partners in connection with the formation of a joint venture for the development of a self-storage facility in Fort Lee, New Jersey, including the negotiation of a ground lease for the property and the financing of the development.
- Ogden Cap Properties in connection with the refinancing of the US\$50 million term loan made by The Bank of New York Mellon and secured by the client's fee estate in the 442 residential apartment unit complex known as Windsor Court located at 135-155 East 31st Street, New York, New York.
- Fosterlane Management Corporation as landlord in connection with the lease of 750 7th Avenue, New York, New York.
- The Olayan Group in connection with a joint venture with Tritec Real Estate in the development of Ronkonkoma Hub – a US\$600 million transit-oriented mixed-use complex of apartments, stores, restaurants and offices around the Ronkonkoma transportation hub along the Long Island Railroad, as well as the renovation of the transit facilities servicing the same.
- SL Green Realty Corp., New York's largest commercial property owner, in connection with the restructuring of a luxury retailer's flagship Madison Avenue store and the redevelopment, condominiumization and sale of residential condominium units.
- SL Green Realty Corp. as tenant in a 99-year ground lease of 126-132 Nassau Street where SL Green intends to develop a new, as-of-right, 215,000-square foot building and convey to Pace University a leasehold condominium similar to transactions at 220 East 42nd Street.
- Wharton Properties in the sale of an 11-story, mixed-use building located at 530 Broadway for US\$382 million.
- Shorenstein Properties as borrower in connection with a US\$4350,000,000 securitized loan from Barclays relating to Borrower's leasehold interest in a 43-story, 1.1 million square foot building located at 1407 Broadway, New York City.

## CREDENTIALS

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### Admissions

- New York

### Education

- J.D., Columbia University School of Law
- B.S., Rutgers University

## Courts

- United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

## Memberships

- Mattone Family Institute for Real Estate Law – Advisory Board Member
- Association of the Bar of the City of New York and New York State Bar Association
- Association of Foreign Investors in Real Estate
- Real Estate Board of New York
- American College of Real Estate Lawyers

## Accolades

- Best Lawyers in America – New York (2021 and 2022)
- *Chambers USA* ranked Band 1 in the New York Real Estate category (2007-2021)
- Recognized in The Best Lawyers in America (2006-2021)
- Recognized in Best of the Best USA (2016-2021)
- Named as a leading practitioner in The International Who's Who of Real Estate Lawyers, Who's Who Legal 100, Euromoney's Guide to the World's Leading Real Estate Lawyers, New York Super Lawyers –Top 100 and Expert Guides
- Recipient of Lawyers Alliance for New York/Cornerstone Award (2017) in recognition of his pro bono services

## INSIGHTS

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### Publications

#### **COVID-19: Pre-negotiation letters as a critical tool for real estate workouts**

29 May 2020

There is no standard PNL; a well-drafted agreement will address the specific circumstances of the parties and the project.

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- Ten Unexpected Issues When a Property Sale becomes an Entity Sale – Bloomberg BNA Tax Management NE Journal, May 4, 2016

## NEWS

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#### **DLA Piper advises ViacomCBS in sale of Black Rock building for US\$760 million**

15 October 2021

DLA Piper represented ViacomCBS Inc. in the sale of the office building known as Black Rock for US\$760 million to Harbor Group International, a privately owned real estate investment and management firm. The 38-floor office tower is located at 51 West 52nd Street in midtown Manhattan.

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## MEDIA MENTIONS

- "SL Green as tenant signs 99-year ground lease valued at \$30M for office property in FiDi," *PincusCo*, February 5, 2020
- "Shorenstein Lands \$350M Loan on 1407 Broadway," *Connect New York*, November 7, 2019
- "JLL Secures \$350M Loan for Shorenstein Properties' 1407 Broadway in New York City," *Cision*, November 6, 2019
- "Barclays Refis Shorenstein's 1407 Broadway Leasehold Interest With \$350M Loan," *Commercial Observer*, November 4, 2019