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TOP WASHINGTON LAWYERS

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS



Age: 43

Family: Married, daughter, son

Hometown: Springfield, Mass.

Law school: Georgetown University

Residence: Alexandria

If not a lawyer, you would be a ... manager for a minor league baseball team

Memorable case: Representing The Mills Corp., in the development of Arundel Mills

Hobbies: Little League baseball

John Lavoie

COOLEY GODWARD KRONISH LLP

As a kid in New England, John “Jack” Lavoie grew up in the world of real estate with a father who was a small homebuilder. His first job out of college in the late 1980s was working at The Staubach Co., a real estate services company, as an entry-level salesman/broker. He toured projects and assembled marketing materials for them.



“Many of them are still there, but they’ve been bought or sold five times over since then,” he says. “Real estate doesn’t go away.”

In evenings, Lavoie went to law school, thinking he would have a dual career in real estate and law. But after graduating, he struggled trying to decide whether to stay at Staubach or become a real estate lawyer.

“I thought I would understand more about the process if I took a couple of years to understand what a real estate lawyer did,” he says. “I had the intention to go back to Staubach, but one thing led to another and I developed a niche.”

After law school, Lavoie ended up at the Tysons Corner office of Watt, Tieder, Hoffar & Fitzgerald LLP, a firm focused on construction and surety. He stayed there 18 years before joining the Reston office of Cooley Godward Kronish. Today he focuses on real estate transactions, including the purchase, sale, development and leasing office, industrial, retail and unimproved commercial property. His clients include Chevy Chase Bank, T.A. Associates Inc., Altus Realty and PN Hoffman Inc.

One of his most memorable cases was representing The Mills Corp., in its Arundel Mills mall project from 1998 to 2005. The work involved negotiating and putting in an interchange on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, as well as negotiating with adjacent landowners in building the highway and infrastructure.

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