



Evan J. Seeman

Partner

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Hartford — 860.275.8247

Evan J. Seeman concentrates his practice in land use and zoning, real property litigation, and municipal law. Evan offers his clients – including developers, corporations, landowners, municipalities, and advocacy groups – strategic counsel on a broad range of often-complex real estate and land use matters. He works directly with planning professionals to help bring a project across the finish line. Evan is a member of our firm's Real Estate + Development group.

Land Use – Zoning

Evan assists clients in navigating local, state and federal regulatory requirements for real estate development, helping them secure the necessary permits and approvals. He leads clients in securing zoning map and text amendments, special permits, site plan and subdivision approvals, variances, and wetlands permits. Evan works directly with planning professionals, including certified planners, civil engineers, architects, scientists, and appraisers. He routinely appears before local planning, zoning, and wetlands agencies. Evan utilizes his experience as a past Chair of the Planning & Law Division of the American Planning Association as well as his service on the Executive Board of the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association to undertake projects with a collaborative approach and see them through to completion.

Evan has represented clients in the permitting and development of industrial, manufacturing, commercial, residential, social service, philanthropic, and retail facilities. He obtained special permit approval for a cannabis cultivation and manufacturing operation in Hartford. The project involved the adaptive reuse of an existing 100,000-plus square foot former warehouse facility. Evan recently represented landowners in an application regarding the proposed redevelopment of waterfront property as an outdoor restaurant and beer garden along the Connecticut River. Evan also counsels clients on ways to increase the marketability of property and helps obtain rezoning and text amendment approval to accomplish this goal. He recently obtained text amendment approval to modify a community's outdated and restrictive business park regulations to facilitate development of approximately 300 acres of vacant land.

Evan also conducts land use due diligence for property acquisitions. He performed such service on behalf of a corporation that acquired property in Fairfield County to be developed with two residential buildings of more than 400 units.

Real Property Litigation

Evan has been involved in dozens of administrative appeals. He successfully argued before the Connecticut Appellate Court a zoning appeal involving a planning and zoning commission's issuance of a special permit to a Greenwich, Connecticut food pantry serving those less fortunate. He advised a planning and zoning commission in Hartford County and subsequently represented them in litigation over an affordable housing application. Evan also successfully argued in Superior Court on behalf of the fourth oldest lighthouse in the United States to permit public tours as a legally permitted non-conforming use. He represented an applicant in reaching a favorable resolution in a wetlands appeal regarding a proposal to provide student housing for a university. He also obtained dismissal of a zoning appeal challenging the re-zoning and special permit approved for youth baseball fields.

Evan handles many other real property disputes. He obtained judgment on behalf of a pharmaceutical client in a quiet title case defending a restrictive covenant that was challenged as an unfair restraint on trade. He is currently representing a property owner in Greenwich in a quiet title action to permit the development of property with affordable housing. Evan also represented a municipality and obtained the dismissal of an injunction action brought by neighboring property owners who contested municipal approval of a 130,000-square-foot ground mounted solar array system to generate energy for a local elementary school.

Evan's experience includes representing clients in cases involving inverse condemnation, easements, restrictive covenants, First Amendment and equal protection issues, landlord/tenant disputes, and real property tax appeals. Evan also represents property owners in eminent domain matters, challenging both the condemning authority's right to take property and the authority's compensation for the property. He represented a landowner whose plans for a mixed-use development were thwarted when part of his land was condemned by a state agency. Evan was part of a team that tried the case and obtained nearly double the amount of damages assessed by the agency (almost \$400,000 more in damages). He also has experience in advising condemning authorities in the eminent domain process.

Religious Land Use Litigation

Evan defends municipalities nationwide in cases involving the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). He advises municipalities on religious land use issues by:

- Revising municipal zoning codes to comply with RLUIPA
- Counseling municipal land use agencies during the zoning application process to avoid or mitigate potential liability
- Defending municipalities in RLUIPA litigation in federal court

Evan has been involved in RLUIPA cases across the country concerning the permitting of a mosque, a rabbinical college, cemetery, and other religious uses. He counseled a Connecticut planning and zoning commission in real-time during the public hearing process to review a special permit application for a religious conference center. He also counseled a small community in the western U.S. regarding a zoning application for a religious ritual bath. Evan often speaks and writes about religious land use issues and contributes to the firm's widely- acclaimed RLUIPA Defense blog.

Before joining the firm, Evan clerked for the Honorable F. Herbert Gruendel of the Connecticut Appellate Court.

Services

- Coastal Resources + Sea Level Rise
- Real Estate + Development
- Administrative Law
- Land Use
- Land Use Litigation
- Regulatory Counseling
- Administrative Appeals
- Development Permitting
- Landlord + Tenant Leasing
- Religious Land Use + Institutionalized Persons Act

Industries

- Real Estate Developers + Owners

Education

- University of Connecticut School of Law (Juris Doctor)
 - Connecticut Law Review, CONNtemplations Editor
- Trinity College (Bachelors, *with honors*)
 - B.A., Russian Studies
 - President's Fellow in the Department of Modern Languages and Literature

Admissions

- State of Connecticut
- U.S. Court of Appeals, 2nd Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Connecticut

Recognitions

Selected as a Rising Star to the Connecticut *Super Lawyers* list from 2013 to 2023

Robinson+Cole Pro Bono Service Award Recipient, 2014

Connecticut Law Tribune, recognized in 2016 New Leaders in the Law Yearbook

Named to the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) First 100 Plus Class of 2019 for demonstrating leadership and commitment to improving the lives of domestic violence survivors throughout Connecticut

Leadership + Memberships

American Planning Association

Amicus Curie Committee (2026)
 Immediate Past Chair of Planning and Law Division (2021)
 Chair of Planning and Law Division (2019 - 2020)
 CM Law Credit Task Force (2020)
 Chair, Law Content Review Committee (2019 - 2020)
 Case Law Digest Advisory Committee of Planning & Law Division (2019 - Present)
 Chair-Elect of Planning and Law Division (2017 - 2018)
 Secretary/Treasurer of Planning and Law Division (2014 - 2016)
 Education & Outreach Committee of Planning and Law Division (2012 - 2014)

American Planning Association, Connecticut Chapter

Member, Executive Board (2021 - present)
 Co-Chair, Program Committee (2021 - present)
 Government Affairs Committee (2016 - present)

Connecticut Bar Association

Planning & Zoning Section (2011 - Present)
 Planning & Zoning Section, Co-chair (2024-2026)
 Planning & Zoning Section, Secretary (2021 - Present)
 Planning & Zoning Section, Legislative Liaison (2020 - 2021)
 Planning & Zoning Section, Executive Committee (2019 - 2021)
 Young Lawyers Section, Chair of Planning & Zoning Committee (2014 - 2015)
 Young Lawyers Section, Chair of Municipal Law Committee (2012 - 2014)
 Young Lawyers Section, Executive Committee (2012 - 2015)

Connecticut Bar Foundation James W. Cooper Fellow

American Bar Association

Section of State and Local Government Law (2011 - present)

Owners' Counsel of America

Affiliate Member (2018 - 2019)

Oliver Ellsworth American Inn of Court

Barrister (2012 - 2015)

Camp Courant

Chair, Development Committee

Board of Directors

Former Advisory Board

University of Connecticut School of Law

Former Alumni Mentor

Children's Law Center of Connecticut, Inc.