

## Construction firm makes move from Maspeth to Manhattan

BY DANIEL GEIGER

The construction firm Richter + Ratner is proud of its long history in the city, it just didn't want to be confined by it. Based out of Maspeth, Queens since the 1960s, the company had become cramped in its longtime home, a building that it owns but couldn't fully occupy because more than half of it is comprised of a woodworking shop the firm rarely uses any more.

To better accommodate its existing staff and be closer to where it does the bulk of its work, the firm will relocate its offices to the 7th floor of 1370 Broadway, a 16,000 s/f space that the firm is subleasing from the garment brand licensing company, PDI.

"It was getting to be very inefficient for us to continue to operate in Queens because most of the work that we do it is in Manhattan," said Marc Heiman, Richter + Ratner's president and chief operating officer.

The firm is involved in a number of projects and is also well known for its work constructing interior spaces for

retail tenants throughout the city. Currently, it is building a new \$20 million gallery space at Parson's School of Design and a \$27 million global center for conservation at the Bronx Zoo. The firm also just completed building an Equinox gym in One Park Avenue.

Established 95 years ago, the firm operated out of the basement of a tenement building in Williamsburg, Brooklyn for a number of decades before it relocated to Queens. The new space, although smaller than its building in Queens, actually represents a significant expansion because less than half of the building was actual office space. Heiman said that the new move isn't indicative of plans to fast expand the firm's workforce or increase its capacity to take on more projects however.

"It's mainly to accommodate the people we have now, we don't want to grow fast at the risk of not hiring the right people and affecting our reputation," Heiman said. "Eventually,

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*"Eventually, we may even look to buy a building in the city."*

— MARC HEIMAN,  
RICHTER + RICHTER

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we may even look to buy a building in the city if there is opportunity and solve our space needs that way."

Newmark represented the subtenant and broker Jeffrey Nissani repped Richter + Ratner in the deal.

It's the latest among a number of large leases handled by Nissani in recent months, who started his career at Murray Hill Properties but left after a few years to start his own commercial

brokerage firm, JSN Properties. In October 2006, Nissani represented technology consulting company Okere in a 7,000 s/f sublease on the 33rd floor of Larry Silverstein's 120 Broadway.

In May 2006, he represented the non-profit group New Leaders for New Schools in its 7,000 s/f expansion at 30 West 26th Street.

The firm, which offers training to teachers and school administrators,

now occupies 17,000 s/f in the building. Nissani also represented Meatpacking District hotspot Buddha Bar in a giant 16,000 s/f lease last year.

A year ago, his identical twin brother, Erik, joined the firm. He recently represented celebrity clothier and tailor, Dani New York Inc. in a 4,250 s/f lease at 134 West 25th Street for rents that begin at \$30 per s/f.