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on the move

Sutherland Snags Real Estate Partner From King & Spalding

Meredith Hobbs, Daily Report

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Real estate lawyer D. Clayton Howell has joined Sutherland Asbill & Brennan as a partner from King & Spalding. Howell represents commercial real estate owners, operators and investors in a variety of transactions, mostly in Atlanta but also nationally.

Sutherland's managing partner, Mark Wasserman, said Howell's addition to the firm's real estate practice is part of a push to expand the practice and "grow in tandem with the real estate industry, not only in the Southeast but across our national footprint."

Howell has represented Hines on the development and sale of the 1180 Peachtree Building, where King & Spalding is headquartered, and he represented Arden Realty Inc. in its acquisition of 38 office properties from the Blackstone Group for about \$2 billion, according to his King & Spalding biography. He's also worked on the financing and development of a series of SkyHouse high-rise apartment buildings developed by Novare Group—three in Atlanta and 10 in other cities.

Howell declined to name clients without their permission but said that locally he's also worked on the development of Georgia Tech's Technology Square project.

The real estate market has come back since the recession, Howell said. "The market is booming. Transactions are increasing. ... It's not quite the frenzy it was in 2006 or 2007, but it's still very active."

"There's a tremendous amount of capital in the market looking for deals and able to find them," Howell said, because foreign investors consider the United States a safe haven for their capital and interest rates remain low. "There are a lot of people out there buying who are looking for a better return than in the bond market or otherwise. Real estate is viewed as a good place to get that return."

Howell, 43, had worked at King & Spalding since earning a law degree from the University of Georgia. He said he decided Sutherland was a better fit for his practice.

"I was attracted to Sutherland because of the opportunity for growth, the emphasis it puts on

the real estate practice and, frankly, the lawyers there," Howell said, adding that he knows a lot of them already because he's worked opposite them on transactions.

"I worked with great lawyers and great people at King & Spalding. I'll miss them," he added.

Briefly

The University of Georgia has named Robert Gordon Jr., a public finance lawyer, as the new director of its Archway Partnership, which assists Georgia cities and counties with economic and community development that residents identify as priorities. UGA faculty and staff collaborate with the communities, providing technical assistance and research. Archway's previous director, Mel Garber, has retired.

A unit of the UGA Office of Public Service and Outreach, Archway began as a two-year pilot program in 2005 to assist the city of Moultrie with issues arising from rapid growth, such as land-use planning, workforce housing and economic development.

Gordon previously worked for another branch of the university's Office of Public Service and Outreach, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. He was its economic development and fiscal analysis unit manager from 2010 to 2014 before joining Davenport & Co. in Athens, a Richmond-based investment advisory firm, as first vice president of public finance.

UGA's vice president for public service and outreach, Jennifer Frum, said in a statement that Gordon's "expertise in economic and community development will boost the efforts we are making in Archway communities throughout Georgia to help attract jobs, develop leaders and solve critical issues."

Archway is collaborating with nine Georgia communities: the cities of Sandersville, Tennille, Americus, Hawkinsville, Dalton, Cairo and Metter and their counties, as well as Hart and Habersham counties. It has also assisted Colquitt, Glynn and Clayton counties and it will start working with the city of Griffin in July.

Chamberlain, Hrdlicka, White, Williams & Aughtry has hired two associates, Jennifer Duval Lindy and Daniel Robbins. Lindy joined the international tax practice from Ernst & Young. Robbins, a patent lawyer, joined the intellectual property practice from Abelman Frayne & Schwab, an IP boutique in New York.

Harold Franklin, a partner at King & Spalding in the tort litigation practice, has been admitted as a sustaining member of the Product Liability Advisory Council, which aims to shape law around product liability and litigation. The nonprofit has more than 100 product manufacturers as members. While the group was created by and for general counsel, it invites about 350 product liability defense counsel to become sustaining members.

Michael Hollingsworth has been elected to the Empty Stocking Fund's board of directors. Hollingsworth is the managing partner of Nelson, Mullins, Riley & Scarborough's Atlanta office and co-leads its mergers and acquisition group. The Empty Stocking Fund provides Christmas gifts to about 50,000 needy Atlanta children each year.

Ballard Spahr patent partner Mary Anthony Merchant has updated *The America Invents Act Handbook*, which she first published in 2013 with Law Journal Press. Congress passed the AIA in 2011 to update the U.S. patent system. The second edition includes experiences with AIA-established proceedings in front of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and regulations that have been finalized since the first edition. It also examines new procedures for challenging patents in court and legal challenges to parts of the AIA.

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