



## **2021 Ones to Watch: John Egnatios-Beene, Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP**

September 21, 2021 - Spotlights

Name: John Egnatios-Beene

Title: Special Counsel

Company Name: Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP

Real estate associations or organizations that you are currently a member of: Zoning and Design Committee, Real Estate Board of New York

What recent project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

I am most proud of our work for Madison Realty Capital (MRC) in connection with the rezoning and redevelopment of 69-02 Queens Blvd. in Woodside. Upon completion, the project will contribute necessary affordable housing and a new public school to the Elmhurst and Woodside communities. It was the first major project I began working on when I joined Stroock in 2015. At that point, we were helping MRC acquire the various parcels that would become the development site—and we're continuing to represent MRC as it finances the construction and prepares condominium documents.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

My parents were recently going through another one of their periodic purges (they saved everything my sisters and I drew or made and every record of our accomplishments, no matter how small), and my mom texted me a photo of a timeline I created of “my future” when I was in sixth grade. It had two paths: (1) a professional baseball or football player (specifically, a quarterback) and (2) a lawyer. So while I'm still holding out hope that I'll get that tryout with the Atlanta Braves (I'm only 41!), I guess you can say I got my second choice, which isn't half bad.

Who was/is your mentor and how did s/he influence/help you in your career?

I've had the good fortune of having a series of mentors throughout my career. When I began my career with the Department of Buildings, my mentors were Felicia Miller, Mona Sehgal, and Phyllis Arnold. They trained me in fundamental concepts of administrative law and New York City zoning and land use. When I joined the Board of Standards and Appeals as a deputy counsel, my mentors were Becca Kelly and Meenakshi Srinivasan. They helped me understand how to mitigate risk, write narrowly and precisely, and, above all, protect the interests of the client, (which at that point was the City of New York). Later, as general counsel, my mentor was Margery Perlmutter. Margery's unique talents and experiences (architect by training, Landmarks Preservation commissioner, and

partner at a major NYC law firm) inspired me to think more critically about the role of regulators and elected officials in land use regulation. At Stroock, my primary mentors are Ross Moskowitz and Karen Scanna. Ross scarcely needs an introduction from me. He's taught me nearly everything I know about the private practice of land use law and he's done it with grace, humility, and humor. Karen, a towering figure in her own right in New York real estate, has been instrumental in my development of a transactional real estate practice.

Top three things on your bucket list:

I've never really thought about a bucket list. I already feel so fortunate – wonderful family life, a job I really enjoy, a nice standard of living, and good health. I guess I'd love to throw out the first pitch on Opening Day – that would be one. I'd like to see the Wonders of the Ancient World – the Pyramids, the Great Wall, etc. I guess that's number two. And three would be to live long enough to meet my great grandchildren, if I'm lucky enough to have them.

Favorite quote:

"The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." -MLK, Jr.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540