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Law firm McMillan relocating to adaptive-reuse development in Charlotte's North End

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Local law firm McMillan is moving to a new office at The Rail House, an adaptive-reuse development in Charlotte's North End district.

McMillan Partner Shawn McMillan said an upfit of the 5,800-square-foot space is underway, and he expects to move in sometime in January.

McMillan will be more than doubling its footprint with the move. Its office has been located at 514 Beatties Ford Road for the last seven years.

McMillan said expansion is something he's been working toward for at least two years — it was just a matter of finding the right space. He said



CHILDRESS KLEIN

Local law firm McMillan is moving its office to The Rail House, an adaptive-reuse development in Charlotte's North End district.

he was inspired to search for an adaptive-reuse-type location after a visit to San Francisco.

"We're not a traditional law firm in the sense of your typical, formal setting," he said. "We liked the fact that it's in the warehouse; it's got the bow-truss ceiling ... It's a cool trend and a good vibe."

The new office will allow McMillan to triple the size of his team over the next few years. Currently, the firm has eight employees in Charlotte and four in Charleston, South Carolina. He plans to hire at least four more in the short term and eventually expand the local team to 25 employees.

"We've had a lot of growth, and this move is allowing us to hire a lot more people," he said. "What's amazing is ... the shape is going to allow us to have a lot more useable space as we expand our team."

Dumpling Lady is leasing just over 2,000 square feet on the ground floor of The Rail House as a production kitchen, and Training Camp Fitness will open a 5,300-square-foot studio there this fall.

Panchali Sau, managing member of local developer Canopy CLT, said the building is about 50% occupied and has a little more than 12,000 square feet of space available to lease.

"I do think we'll get one or two more smaller retail tenants, and we're still targeting a larger creative office user," she said. "It's great to be able to offer spaces that gives office users a different kind of option."

Canopy purchased the building at 123 E. 27th St. from The American Red Cross in 2018 for \$325,000, according to Mecklenburg County real estate records. Panchali said they began renovating the warehouse in 2020, finishing last year.

"We never tried to pre-lease the building," she said. "We were talking to a brewery and a much larger production kitchen early on. I saw the space more of a community gathering and destination place, but things have evolved."

Real estate investment and management company Childress Klein recently took over leasing at The Rail House, though Childress was not the executor of the current active leases. Scott Wilson, partner of brokerage services at Childress Klein, said they are looking forward to filling the space.

"We are thrilled to bring new energy into Charlotte's North End district, and are

actively seeking a forward-thinking retailer or creative office users looking to join an atmosphere of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship at The Rail House," he said.

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