

Queens Business

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BUSINESS • REAL ESTATE • HOME IMPROVEMENT

INSIDE



The partners at Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP, (from left to right) Andrew A. Kimler, Joseph G. Milizio, Bernard F. McGovern, Bernard Vishnick, Christopher J.L. Deziel, Joseph Trotti and Morris Sabbagh place their client's legal needs and interests first and foremost.

Photo Courtesy Vishnick McGovern Milizio, LLP

Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP Legal foundation for a lasting relationship

BY VICTOR G. MIMONI

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There are many milestones in life, from that first kiss, first job and first home, to the final farewell. At each of them, sound advice and guidance are not just helpful – oftentimes, they're absolutely essential. Where legal advice and representation are necessary, the firm of Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP stands ready to be your "lawyer for life."

"We started as a small firm in Queens over 40 years ago and our roots are still in Queens," said Joseph G. Milizio, Esq., the managing partner of the firm. During the firm's history, Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP has developed long-term relationships with clients, many of which have lasted for over 30 years. They're proud of this loyalty. "Our clients trust our abilities as attorneys and appreciate the care and service we provide to each matter," Milizio said. The firm's clients consist "mostly of individuals, families, and small businesses that want a firm that can work with them on a day-to-day basis on a wide range of issues" he explained. They also serve

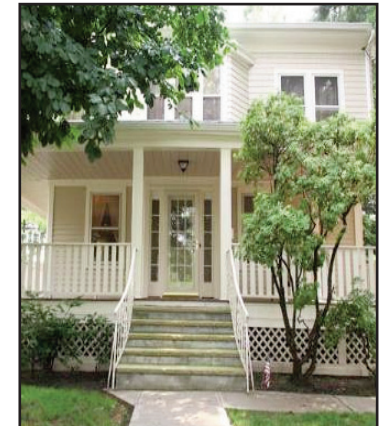
locally-run businesses in the New York Metro area including Long Island and Manhattan, which require a 'hands-on' approach and a firm that is familiar with all aspects of the business's operations."

Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP has grown and received recognition within the legal profession for their outstanding results and creation of new law. From their offices at 3000 Marcus Avenue in Lake Success (which is on the Queens-Nassau Border), they aggressively pursue cost saving strategies, while always placing their client's legal needs and interests first and foremost. State of the art computerized research databases and highly skilled personnel enable Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP to offer expert counsel at affordable fees.

The depth of knowledge to provide full service

"The firm's original focus was in Trusts and Estates, and estate litigation, but has rounded out its service offerings with Business and Transactional Law, Real Estate Law, Litigation, Employment, and Family Law," Milizio said.

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KNOWLEDGE, SENSITIVITY AND SUPPORT

(continued from cover)

In the area of Trusts & Estates, Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP is well-versed in the most current strategies for wealth preservation and is committed to assisting individuals in acting for the benefit of their families, from wills and post-mortem estate planning, to probate and estate administration; Surrogate's Court proceedings; estate and fiduciary income taxation and IRS Estate Tax audits. Estate Planning specialist and Partner, Bernard McGovern, says, "Proper estate planning is the key to allowing individuals to pass the greatest possible portion of their assets to their beneficiaries." As tax laws change, many people find their plan no longer serves their best interest. That's why the firm encourages its clients to revisit their estate plans periodically.

In addition to developing traditional estate plans, the attorneys at Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP help clients plan for other issues of concern, such as anticipating sudden disabilities and the risk of the unexpected loss of a family breadwinner.

Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP is also well-recognized as one of the foremost estate litigation law firms in the New York Metropolitan area. The estate litigation team, led by Bernard Vishnick, has extensive experience and zealously represents clients in various Surrogate's Courts' proceedings, ranging from will contests; lost wills; actions to remove an executor or trustee; defending or objecting to judicial accountings or recovering assets which properly belong to an estate.

The Vishnick McGovern Milizio estate litigation team understands that a family's wishes and feelings are integral aspects of all estate litigation and is proud to be recommended by other well-respected attorneys and accountants. "We strive to ensure that clients' interests will be advocated for in a highly professional manner and that optimal results will be achieved," Vishnick said.

A compassionate and sensitive approach

As a natural outgrowth of the trust and estate planning area, the firm has developed impressive expertise in the specialized area of Elder Law, which includes asset preservation planning; Medicaid eligibility and planning; disability planning; guardianships and Powers of Attorney; health care proxies and special needs Trusts.

Vishnick McGovern Milizio's Elder Law Practice Group specializes in dealing with legal issues that are unique to seniors and people with special needs, such as special benefits for the elderly; planning for incapacity and long-term care financing and insurance. In addition, they are experienced in handling issues relating to retirement, retirement benefits and age discrimination in employment.

Since seniors and people with special needs sometimes encounter difficulties in dealing with the legal system, the attorneys and support staff take care to treat their clients with the utmost respect and compassion. "It is important to us that our clients feel reassured that all their needs are being met," says Morris Sabbagh, an Elder Law specialist and Partner.

At Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP, attorneys take a practical approach, combining knowledge of the many different fields of law and integrating them to achieve clients' goals. Years of legal experience enables them to anticipate potential problems and to take preventative measures to help ensure the senior clients enjoy a peaceful and satisfying retirement.

Thinking creatively and strategically

The firm has extensive expertise in representing businesses, beginning with the formation of Corporations; General or Limited Partnerships, and Limited Liability Companies or Partnerships. They render expert advice in connection with the organization and structure of a given business, in order to best achieve and fulfill agreements among the equity owners.

Business transactions are complex, and to best serve their



THE COURIER/Photos by Victor G. Mimoni

Starting out as a three-lawyer office in Queens, Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP now has offices in Lake Success.

clients, the firm's attorneys are experienced in negotiated stock and asset based mergers; acquisitions and dispositions, and representation of both buyers and sellers of various types of companies, including the negotiation and closing of secured financing for such transactions.

Their services also include the purchase and sale of businesses; preparation of shareholder buy-sell and redemption agreements and employment, compensation, consulting and non-competition agreements. And, as part of providing the finest legal representation in day-to-day business affairs, the firm works closely with business clients in contract preparation and negotiation; agreements and dispute resolution.

Another area that falls under the umbrella of Business Law is succession planning. To ensure the long-range objectives of business owners are properly met, the attorneys in the business department work closely with the estate planning department, to assure that business owners have estate plans which include all aspects of their business ventures. "We incorporate information with respect to individual business owners into planning for the future," Milizio explained.

In the area of Real Estate law, Vishnick McGovern Milizio offers expertise in a broad range of commercial, residential and transaction-oriented real estate matters, including sales, leasing, development, construction, financing and joint ventures. Services range from buying or selling a family home to complex commercial transactions. In fact, the firm has represented owners; developers; tenants; managing agents; cooperative boards and corporations - from single- and multi-family homes to estate properties and from the retail store or office, to shopping centers and industrial properties. In addition, attorneys at Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP regularly represent specialized organizations, such as religious, not-for-profit and franchising entities in connection with their real estate transactions.

"Our Real Estate Department handles all aspects of real estate matters, including mortgage loans," Milizio said. "We have acted as closing attorneys for both clients and numerous banks," he added.

Support of individual ideas and alternative lifestyles

Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP is a firm that is grounded

in the belief that all people should be treated equally under the law. Unfortunately, under current laws, one population - the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community - does not enjoy equal protections. The firm understands that LGBT individuals have the same concerns, and the same needs, as the larger community. Yet, society does not automatically grant the same legal rights, or offer the same legal benefits to the LGBT community. With proper planning, however, those rights and benefits can be supplemented.

Harnessing the firm's estate planning expertise and coupling it with its value system, Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP has recently emerged as a leading provider of legal services to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) persons. Whether counseling individuals or businesses, their attorneys understand the issues and are well versed in providing strategies that protect clients and satisfy their goals.

LGBT couples face challenges in many of the most personal decisions of life, including estate distribution and inheritance; decision making for an ill or incapacitated partner, and the right to make funeral arrangements and act on behalf of a domestic partner's estate. They also need sensitive and caring representation in areas of workplace discrimination and harassment, as well as spousal and domestic partner rights; adoption, separation and divorce.

The LGBT practice group at Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP are highly accomplished in the use of customized trusts and probate alternatives, and can empower LGBT persons and couples through such means as Domestic Partnership and Joint Ownership agreements. When problems need to be addressed, they conduct and participate in separation mediation, as well as estate litigation and will contests.

Milizio points out that "Meeting the legal needs of the LGBT community requires its own set of strategies, not only in estates and trusts planning and administration, but in Family Law - adoptions and more recently, divorce." He adds, "Recognizing that the law has a different relationship with the LGBT community, we established a focus on this practice area."

An open mind to fully listen

In areas of Matrimonial and Family Law, Vishnick

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CREATIVE THINKING, WINNING STRATEGY

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McGovern Milizio LLP advises and represents clients in matrimonial matters that include divorce; distribution of marital property; spousal maintenance; child support, custody and visitation, and pre-nuptial and post-nuptial agreements.

They have vast experience and have litigated these issues in matrimonial courts throughout New York State. In addition, attorneys in the matrimonial department have lectured and written numerous articles and chapters on various aspects of matrimonial law.

"We are sensitive to the emotional and economic concerns of our clients in such matters," says Family Law Partner Joseph Trotti. Consequently, the firm makes every effort to explore the possibility of resolution including the utilization of alternative dispute forums and mediation. They also encourage meetings with clients and their adversaries prior to litigation, in the hope of avoiding family friction and unnecessary legal fees and expenses.

If the dispute cannot be amicably resolved, they vigorously represent their clients throughout all phases of Family Court and/or Supreme Court proceedings.

The execution of a winning strategy

Another one of Vishnick McGovern Milizio's main areas of practice is civil litigation and arbitration. Their attorneys have extensive experience before state and federal Courts at both the trial and appellate levels.

The Litigation Group has a solid reputation for producing outstanding results for their clients, whether they are representing a multinational company, charitable organization, a small business owner, individual or a family. The firm has been extensively involved in various aspects of employment law, representing individuals and businesses in the preparation of employment agreements and negotiation of employment-related issues. They are also experienced before the American Arbitration Association and other forums for alternative dispute resolution.

The firm represents clients as both plaintiffs and defendants in a wide variety of cases, including publishing, royalty and related entertainment issues; personal injury; medical malpractice and insurance related litigation. Because they are sensitive to the cost concerns of small businesses and individual clients, attorneys at Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP always discuss the merits of pursuing a case against the likely costs with their clients.

Another aspect of the firm's litigation practice is its "Tax" area. Litigation and arbitration proceedings often boil down to protecting clients' assets. Thus, the firm maintains a Tax Practice Group that works with clients to plan, develop and implement tax saving strategies and to defend against tax conflicts with federal, state and local tax authorities. To ensure they possess a full understanding of each client's situation, attorneys first meet with clients to learn about their business and personal aspirations and then assist them to implement creative plans in order to achieve optimal income and transfer tax savings.

Planning will often include the use of trusts and other tax planning techniques such as Irrevocable Life Insurance Trusts (ILITs), Grantor and Retained Annuity and Unitrusts (GRATs and GRUTs) and others.

Charitable plans include Charitable Annuities, Lead or Remainder Trusts and Private Foundations.

Attorneys assist in developing effective strategies such as using Limited Liability Companies, Family Limited Partnerships and S-Corporations to minimize tax liability and allow a client to pass on more of the estate with minimum gift or estate tax liability.

As advocates, their attorneys represent individuals and businesses at federal, state and local tax audits and litigation with respect to all areas of tax controversies.



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Giving Back in Time and Resources

Supporting worthy causes is a serious commitment at Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP. Their motto is, "We don't fight all our battles in court." Whether through the direct services of pro bono legal representations, volunteer work, or donations, the attorneys and staff generously dedicate their time and energy to help individuals in need.

Not-for-profit organizations that benefit from their efforts include: The National Multiple Sclerosis Society; The American Red Cross; Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center; the

American Heart Association; Arthritis Foundation; Long Island Gay and Lesbian Center and The Human Rights Campaign.

In addition to these organizations, their attorneys are active committee members for myriad legal, educational, community and social justice organizations and frequently lecture to members of these organizations on various legal topics.

For more information, contact Vishnick McGovern Milizio, LLP by mail at 3000 Marcus Avenue Suite 1E9, Lake Success, New York 11042. Phone 516-437-4385, Fax 516-437-4395 or email them at info@vmmlegal.com.