

Younkins & Schechter Negotiates Design and Construction Contracts for Vanbarton Group's 77 Water Street

WBENC law firm is negotiating agreements to onboard architects, leasing & marketing groups, construction managers & more for residential conversion

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Younkins & Schechter LLP](#), a leading Manhattan-based, women-owned law firm, is representing preeminent real estate investment and advisory firm Vanbarton Group as it prepares the residential conversion of 77 Water Street, a former office tower in the Financial District. Plans for the approximately 600,000-square-foot, 26-story property, originally built by the William Kaufman Organization in 1970, include the development of 600 residential units.

"Commercial to residential conversion projects are always complex and unique," says Kathy Younkings, Co-Managing Partner, Younkings & Schechter. "In large part, this is because of fundamental design differences between residential and commercial buildings, as well as different code requirements applicable to each conversion. These projects typically require a large number of contractors across a wide range of trades working together. The various contracts have to be carefully drafted and coordinated to ensure the project runs smoothly and efficiently."

Younkins & Schechter has been working with the Vanbarton Group on commercial-to-residential conversions since its 2014 project at 180 Water Street. The WBENC law firm subsequently worked on two more Vanbarton conversions at 160 Water Street and 990 Avenue of the Americas and is currently working on a conversion project at 1011 First Avenue, in addition to 77 Water Street. Preparing the contracts with Kathy Younkings are Co-Managing Partner Mardi Schechter and Attorney Lauren Younkings.

Adds Lauren Younkings, "Our work on the 180 Water Street conversion provided a great framework for preparing and coordinating contracts for all the different vendors and consultants. Over the course of hundreds of contracts we have completed for these projects, we





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Kathy Younkins, Managing Partner, Younkins & Schechter LLP.

have been able to refine the process to accommodate the high volume and ensure quick turnarounds.”

Among the advisors and consultants already on board for the 77 Water Street project are CetraRuddy Architecture, Surface Design Group, Collaborative Constructive Management, Dagher Engineering, Core Engineering & Construction, and Skyline Windows.

The Vanbarton Group purchased the property in late 2024

for \$95 million and construction plans were filed with the New York City Department of Buildings in February 2025.

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About Younkins & Schechter LLP

Younkins & Schechter LLP is a New York City-based boutique law firm founded in 1996 by Kathy A. Younkins and Mardi J. Schechter. The WBENC-certified practice specializes in commercial real estate, offering legal counsel in the areas of Commercial Leasing, Property Management, Construction, Real Estate Acquisitions, Development and Financing, Restructurings, Corporate Organization, and serving as General Counsel for numerous owners, operators, and users of real property.

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