



Senior Counsel | Providence, RI

Joelle C. Rocha

📞 401.274.7200 📠 401.751.0604 ✉️ jrocha@apslaw.com

Overview

Joelle focuses her practice on real estate development, land use and real estate litigation. She represents private developers in residential, commercial, mixed use and solar projects before municipal and state boards and agencies. Her representations also include property owners and developers in litigation related to site control, breach of contract and litigation against municipalities, including numerous cases of first impression.

She has successfully litigated several class actions against municipalities regarding illegal and excessive impact fees and building permit fees and has recovered litigation costs for her clients. She has argued before the Rhode Island Supreme Court in matters involving challenges to local ordinances, unlawful state and local actions and recovery of attorneys' fees.

In 2023, Joelle was hired by the Speaker of the House of Rhode Island to work with him and his policy team to draft housing packages resulting in the first major changes to land use law in three decades. She was retained by the Speaker for this same role in 2024 and 2025.

Joelle is a former Assistant to the Solicitor for the towns of Warren, RI, and Lincoln, RI.

Credentials

Practices

- [Real Estate](#)
- [Litigation](#)
- [Land Use](#)

Education

- Roger Williams University School of Law, J.D.
- University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, B.A., *summa cum laude*

Admissions

- Rhode Island
- Massachusetts

- U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts
- U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island
- U.S. Supreme Court

Honors

- Best Lawyers' 2026 Lawyer of the Year, Litigation – Land Use and Zoning, Providence.
- Listed in *Chambers USA*, Litigation: General Commercial, Rhode Island, 2025
- Professional Excellence in the Law, Environmental and Land Use, *Rhode Island Monthly* 2019 – 2026.
- Recognized by *Best Lawyers in America*, Commercial Litigation, Land Use and Zoning Law, Litigation – Construction, Litigation – Land Use and Zoning, Litigation – Real Estate, Providence, 2022-Present
- Rhode Island Bar Association, Fellow
- Garnered the Rhode Island Bar Association Lauren E. Jones, Esq. Writing Award for co-authoring the *Rhode Island Bar Journal* article “Seismic Changes to RI’s Land Use Laws: What You Need to Know,” 2024
- Named a “Rising Star” by *Super Lawyers*, General Litigation, Providence, 2011
- Named among “Forty Under 40” by *Providence Business News*
- Garnered “Excellence in the Law” distinction and the “Outstanding Women in Business” award from *Rhode Island Monthly*

Professional Affiliations

- Board Member, Roger Williams University School of Law
- Board Member, Providence Park Network