



Chris Centore

Partner

Syracuse

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Education

- University at Buffalo School of Law, JD
- Cornell University, BS

Practices & Industries

- Real Estate
- Financial Institutions & Lending
- Energy
- Renewable Energy
- Nuclear Energy

Admitted to Practice

- New York

Biography

Chris is Barclay Damon's Real Estate Practice Area chair and former hiring partner. He primarily concentrates his practice on real estate law and financial transactions, negotiating and handling real estate acquisition and sale transactions on behalf of clients ranging from individuals and small businesses to international corporations.

As counsel to energy and utility clients, Chris advises on a wide array of development, acquisition, sale and site-control matters nationwide, including the acquisition of hydroelectric, nuclear, and co-generation power plants as well as electric- and gas-transmission corridor developments throughout New York State and from New England through the Midwest. In the oil and gas development industry, Chris provided real estate counsel in the largest-ever acquisition of oil and gas rights in New York State. In renewable-energy development and acquisition projects, Chris represents solar, wind, and hydroelectric owners and developers in negotiating, drafting, and obtaining site-control documents such as solar and wind leases and easements as well as examining and resolving title issues.

Working closely with the firm's commercial litigation attorneys, Chris provides support with real estate disputes involving easements and rights of way, riparian rights, adverse possession, and complex title issues. Chris has extensive experience representing landlords and tenants in commercial lease negotiations for retail, office, manufacturing, and shopping-center lease transactions as well as real estate development ground-lease transactions.

As a NY-licensed title insurance agent and examining counsel to several title insurance companies, Chris analyzes and examines real estate titles and routinely handles large, complex title insurance policies. He represents institutional lenders in both real estate-secured and non-real estate-secured commercial financing transactions, including conventional mortgage loans, equipment and borrowing-base secured lines of credit, Small Business

Administration (SBA) guaranteed business loans, letter-of-credit-secured civic facility revenue bond transactions, and construction loans.

Bar Associations

- New York State Bar Association, Real Property Law Section Member and Former “Hot Topics in Real Estate” Statewide and Program Chairs
- Onondaga County Bar Association

Representative Experience

- Served as general outside counsel to a NY-based owner-operator of post-acute health care facilities regarding the \$10 million acquisition of a nursing facility in Brockport, New York, and the acquisition financing, including title matters and restrictions and required NYS Department of Health and Attorney General approvals.
- Served as general outside counsel in financing a transaction that included equity rights to a specialized venture capital group that provides financial assistance to energy-related industries. Relevant issues included real property title, environmental, and intercreditor agreements.
- Served as general outside counsel to a hydroelectric power project owner and developer regarding the \$80 million acquisition of several hydroelectric facilities located on Maine’s Kennebec River. Handled real property title issues, obtaining necessary approvals of the assignment of US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and state regulatory licenses, and labor union issues as well as the pre-closing investigatory process with regard to potential environmental and regulatory issues and post-closing issues with management companies.
- Represented an owner, operator, and developer of hydroelectric power projects in its \$8.1 million purchase of a Virginia hydroelectric facility, including handling the status and necessary assignment of a US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license as well as the pre-closing investigatory process with regard to potential environmental issues and necessary post-closing connections to the electrical grid.
- Represents utility-scale and community-solar developers in connection with the acquisition of site-control and title-issue resolution for projects throughout New York State, Massachusetts, and Minnesota.
- Represents a hydroelectric project owner in the acquisition of over 20 hydroelectric facilities throughout the United States and acts as outside real estate counsel in connection with the nationwide project portfolio operation.

- Acted as NY real estate counsel for two tax equity investors in connection with two wind projects in Western New York.
- Provides counsel to an energy client regarding trespass and encroachment issues surrounding hydroelectric facilities across New York State.
- Represented an energy company in the acquisition of real estate rights and the resolution of title issues in connection with a combined seven-mile natural gas pipeline in Southern Illinois relating to the conversion of a power plant from coal to natural gas-fueled.
- Represents an energy developer in connection with the development of a five-mile natural gas pipeline in Illinois and a 10-mile natural gas pipeline in New York State.
- Represented a developer in a \$12 million construction and MBS permanent financing of a student-housing development, including an IDA straight-lease transaction.
- Served as examining counsel in the issuance of title insurance for a \$25 million ground-lease development of a university bookstore and retail facility with industrial development agency straight lease and condominium development.
- Represented a client in connection with a \$1 billion acquisition of a national retail propane firm, including the review of leases and counsel regarding real estate assets for over 800 properties located in 41 states.
- Assisted a utility client in the acquisition and creation of a protected wetland to satisfy Army Corps and NY Department of Environmental Conservation wetland-mitigation requirements for a transmission-line project.
- Served as real estate counsel in connection with CERCLA contribution action related to a \$300 million remediation of Hudson River contamination, including defenses relating to the title to the riverbed.
- Provided real estate counsel in connection with action to eject over 20 encroaching landowners for a hydroelectric energy developer, including utilizing reservoir flowage to defeat adverse-possession claims asserted by defendants.
- Served as real estate counsel to an energy company in the \$1 billion acquisition of Nine-Mile Nuclear Point Stations One and Two.
- Served as real estate counsel to a power company in the \$2.8 billion acquisition of the Ravenswood Cogeneration Facility in Queens, New York.
- Represented a utility in the acquisition and development of a \$30 million substation project involving an acquisition from Target Corporation and complex site-plan and regulatory approvals.
- Represented an energy company in the acquisition of a \$33 million hydroelectric generation facility in Glens Falls, New York.

- Represented an energy company in an acquisition of real estate rights for a 182-mile expansion of a natural gas pipeline across the Southern Tier of New York.
- Represented an energy company in the site development and acquisition of real estate rights in connection with a 10-mile natural gas pipeline in Western New York in connection with the conversion of a power plant from coal to natural gas-fueled.
- Served as real estate counsel to a purchaser in the largest acquisition of natural-gas lease rights in NYS history, valued at \$3.375 billion and comprising hundreds of leases throughout the Marcellus Shale in New York State and Ohio.
- Counseled a Canadian wind-energy generator in the development of a NY wind lease and related real estate documents.
- Represented a shopping-mall owner in negotiating and drafting retail leases and lease modifications with numerous national and local retail businesses.
- Represented an electronics distributor in the negotiation of a 43,000 square-foot lease for its corporate headquarters and distribution center.
- Represented an office-park developer in the negotiation and drafting of multiple space leases with medical and technology firms.
- Served as examining counsel in the issuance of a policy of title insurance for a \$40 million shopping-center development.
- Represented a letter-of-credit lender in numerous student-housing development projects throughout upstate New York.
- Represented a lead lender in an \$11 million mortgage, term loan, and line-of-credit financing for a water developer, including participation with the NY Business Development Corporation, secured by all assets, including riparian rights.
- Represented a lender in a \$16 million asset-based revolving-credit facility to an aviation company, secured by assets including equipment, vehicles, and aircraft located nationwide.
- Represented the owner of a major Central New York landmark building in regard to its permanent financing.
- Completed environmental and real property due diligence in connection with a series of equity investment transactions in several solar energy facilities in Massachusetts and New York, and as local counsel, advised our client, the investor, of the legal and business risks and prepared permit schedules for closing.

Prior Experience

- Hiscock & Barclay, LLP, Partner

Selected Community Activities

- ARC of Onondaga, Board President and Nominating and Membership, Human Resources, and Bylaws Committees Chair
- Westhill Central School District Educational Foundation, Inc., Board President, Co-Founder, and Board of Directors Member

Selected Honors

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®: Banking and Finance Law, 2025–2026
- ARC of Onondaga, Mary Carol and Robert J. Fisher Founders Award, 2019

Selected Speaking Engagements

- New York State Bar Association Hot Topics in Real Estate, “Recent Developments in Oil and Gas Leasing: The Hydro-Fracking Debate”
- CNA Pro Insurance, “NY Real Estate Transactions: Basic Elements and Legal Malpractice Considerations” CLE
- New York State Bar Association Hot Topics in Real Estate, “Understanding New York’s New Adverse-Possession Statute”
- Zurich National Insurance Company, “NY Real Estate Transactions: Basic Elements and Legal Malpractice Considerations” CLE
- Prudential First Properties, “Legal Issues in Residential Real Estate Transactions”

Selected Media

- New York State Bar Association *Commercial Leasing*, “Real Property Tax Considerations For Landlords and Tenants in Negotiating Leases of Commercial Property”