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FEATURED FXFOWLE JEMB Realty Corporation Guy Geier American Institute of Architects

JEMB develops Downtown Brooklyn office, retail property

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[Kaitlyn Mitchell](#)

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JEMB Realty Corporation, which is developing an office building at One Willoughby Square in Downtown Brooklyn, has tapped **FXFOWLE** as the design architect for the 500,000-square-foot, 34-story mixed-use office and retail building.

And in an unusual move, FXFOWLE will also be the property's anchor tenant. "A lot of creative companies are getting out of the Manhattan corporate mold and moving into something more conducive to a creative environment," said **Guy Geier**, managing partner of FXFOWLE and president of the **American Institute of Architects** New York.

The firm has signed a 40,000-square-foot, 15-year lease for floors seven through nine, with the goal to move in in about four years. The architecture firm will assemble an internal team that aims to complete drawings for the building by the end of 2018, which will include an outdoor terrace space for its offices. Throughout the construction process, the firm will provide test-fits for other potential build-to-suit tenants.

It's unusual for an architect to occupy a building that it has designed, mainly because it is often cost prohibitive, Geier noted. The company also designed Eleven Times Square, 3 Hudson Boulevard, and collaborated with the **Renzo Piano Building Workshop** on the *New York Times* building. "We would love to occupy the buildings that we designed in Manhattan, but the rents don't work out – being in Brooklyn made this possible," Geier added.



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The firm has occupied its Midtown South location at 22 West 19th Street for the past 30 years. “With the kind of lease terms the landlord is getting from new tenants [at our current location], we knew that the rising rents would not be sustainable over the next four years,” said Geier. “The Flatiron district had a high concentration of architecture firms for many years, due to the desirable big loft spaces, but it’s not affordable any longer. Over the past five to ten years, there has been a slow migration of architecture firms downtown, where there are many similar warehouse-like buildings.”

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