

Howard D. Geneslaw

Partner

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Industries

Manufacturing

Consumable Goods

Energy

Finance

Renewables

Retail & Shopping Center Finance

Practice Areas

Real Estate

Land Use & Zoning

Real Estate & Land Use Litigation

Shopping Center & Retail Development

Solutions

Data Centers

Bar Memberships

New Jersey

Connecticut

New York

Pennsylvania

Howard – a licensed Professional Planner in New Jersey, member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), and a former consultant to municipal planning boards – relies on his focused industry training and experience to inform his comprehensive regional real estate development practice. Helping clients to expand their markets and establish significant presence throughout the region, he secures permits and approvals for expansions and new construction on behalf of, among many other clients, supermarkets, fast food restaurants, convenience stores, other retail chains, self-storage facilities, warehouses, and industrial and light industrial facilities, as well as financial institutions and real estate developers. He also handles liquor license issues for a variety of clients.

Howard focuses on development, redevelopment, zoning, land use planning, and related permitting issues, as well as liquor licensing and alcoholic beverage control issues, in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. He served on the Board of Directors of the Land Use Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association (holding the position of Director for five years, after which he held the position of Secretary for the 2014-15 year, Vice Chair for the 2015-16 year, and Chair for the 2016-17 year) and has mediated various disputes as a court-appointed mediator.

Additionally, Howard is Co-Chair of the Retail & Shopping Center Finance sub-team.

Other Info About Howard

Experience

Applications for Development

Represented owners and developers of traditional warehouses and last-mile delivery warehouses in obtaining approvals for new facilities and modifications to existing facilities

Represented a property owner in securing approvals for a change of use of an existing office building to medical office use

Represented a house of worship in securing approval for a facility renovation and expansion, and defended the appeal of the approval in the trial court and subsequently in an appellate court

Represented a regional supermarket chain in applications for zoning and development approvals at multiple locations in New Jersey and New York

Represented anchor tenant in shopping center opposing development of a pad site which would have an adverse impact on parking throughout the center

Represented a chain of food stores, with fuel sales and car washes, in applications for zoning and development approvals at multiple locations in the Lower Hudson Valley of New York

Represented various national restaurant chains and retailers in performing zoning reviews and prosecuting numerous applications for zoning and development approvals at numerous locations in New Jersey, New York and Connecticut

Represented developer in application for zoning and development approvals for national pharmacy

Represented hospital in obtaining zoning and development approvals for cardiac catheterization facility and parking facilities

Represented national lawn care company in applications for approval of regional warehouse facilities

Redevelopment

For a municipality, negotiated redevelopment agreements for the following redevelopment projects:

- Public-private development involving a public park, amphitheater, restaurant, and a 21,000 square foot office building
- Private project involving 134 residential units and 25,500 square feet of commercial space
- Private project involving 34,500 square feet of retail space
- Private project involving 5 million square feet of warehouse space

For private developers, provided counseling and representation in connection with the following projects:

- Represented property owner in securing significant amendments to redevelopment plan, becoming designated as redeveloper, negotiating comprehensive redevelopment agreement, and securing development approvals for a project on a 100+ acre site
- Represented redeveloper in negotiating redevelopment agreement, amending redevelopment plan and securing development approvals for a planned retail, commercial and residential center consisting of 8 million square feet
- Represented national restaurant chain in securing development approvals for construction of new restaurant in a redevelopment area
- Represented a developer of affordable housing in connection with rehabilitation for affordable housing units of a historic building in an urban center
- Represented consortium of universities in connection with redevelopment in an urban area for science-related uses
- Represented major office developer in connection with the development of a nearly 1 million square foot office complex within a redevelopment area and which was sponsored by a bi-state agency

- Represented a designated redeveloper in negotiating redevelopment agreement and in securing all development approvals for construction of a 43,000 square foot downtown retail center and 475-space parking garage
- Represented a subdeveloper in connection with zoning and other development issues relating to construction of a 300-unit luxury rental apartment building in the New Jersey Meadowlands
- Represented master developer in negotiating redevelopment agreements with subdevelopers for retail waterfront redevelopment project
- Represented manufacturer as designated redeveloper in negotiating redevelopment agreement and securing development approvals for new corporate headquarters building

For objectors, represented a national restaurant chain in objecting to a proposed "area in need of redevelopment" designation

Litigation

Represented property owners and other aggrieved parties in challenging "area in need of rehabilitation" and "area in need of redevelopment" designations, as well as the adoption of redevelopment plans and the designation of redevelopers, by several municipalities in New Jersey

Represented a municipality in New York in an appeal of a zoning amendment by a neighboring municipality in New Jersey

Represented the owner of a retail property in New Jersey in appealing a zone change which would have allowed a substantial retail project nearby

Represented successful applicant to Planning Board in an appeal to rescind certain conditions of approval

Represented property owner in an Article 78 proceeding concerning a zoning amendment, which was enacted after the client's subdivision had been pending for several years, that would have substantially reduced the number of lots the client could develop

Represented property owner in an Article 78 proceeding challenging Planning Board's refusal to endorse site plan following the grant of site plan approval following prior litigation and settlement

Represented retail and restaurant tenants in trial and appellate court and in arbitration proceedings concerning lease disputes involving signage, consent rights, and use covenants

Represented country club in successfully defending an appeal of development approvals by objectors

Represented a national restaurant chain in appealing the denial of a use variance, and in the appeal of development approvals by a business competitor

Represented niche retailer in obtaining reversal of site plan denial

Represented national restaurant franchisee in obtaining reversal of approval granted to a business competitor

Represented shareholder in dispute with homeowner's association concerning development that would result in loss of view

Represented grocery retailer in various weights and measures matters in municipal courts in New Jersey

Due Diligence Investigations

Represented a national REIT in performing zoning due diligence preceding the acquisition of a portfolio consisting of several million square feet of office space in two municipalities in central New Jersey

Represented an affiliate of a major insurance company in performing zoning due diligence preceding the acquisition of an ownership interest in a regional shopping mall in northern New Jersey, one of the largest in the United States

Represented regional supermarket chain in performing zoning and permitting due diligence investigations in New Jersey and New York precedent to the acquisition of multiple existing supermarkets from another operator

Represented an international energy conglomerate in performing zoning due diligence relating to the acquisition of multiple electric generating facilities and substations in a dozen municipalities

Represented a major trucking company in performing zoning due diligence precedent to the acquisition of a warehouse in Queens, New York

Represented a major international logistics company in performing due diligence precedent to the acquisition of a distribution center in western New Jersey

Represented a major hotel chain in performing due diligence precedent to acquisition of an ownership interest in an existing hotel in northern New Jersey

Represented a regional property management company in performing due diligence precedent to acquisition of a theater and strip center in northern New Jersey

Liquor Licensing and Alcoholic Beverage Control

Represented retail licensees in New Jersey in annual license renewals, place-to-place and person-to-person transfers, obtaining off-premises records storage permits and minor employment permits, and seeking waivers from certain disclosure requirements

Performed due diligence for a client in the acquisition by assignment of leases of several supermarkets in New York which currently hold beer and wine product licenses, and assisted the client in obtaining its own licenses for use in those stores

Represented a prospective licensee in securing amendment of a local ordinance prohibiting the issuance of any plenary retail distribution licenses in a New Jersey municipality, which was contested by the local holders of plenary retail consumption licenses, so as to allow the issuance at auction of two distribution licenses

Represented a prospective licensee in obtaining an on-premises full liquor license for a restaurant in New York City, including assisting the client with determining the ownership and management structure in accordance with requirements of the alcoholic

beverage laws, defining the parameters of the licensed premises, and drafting applications to and making appearances appearances before the State Liquor Authority and the applicable Community Board

Advised a client in New York concerning local hours of operation limitations and their enforceability on a licensed establishment

Represented a client in Connecticut in obtaining a restaurant permit for operation of a café within a retail store which will serve wine and beer

Represented a client in challenging the person-to-person and place-to-place transfer of a plenary retail consumption license to a neighboring business, initially in the Superior Court of New Jersey and subsequently at the Office of Administrative Law, involving a number of alleged notice and other procedural defects

Represented a retail licensee in New Jersey in responding to a Notice to Produce from the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, and in negotiating a monetary compromise in lieu of license suspension to resolve the resulting enforcement proceedings relative to alleged recordkeeping violations and alleged improper wine tastings

Represented a retail client in drafting state legislation to permit supermarkets in New Jersey to purchase additional plenary retail consumption licenses

Education

Columbia Law School, J.D., 1994

- Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar
- Winner of the James A. Coon Writing Contest, Municipal Law Section, New York State Bar Association

Rutgers University, M.C.R.P., City and Regional Planning, 1995

Washington University, St. Louis, B.A., Political Science, *cum laude* 1989

Licensed Professional Planner, New Jersey

American Institute of Certified Planners

Courts

United States District Court for the District of New Jersey

United States District Court for the District of Connecticut

United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Supreme Court of the United States

Recognition

Listed in *Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business,* Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use

Recognized by Best Lawyers®, 2026-2027 Editions: Land Use and Zoning Law; Litigation – Land Use and Zoning; Real Estate Law

Recognized by Best Lawyers®: "Lawyer of the Year," Real Estate Law; and Litigation – Land Use and Zoning in Newark, NJ (2020, 2022 and 2025 Editions)

Included on the *New Jersey Super Lawyers* list, Land Use/Zoning

Professional Affiliations

New Jersey State Bar Association

- Director, Land Use Law Section, 2009-2014
- Secretary, Land Use Law Section, 2014-2015
- Vice Chair, Land Use Law Section, 2015-2016
- Chair, Land Use Law Section, 2016-2017

Supreme Court of New Jersey District Ethics Committee:

- Essex County V-B Investigator, 2008-2011
- Essex County V-A Investigator, 2024-Present

American Bar Association

New York State Bar Association

Connecticut Bar Association

American Planning Association

New Jersey Planning Officials

Rockland Municipal Planning Federation

New York Planning Federation

International Council of Shopping Centers

New Jersey Brewers Association

National Association of Licensing & Compliance Professionals (NALCP)

Featured Articles

The Briefing | Commercial Development Industry

New Jersey Fast-Tracks Permitting for New EV Charging Infrastructure at Existing Developments

Reminder to Retail and Wholesale Alcoholic Beverage Licensees: Annual TTB Filing Due July 1, 2026

Court Annuls New York State's Wetlands Regulations

Reminder to Alcoholic Beverage Licensees: Annual TTB Filing Due July 1, 2024

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