

Five Questions With: Hamza Chaudary

By **Marc Larocque**

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HAMZA CHAUDARY is a former real estate analyst who now works as an attorney focusing on land use and real estate for Adler Pollock & Sheehan PC in Providence. / COURTESY HAMZA CHAUDARY

Hamza Chaudary is a real estate analyst turned business, land use and real estate attorney who is now both a shareholder and lawyer for Providence-based Adler Pollock & Sheehan PC. Chaudary has litigated land use and zoning matters in R.I. Superior Court and R.I. Supreme Court. He said he uses his past real estate experience to fight for clients in municipal tax appeal cases.

Chaudary, who earned his law degree from Washington and Lee School of Law and previously served as a real estate analyst for a commercial real estate firm appraising property across Rhode Island and Massachusetts, also once mediated a controversial case involving rival groups battling for the right to hold the Newport Marathon.

PBN: What kind of clients have you represented recently in the field of real estate litigation, what kind of conflicts are they facing that require a lawyer like yourself and how have you been able to help them?

CHAUDARY: I regularly represent companies seeking to develop or redevelop their property in order to expand their business. However, often times direct competitors of our clients object to the development to avoid having to compete with a new business. I have successfully defended several clients seeking to expand their business over the objections of competitors, one of which was decided as a matter of first impression by the Rhode Island Superior Court.

These cases are of extreme importance to our clients because of the substantial investment of time and money required to obtain the necessary permits and defend those permits in litigation. These cases are also important because real estate development is critical to spur the state's economy.

PBN: What are you most proud of regarding the results from real estate litigation you handle here in Rhode Island?

CHAUDARY: I am most proud of assisting clients to maximize and realize the full potential of their properties, as well as to protect and enforce their rights as landowners. These cases range from high-end commercial disputes to residential disagreements between neighbors. Moreover, I assist my clients with real property tax appeals to ensure their property is taxed appropriately by the municipality.

PBN: How did you make the transition from a background as a real estate analyst to become a lawyer? What was your experience like in real estate and how does your background help you in your current role?

CHAUDARY: I always had an interest in real estate and had the opportunity to work as a real estate analyst drafting real estate appraisals before attending law school. My background in real estate has been very helpful in serving my clients. I am able to analyze real property to determine whether it has development potential, identify potential obstacles and challenges, critically review appraisals to determine if the appropriate methodology was utilized and assist clients in developing a strategy to meet their goals.

PBN: In 2015, you were appointed as a special master by the R.I. Superior Court to oversee litigation related to the Newport Marathon. How did that case turn out and what was that experience like?

CHAUDARY: The Newport Marathon is an annual event that is attended by thousands of people from across the country and world. The Newport Marathon is important to runners because it serves as a qualifier for the Boston Marathon. The litigation involved rival companies who were competing for the rights to host the Newport Marathon and involved substantial sums of money that had been prepaid by the runners.

I mediated between the parties, ruled on disputes within the litigation and implemented a strategy to resolve the litigation, which allowed the Newport Marathon to be hosted by one of the litigants and another race in Narragansett to be hosted by the other. The runners were able to choose which race to run. Both races were very successful.

PBN: You've represented clients who speak other languages or don't speak perfect English. Can you tell us about your background as a first-generation American and what kind of pride you get out of helping those business owners who are newcomers to this country and what's that like?

CHAUDARY: As a first-generation American, I am particularly proud to represent a large number of immigrant business owners in Rhode Island. Oftentimes immigrant business owners are not well-versed in navigating the regulatory process required to successfully obtain the approvals necessary to build and operate their business.

Unfortunately, I have found that those who do not speak perfect English or speak with an accent are not always treated fairly. I pride myself in being their advocate to ensure my clients are able to quickly and efficiently obtain exactly what they need to achieve their goals.

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