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2019 Ones to Watch: Brendan Schmitt, Herrick, Feinstein LLP

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Name: Brendan Schmitt

Title: Associate

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Real estate organizations: NYCLA – Co-Chair of the Construction Committee

What do you consider to be your greatest success in the past 12 months?

This year we made a push to integrate the construction and development services within Herrick's real estate group into work from clients who originate in our land use group. We saw an opportunity to assist clients through all phases of the building process, beginning prior to acquisition, on a diverse range of matters, including the negotiation and drafting of contracts between owners, developers, architects and construction professionals; risk management and construction insurance issues; and the drafting, negotiation and enforcement of construction license agreements involving neighboring properties. It's been exciting to organically grow the business and help solve clients' challenges.

Who or what do you attribute to your success?

Putting myself in the shoes of my clients in all aspects of my work. That starts with understanding the client's business and goals, and it continues through the design of creative strategies and implementation of efficient solutions with an eye towards the client's bigger picture. Throughout any engagement, that means counseling through the lens of cost-benefit analysis while taking account of the relative risks and rewards, just as my clients would. With the benefit of that perspective, I am able to serve as not only counsel to my clients, but also as an advisor to their business.

?What advice can you offer to someone who is just getting started in your industry?

First, always provide a high value proposition to those relying on your services; the benefits to your client from your work must exceed the costs of your services such that you are delivering value to a client's bottom line. Second, do not be afraid to rely on good judgment in the absence of a clear answer. Often times the obvious or good solution does not exist by the time a client comes to you, so be prepared to evaluate the situation as it presents itself to you in order to make a well-reasoned and fully considered recommendation.

