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Residential Properties Ltd. acquires Libby Kirwin Real Estate; RPL opens 8th office in Newport

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Sally Lapedes, RPL president and CEO, at ribbon cutting ceremony for opening of office at 418 Spring Street - Newport.

Newport, RI Residential Properties Ltd., one of Rhode Island's leading real estate companies, has opened a new office at 418 Spring St. after the acquisition of Libby Kirwin Real Estate. Along with the opening of a new office, RPL has added seven local real estate experts who will operate out of this location, including broker associate Libby Kirwin.

Since opening its first office in 1981, Residential Properties Ltd. has quickly grown to become the

state's largest and most successful independent real estate brokerage. The company was recently included on the 2021 REAL Trends list of the top 500 most successful real estate companies in the entire nation. It now has over 250 agents and a total of eight office locations.

Libby Kirwin Real Estate (LKRE) has been a leading boutique firm in Newport since 2010. Kirwin and her agents have deep roots on Aquidneck Island as well as a stellar reputation. "Libby built a strong and respected business in Newport and was looking to take her company to the next level," said RPL president and CEO, Sally Lapidés. "Residential Properties has been No.1 in Rhode Island residential sales for over a decade, breaking the billion-dollar mark last year. With the addition of Libby Kirwin Real Estate to our over 250 power brokers, RPL will rapidly expand its presence throughout Newport, Portsmouth, Little Compton, and Jamestown."

To begin this new chapter for Residential Properties, we recently sat down for an interview with Libby Kirwin to discuss joining RPL and the range of opportunities in the offing.

What about RPL felt like a good fit for you and LKRE?

"I recognized that my company was at a size and capacity that in order to evolve and stay competitive, it would be important to team up with a larger company that didn't have a presence on Aquidneck Island. Residential Properties was the perfect fit. I was very impressed with Sally's reputation and wanted a woman-run company to be the direction for Libby Kirwin Real Estate."

What were your thoughts about RPL prior to joining the company?

"In all the years that I've been in the business, I've been aware of Sally Lapidés' skills as a leader. As it happens, my husband Kevin Kirby has had business interactions with Sally via the insurance industry at Starkweather & Shepley. Kevin was the one who suggested I contact her."

Why is now the right time for you and your company to make this move?

"Libby Kirwin Real Estate has had up to 15 agents and as few as eight. Once we became a smaller office, I recognized that it was going to be an easier time if we made a transfer. So, the time felt right to join forces."

What does RPL provide that makes it such a desirable company to work for?

"Their infrastructure is certainly important. We work in a competitive business and trying to wear every hat is not sustainable in the long term. To be supported by RPL, with a team that can help you evaluate properties, put together your paperwork, and keep you on track with your business plan is crucial. When I met with Sally and Libby, I could see that their teamwork was something I wanted to be a part of."

Can you tell us about the Spring Street office and why it is a great location for both agents and clients?

"The Spring Street location has been such a terrific spot for LKRE to grow and stay recognizable. It has a lot of different traffic directions going for it, which means a lot of eyeballs. People love the way the building is situated on that gorgeous corner. When I look at the other office spaces RPL occupies, it certainly seems to fit into the repertoire. It's simply a darling, stylish office with great

exposure to potential clients.”

What is your design philosophy or aesthetic orientation?

“I’m a modernist at heart. I tend to design and renovate homes with a modern aesthetic. I love a diamond in the rough and am passionate about great design, which I studied at the Massachusetts College of Art. I’m always inspired by up-and-coming artists. Whether it’s photography or oil paintings, I love the feeling of connection through art. Of all the museums I’ve traveled to, the museum at RISD in Providence is probably one of my favorites because it has small collections of absolutely everything. I look forward to spending more time in Providence and expanding my business outside of Newport.”

How do you inspire your team? / What inspires you?

“I like my agents to concentrate on matchmaking. When you have someone looking for a home, whether it’s a renter, a buyer, or a business entrepreneur looking for the perfect commercial space, the moment they do find it is amazing. You feel you’ve contributed to someone’s future. A property is a place where people are going to grow up and watch their families grow up. So, I inspire my agents by having them visualize where they see a particular buyer.”

What are you most looking forward to by joining RPL?

“I’m looking forward to having more people in my world! I just love having the support of Sally’s team already. It’s great surrounding yourself with positive people, which I’ve been missing over the last couple of years. I’m excited that this is all coming together.”

Meet RPL Newport’s Sales Associates:

Joseph Costa - With a bachelor’s degree in business and sociology from Providence College, Joe hit the ground running and built a successful company by the age of 25, having since served in sales, marketing, and management roles in tech startups and management consulting. He has bought, renovated, and sold 14 luxury homes throughout the East Coast.

Pawler Garrahan - Pawler is an experienced Newport Realtor, having worked in Narragansett as well. Prior to returning to Rhode Island, she gained invaluable professional experience with the CBS Morning News, with Morgan Stanley in institutional sales, and as an executive recruiter.

Brian Govednik - Brian graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Rhode Island, where he was a member of the sailing and skiing teams. He is a lifelong resident of Bristol, giving him an extensive knowledge of the East Bay and its real estate processes.

Sarah Kirwin-Brady - Originally from Aquidneck Island, Sarah began working as office administrator and personal assistant to her cousin Libby in 2010. In 2012, she acquired her license and moved into the role of Realtor at Libby Kirwin Real Estate.

Samantha Tobin - Sam loves coastal living and calling Aquidneck Island home. It was during the purchase of her first home in Newport that she knew she wanted to pursue a career in real estate.

Sam brings her negotiation talents, analytical skills, and understanding of relocation to her clients.

Kathleen Wilson - With a prior 18-year career as a high school counselor, Kathleen decided to embrace challenge and change during the pandemic to become a real estate agent. Her additional 20 years of experience in the restaurant industry and long-term residence in Newport brings to RPL important connections within Rhode Island's communities.

Marisa Ferris - Marisa has been a licensed Realtor for 10 years and is a top-performing agent at Residential Properties. As a native Rhode Islander with extensive local knowledge, her professionalism and tenacity consistently guide her clients toward success.

Libby Kirwin, Broker Associate - Born and raised in Newport, Libby has successfully navigated the real estate industry for over twenty eight years by staying ahead of the curve. In addition, she is the Lead Design Consultant at Libby Kirwin Renovation & Design Consulting, established in 2012.

Residential Properties Ltd. is the largest privately held real estate company in Rhode Island and has been serving sellers and buyers of distinctive properties since 1981 through service, innovation, and sheer hard work. The Company, with eight local offices in Barrington, Cumberland, East Greenwich, Narragansett, Newport, Providence, the West Side (PVD), and Westport, Mass., services all of Rhode Island, the Connecticut shoreline, and southeastern and central Massachusetts.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540