

# Former Grove coffee shop, retail space gets makeover from marketing firm (Photos)

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A marketing firm has moved its offices to a historic building in Forest Park Southeast that previously housed a coffee shop and vintage retailer.

Digital marketing and communications company Kaleidoscope Management Group, or KMG, has finished renovations on 4180 Manchester Ave. The building, once known as the J.C. Kuhnert Commercial Building, was constructed in 1927 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was on the verge of being **torn down** when Rise coffee shop renovated it in 2013, before moving nearby in 2016 and then closing earlier this year. Since then, the two-story building has been occupied by a **kitchen goods retailer** and then **May's Place**, a vintage clothing store that in September **moved** to a pop-up location in the City Foundry development in Midtown.



KALEIDOSCOPE MANAGEMENT GROUP

One of the goals of the marketing firm's new office was to ensure collaboration between employees by giving them places to gather.

A separate LLC created by KMG's founder and CEO, **Cabanne Howard**, acquired the Kuhnert building in August for \$285,000. KMG previously occupied varying amounts of office space over the past six years in the Cortex Innovation District. The firm provides marketing services for clients, including many in the commercial real estate industry. Notable clients include Propper Construction Services, the St. Charles-based developer that earlier this year **started construction** on a \$200 million redevelopment of the former MetLife campus in south St. Louis County.

The 1,400-square-foot structure on Manchester Avenue combines dedicated space for KMG's offices on the second floor with a new ground-floor retail tenant, Chakra Wellness, occupying the first floor starting in January, KMG said. Chakra, also owned by Howard, is to offer holistic health care providers space for one or two days a week on a rotating basis.

***See photos of the new office and retail space in the gallery below.***

Chakra Wellness will also offer marketing and booking software services, along with workshops and other benefits for providers, Howard said. The online booking system goes live Feb. 1.

KMG worked with Space Architecture + Design on \$50,000 in renovations to customize the space and add a bathroom and kitchenette, while emphasizing the building's historic features, natural light, exposed ceilings and hardwood floors, Howard said. The site has room to expand if business growth warrants it, she said.

At Cortex, KMG started with coworking space, moved to a 2,000-square-foot office, then had less space during the pandemic, Howard said. KMG will keep a coworking membership at Cortex for overflow office space and extra conference rooms.

<https://goo.gl/maps/C88oAi381Fg3RaN2A>

The company doesn't require as much office space as in the past because employees utilize a hybrid work schedule. But the new space was designed with collaboration in mind.

"I love old architecture, and the open floor plan on the second floor was something we could really put our own mark on," Howard said. "It just has amazing bones, exposed brick beams, ceilings, and hardwood floors, natural light galore, and our team agrees. I've heard all of them say it's so conducive to collaboration. It feels like it inspires creativity, and being a marketing firm that's just such a nice feeling. We wanted to do the office design where it's almost like when you go to a restaurant and you've got that communal table for 12."

KMG wanted to stay in the city, and the site offered dedicated parking, outdoor space and proximity to restaurants.

"It felt like the state of The Grove made it a perfect location for us," Howard said.

May's Place had already decided to **relocate** from the building to City Foundry and then expand at a permanent home elsewhere ahead of the building's sale, according to a news release.

"We are grateful to our customers and very excited about our next chapter. It's a joy to see this space – one that has meant so much to us and been so critical to the growth of May's Place – go to a like-minded, female led company," said **Katie May**, owner and founder of May's Place, in the release.

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