

JOHN W. FARRELL

Principal
(703) 934-1182



Bio

John W. Farrell has over 40 years of experience before county supervisors, planning commissions and boards of zoning appeals in matters of real estate development, land use and environmental regulation, including rezoning, site plan and wetlands approvals. He has represented landowners and developers in innumerable land use and environmental cases and controversies including comprehensive planning, infrastructure financing and bonding and microbial, asbestos and lead contamination issues. Among those John has represented are the applicant in the largest rezoning ever filed in Northern Virginia which included 26 million square feet of nonresidential space and 2,266 dwelling units. He also represented dozens of plaintiff/landowners in the Fairfax County C & I and both Loudoun County down-zoning litigations.

John's experience on behalf of lenders and borrowers in transactions involving real estate acquisition, construction and development loans is extensive. This representation has included the acquisition, development, leasing and sale of mixed-use communities, condominium and residential

projects, commercial and retail properties, the sale of REO, negotiation of workouts, and foreclosure of non-performing loans.

As the former General Counsel for the Fairfax County Democrats (“FCDC”), John has extensive expertise in Virginia election law, having represented FCDC during the 2013 Attorney General’s recount and in litigation versus the local and State Electoral Boards. During 2017 he represented one of the candidates in the House recounts and served as General Counsel to the successful Lieutenant Governor’s campaign.

John’s environmental law and regulatory background is considerable and includes matters involving lender liability, CERCLA, RCRA, Clean Air, asbestos, lead, underground storage tanks, wetlands regulation and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

Practice Areas

- Business and Information Technology
- Real Estate
- Real Estate Litigation

Education

- A.B., *cum laude*, Boston College, 1974
- J.D., New England School of Law, 1977

Admissions

- Virginia
- Massachusetts

Honors

John has been recognized by Virginia Business Magazine, based on a statewide survey of practicing attorneys, as one of the best attorneys in Virginia in Real Estate/Land Use Law and in Environmental Law, and in “Virginia Super Lawyers” for Land Use Law.

Activities

John is the former chairman of the Planning Board of Town of Walpole, Massachusetts. He is also the past chairman of the Land Use, Environment and Transportation Committee of the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and served on the State Legislative Committee of the Home Builders Association of Virginia.

A 35-year resident of Reston, Virginia, John is a past national President of Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation and a past President of the Fairfax County Girls Softball League. He also served on the Building Committee of Christ the Redeemer Church of Sterling, Virginia. He is a graduate of Boston College and New England School of Law and is admitted to practice in Virginia and Massachusetts.

Publications

John is a lecturer/instructor in real estate, land use, and environmental law for the Virginia Law Foundation, the Northern Virginia Building Industry Association, and the Engineers & Surveyors Institute.

His publications include:

- [Selling An Existing Condominium Just Got Easier](#), *The Fee Simple* (The Journal of the Real Estate Section of the Virginia Bar, Spring 2020)
- [How to Sell an Existing Commercial Condo Project](#), *The Fee Simple* (The Journal of the Real Estate Section of the Virginia Bar, Spring 2019)
- [Real Estate Transactions in Virginia: Planning and Zoning](#) (2019)
- [Virginia Subdivision and Site Plans Law](#) (2011)
- [New Zoning Cases “Reconcilable,”](#) Guest Column, Virginia Lawyer’s Weekly (May 7, 2012)
- [The Changing Landscape of Proffers](#) (2015)
- [The Legal Implications of Obergefell v. Hodges](#), co-authored with Douglas Sanderson (2015)