

Carlton Fields Expands Renowned Construction Practice

August 01, 2019

Government-Contracting Expertise Adds New Depth to Firm's Construction Practice

Washington, D.C. – Carlton Fields is pleased to announce that the attorneys of McManus & Felsen LLP have joined Carlton Fields in its Washington, D.C. office. In total, five lawyers — shareholders Joseph A. McManus, Jr., Daniel K. Felsen, and James P. Carney, and senior counsels David J. Butzer and Dale R. Ellickson — bring their construction and government-contracting practices to Carlton Fields, effective today.

The addition of these construction litigators decisively expands the firm's already prominent footprint in this practice area. Carlton Fields' construction practice is growing rapidly in 2019 as the firm has added 10 construction attorneys in three of its offices — in just the past four months.

"The McManus & Felsen team adds an important public sector dimension to our national construction practice," said Richard Choi, managing shareholder of Carlton Fields' Washington, D.C. office. "They are exceptional lawyers and great people, which makes them a natural fit for our D.C. office.

"We look forward to bringing their considerable talents to bear in guiding our clients through the sometimes complicated thicket of government-contracting issues," added Choi.

From contract inception through litigation, the Carlton Fields group is uniquely positioned in the government-contracting sector.

McManus has worked in federal-government contracts since 1972 and published extensively in the federal-contracting arena. As a Judge Advocate General (JAG) US Air Force Captain, he was assigned to the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals (ASBCA). Working under Chief Judge Richard Solibakke, he wrote decisions for judges on ASBCA appeals that involved air-separation facilities, foreign-base housing, and SSN 680 series Nuclear Submarines, among many other areas. His familiarity with the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and agency supplements is unsurpassed.

“With the addition of Joe and his team, Carlton Fields is one of only five law firms in the nation with four or more lawyers who are Fellows of the preeminent American College of Construction Lawyers,” said Wm. Cary Wright, chair of Carlton Fields’ Construction practice. “It’s a distinction that eloquently confirms Carlton Fields’ status among the elite firms serving the construction industry. We are thrilled they are joining us.”

McManus is past president of the American College of Construction Lawyers (ACCL), and in total, seven Carlton Fields lawyers and alumni have been inducted as ACCL Fellows.

Carlton Fields’ Construction practice is consistently recognized as a national leader. The firm’s Construction Litigation practice earned a national first-tier ranking in the 2019 *U.S. News and World Report* and *Best Lawyers*® “Best Law Firms” guide. For the 17th consecutive year, the firm’s Construction practice was also ranked No. 1 in Florida in *Chambers USA 2019*.

“We’ve always known that a larger firm might provide a better platform to attract and service clients,” said McManus. “We were reluctant to combine with a larger firm until we met [CEO] Gary Sasso and the other Carlton Fields shareholders.

“They gave us a unique value proposition — the bench strength of a larger firm with the collegiality and devotion to the personal client service of a smaller firm,” added McManus. “All things considered — and certainly when we figure in the depth that Carlton Fields’ American College of Construction Lawyers roster demonstrates — there is no firm in the country more powerful in the construction industry than Carlton Fields.”

McManus became the first General Counsel to Clark Enterprises, Inc. at the age of 31. Now, with more than 43 years of experience and having had his own firm for 35 years, he advises clients on all phases of construction, commercial issues, and disputes resolution. He has deep experience in infrastructure and transportation matters, as well as aviation and healthcare matters.

Clients come to him for government requirements beyond contracts. He has written ethics compliance manuals for clients and advised on ICE citations.

McManus is as an active arbitrator and litigator on local, national, and international cases. He is on the construction, commercial, and international panels of the American Arbitration Association (AAA), an arbitrator with International Institute for Conflict Prevention & Resolution (CPR), and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, headquartered in London (FCIArb). He is a Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America (LCA).

Felsen’s experience spans a wide variety of public and private projects, including commercial,

federal, airports, roads, residential, hotels and resorts, hospitals and research facilities, and power and utility projects. He has litigated before state and federal courts and national and international arbitration panels. His clients include owners, contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, architects, and sureties.

Additionally, Felsen has experience in bankruptcy matters. When a prominent subcontractor went into bankruptcy, the bankruptcy trustee retained him as special counsel to advise on suretyship and construction-related issues. This bankruptcy was one of the largest in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Virginia in recent years.

Carney's experience includes litigating complex construction matters as well as drafting and reviewing construction contracts, analyzing claims, and closing out projects. He represents clients in state and federal court and in domestic and international arbitrations. Carney has represented suppliers, subcontractors, general contractors, designers, and public and private owners on a wide range of projects, including commercial, residential, federal, airport, road, hotel and resort, hospital and research facility, and power and utility projects.

Butzer started his legal career as a law clerk at the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, and his entire legal career has focused on construction law and government contracts.

Butzer represents a wide range of clients, including project owners, general contractors, subcontractors, sureties, architects, commercial landlords and tenants, and neighbors to construction projects. As part of his government-contracts practice, he has handled, among other things, bid protests, claims and appeals, and prosecution and defense of Miller Act bond claims. His construction-law experience includes litigating claims (including mechanic's lien and bond claims) in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia on matters ranging from simple collection disputes to complex claims.

Ellickson practices in the areas of construction contracts and design professional agreements. He provides his clients with advice on multi-phased projects of significant dollar value, providing advice on complex regulations and laws, reviewing proposals, and negotiating the terms and conditions of contracts. In Washington, D.C., Ellickson provided legal review, drafting and negotiating of construction contracts, and professional design agreements for mixed-use projects in the Georgetown and Tivoli Theater neighborhoods.

Ellickson is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and former senior legal counsel to the AIA. There he was responsible for writing and publishing the institute's 180+ standardized contracts and forms.

Prior to his legal practice, he practiced as an architect and designed and built buildings ranging from a cancer laboratory for Rockefeller University to a subway station for Atlanta's MARTA system.

Featuring



Joseph A. McManus Jr.



Daniel K. Felsen



James P. Carney



David J. Butzer



Richard T. Choi



Wm. Cary Wright

Related Practices

[Construction](#)

Related Industries

[Construction](#)

