

PARTNER

# Joshua Lee Smith

T. 508-926-3464 E. jsmith@bowditch.com

## OVERVIEW

Joshua Lee Smith is a land use and real estate lawyer who focuses on complex commercial real estate matters involving permitting, acquisitions, leasing, environmental compliance and financing. He has successfully permitted a wide variety of projects involving high-density multifamily, public utility infrastructure, higher education, cannabis, renewable energy, large-scale industrial and life science developments.

Josh has helped clients develop properties in numerous communities throughout the Commonwealth. He has been involved in many of the most high-profile economic development projects in Central Massachusetts over the span of nearly two decades.

His clients primarily consist of developers, public and private corporations, public service corporations, colleges and universities and lending institutions. A unique aspect of his practice, which has played a vital role in supporting the public welfare, economic development growth, clean energy goals and overall reliability of electric service to thousands of residents, businesses and institutions, includes his representation of public utility companies in the siting and permitting of bulk power substations, regional high-voltage transmission systems, LNG facilities, solar photovoltaic generation systems and battery energy storage systems. Josh also serves as an expert zoning witness in hearings before the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.

## EXPERIENCE

Among his many projects, Josh has advised on life science incubator and biomanufacturing facility projects in Worcester and the 150,000 sq. ft. medical device and office building development in Westborough.

### Permitting and zoning

- 371-unit apartment complex at site of former historic Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
- 161,881 sq. ft. collegiate residence hall with ground floor retail along a prominent commercial corridor
- Highly-publicized $92M performing arts center
- Numerous transit-oriented developments involving high density multifamily mixed-use projects
- Various adult-use marijuana retail, cultivation and product manufacturing establishments

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- 150,000 sq. ft. office and research facility for an international medical device company
- 139,000 sq. ft. expansion of a collegiate athletic complex
- Various large-scale public utility infrastructure and improvement projects throughout the Commonwealth
- Expert zoning witness for a public service corporation with respect to various matters before the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

### Purchase, sales, leasing and licensing

- Highly-publicized purchase and ground leasing of property and permitting for development of a 36,000 sq. ft. academic center
- Purchase, leasing and development of numerous gasoline station and convenience store sites throughout the Commonwealth for publicly-traded and private operators
- Negotiation of a highly-publicized license for semi-pro hockey team
- Purchase and financing of multi-tenant shopping centers
- Purchase and development of a highly publicized 35,000 sq. ft. retreat center
- Purchase of a former hospital site in a multi-phased, 10-year acquisition involving numerous real estate, environmental, zoning and leasing issues

### Financing and development

- Acquisition, development and financing of the former Worcester County Courthouse property involving a $53M development of 117 residential units
- Financing of a highly-publicized, $33M, 168-room hotel development
- Historic rehabilitation of a 135,000 sq. ft. former newspaper building complex involving New Markets and historic tax credits
- Financing of a highly-publicized $18M hockey rink facility and mixed-use development
- Leasing and development of large-scale solar photovoltaic generation facilities in various communities, including consultation of one of the largest multi-community solar build outs in the state's history, with over 50,000 solar panels

## AFFILIATIONS

- Director, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Board Member, Board of Directors, Worcester Business Development Corporation
- Board Member, Board of Directors, Worcester Regional Research Bureau

## PREVIOUS

- Chairman, Board of Directors of Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Member, Westborough Economic Development Committee
- Board Member, Board of Directors, Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization
- Finance Committee Member, Worcester Art Museum
- Corporator, Greater Worcester Community Foundation

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- Board Member, Board of Directors of Music Worcester, Inc.
- Executive Committee Member, Babson College Real Estate Career Affinity Network
- Member, Asian-American Lawyers Association of Massachusetts
- Member, Massachusetts Bar Association

## HONORS

- Legal Luminaries, *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly* (2026)
- Named to *Worcester Business Journal* Power 100 List (2025 and 2026)
- Named a Go To Lawyer for Commercial Real Estate, *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly* (2023)
- "40 Under Forty," *Worcester Business Journal* (2011)

## ARTICLES & TALKS

### TALKS

- "Unlocking Housing: Adaptive Reuse & Affordability," *Worcester Business Journal* Central Mass. Real Estate Forum, 2026
- NEREJ NYREJ Podcast, 2026
- Central Mass Economic Forecast & Central Mass Real Estate Forum, *Worcester Business Journal*, 2026
- "Building Communities: Multifamily & Mixed-Use Development," Bisnow's Worcester State of the Market Conference, 2024 (Moderator)
- "Affordable Housing Creation in Gateway Cities," Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce Construction & Real Estate Roundtable, 2024
- 8th Annual Woostapreneurs Forum, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, 2023
- The Real Estate Story, *Worcester Business Journal*'s Central MA Life Sciences Forum, 2023
- Annual Economic Development Summit: Multifamily Development and Inclusionary Zoning, Bowditch, 2022 (Moderator)
- The Business of Cannabis: Highs and Lows of a Growing Industry, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce's Game Changers Business Conference & Expo, 2022
- Experts and Resources Panel, Woostapreneurs Forum, 2022
- Super Sale: How to Sell Your Marijuana Business in Massachusetts and Stay Out of Trouble, NECANN, 2022
- The Rise of Boston's Neighborhoods and Importance of Location, Bisnow's Boston State of the Market, 2021
- Investment & Development Along Route 128, 495 and Worcester Corridors and Outlook on COVID-19, Bisnow's Suburban Boston State of the Market Digital Summit, 2020
- Love Your Legislators: Legislative Update Breakfast, Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce, 2020 (Moderator)
- Community Relations: How to Gain Community Support and Secure Your Host Community Agreements, *Worcester Business Journal*'s The Business of Cannabis, 2020 (Moderator)
- Public Transportation, Walkability and Livability, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce's Game Changers Business Conference & Expo, Worcester, MA, 2019

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- Smart City: Smarter Connectivity, Better Quality of Life, Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce's Game Changers Business Conference & Expo, 2018 (Moderator)
- 3rd Annual Economic Development Summit: Regional Economic Development – A Central Mass Partnership, Bowditch, 2017

## MEDIA MENTIONS

- "Real estate forum: Developers see promise, hurdles in Central Mass. growth" (*Worcester Business Journal*)
- "Small changes, big impact: Quiet state budget provisions could reshape housing development" (*Worcester Business Journal)*
- "Budget bill brings seismic changes to state's Zoning Act" (*Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*)
- "Downtown Worcester conversions bring new housing" (*The Worcester Guardian*)
- "New supermarket ready for abandoned Shrewsbury Stop & Shop site" (*Community Advocate*)
- "Talk of the Commonwealth" Radio Show with Hank Stolz (WCRN)
- "Three-story apartment building proposed for Worcester's Millbury Street" (*Worcester Business Journal*)
- *Chamber Exchange: The TV Show* (Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce)
- "Weathering the perfect storm: Worcester's slate of multifamily developments was hit hard in the last year, but a handful of projects were able to break through" (*Worcester Business Journal*)
- "Developers Sit on Empty Lots After Historic Apartment Boom" (*Wall Street Journal*)
- "Menkiti Group outlines vision for Worcester ahead of Denholm Building project" (Spectrum News 1)
- Joshua Lee Smith Featured in "Home Field advantage: Local attorneys smooth the path for developers" in the *Worcester Business Journal*
- "Rehab of old Worcester County Courthouse to start in spring" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Worcester Planning Board OKs plan for 371-unit apartment complex on Mount Carmel Church site" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "NY developer proposes 150k-sq.-ft. warehouse at former Worcester movie theater" (*Worcester Business Journal)*
- "Planning Board OKs plans for 218-unit Shrewsbury Street project" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Holy Cross' $92M Performing Arts Center Gets Planning Board Approval" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "With expansion of MBI's biomed center, state and city say Worcester rises on biotech scene" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "49-unit apartment building OK'd for Sever Street in Worcester" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Worcester apartments to receive $178M renovation, adding 100 new units" (*Worcester Business Journal)*
- "Downtown Worcester apartment development given planning board nod" (*Worcester Business Journal)*
- Joshua Lee Smith moderates Bowditch Economic Development Summit on Multifamily Development and Inclusionary Zoning
- "Here's the beef: Developer plans 9-story building at old Fairway site on Grafton Street" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*

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- "Six-story mixed-use development proposed for long-vacant Madison Street lot in Worcester" (*Worcester Business Journal)*
- Joshua Lee Smith Speaks with *Worcester Telegram* about Two Approved Higher Ed Real Estate Projects
- "Holy Cross plans to raze 4 College Hill buildings, build 2 new dorms" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- Joshua Lee Smith Spoke at Bisnow's "The Rise of Boston's Neighborhoods and Importance of Location" (related article: "Developers Chasing Attractive Live-Work-Play Spaces For Boston's Growing Workforce")
- Joshua Lee Smith Spoke at NECANN's "Super Sale: How to Sell Your Marijuana Business in Massachusetts and Stay Out of Trouble"
- "Resourcefulness sees BV Chamber through the pandemic" (*Blackstone Valley Xpress)*
- "Central Mass. 'Cannabis Capital of the East'" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "North Adams Planning Board OKs marijuana cultivation in former Crane Stationery HQ" (*The Berkshire Eagle)*
- "Marijuana retailer New Dia preparing to open in Worcester" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Suburban Boston Developers: Coronavirus Pandemic Is Time For CRE To 'Exercise Humanity'" (*Bisnow)*
- "Nature's Remedy gets tentative nod for adult-use marijuana in Grafton" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Mass. Biomedical Initiatives expands incubator space, offering startups more room to grow" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "With 2 more marijuana permits Worcester nears self-imposed cap" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Worcester OKs 2 pot shops, on Southbridge St., Millbrook St." (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*
- "Westborough voters approve tax agreement for Olympus Corporation" (*Community Advocate)*
- "Temescal gets special permit to grow recreational pot in Worcester" (*Worcester Telegram & Gazette)*

## BAR ADMISSIONS

- Massachusetts

## EDUCATION

- J.D., *magna cum laude*, Syracuse University College of Law
- B.S., *summa cum laude*, Babson College

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