

Spotlight On:

Paige M. Bellino Attorney at Law

Attorney Paige M. Bellino has been practicing law in New Jersey and Pennsylvania for more than a decade, focusing her practice on all aspects of real estate law, including helping clients bring their dreams of homeownership to life. She has recently opened her own firm with Attorney Stephen McNally: McNally & Bellino, LLC ("M&B").

Based in Cherry Hill, the firm represents clients in a variety of legal matters concerning real estate and other practice areas. For the real estate industry, M&B represents buyers and sellers in residential and commercial real estate transactions, including negotiating contractual terms and repair requests, reviewing the title search to ensure a seller can provide marketable and insurable title to a buyer, reviewing and explaining closing documents to their clients and attending closings. The firm also represents clients in matters including but not limited to: title insurance defense, seller's disclosure issues, rental lease development, landlord/tenant disputes, estate planning matters, creditor's rights and business formation and continuity.

Paige is a graduate of the University at Albany, State University of New York and the Western New England University School of Law where she was a member of the Law Review for two years, and she is licensed to practice law in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Paige is a new NEXUS affiliate member and is excited to get involved with all the organization has to offer its members.

Time = Money, Especially In A Volatile Market

As we all know, the pandemic caused disruption in just about all areas of life, and the real estate industry was no exception. Low inventory, fast closings, and home inspection deferrals created a market ripe to cause situations that might trigger an urgent need for an attorney's advice. Tapping an attorney at the beginning of the transaction can avoid last minute challenges and closing delays should an urgent issue arise, and in some cases provide a path to faster closings.

Some changes Paige has observed since the onset of the pandemic include the competitive nature of the current market, which has prompted buyers, sellers, and agents to find creative ways to successfully close deals; and in this market, an important currency is time. One way an agent can provide an edge for their clients is by finding ways to save time, and an example of this is having an attorney draw up sales contracts.

Having a lawyer draw up a sales contract can eliminate the need for the three-day attorney review, which is required to be included in realtor-prepared contracts, thereby condensing the timeline for signatures and transaction progression. Three days may not sound like much, but in this market, shortening the timeline (in a way that does not jeopardize the deal) can be a gamechanger. Another way to save time and ensure all parties feel safe amidst the ongoing health crisis can be to have sellers pre-sign closing documents, thereby limiting the number of people attending the closing. Pre-signing can also help to reduce scheduling conflicts for closing.

Legal Representation Strengthens Your Transaction Team

Ripple effects in the real estate industry caused by the pandemic may be felt for some time to come. The volume and speed of sales over the last year have created unique challenges for buyers, sellers, agents, and the other professionals involved in a sale. The sound advice of an experienced real estate attorney can help to mitigate liability concerns as sales continue to close quickly.

Successful real estate transactions in 'normal' times require diligence, attention to detail, and even a little luck. Current market conditions have upped the risk factor for everyone involved and put time,

money, and emotions in the crosshairs. While New Jersey does not require buyers and sellers to hire an attorney to represent them in their sale or purchase of real estate, if ever there was a time to include an attorney as part of a sale, this is it. Paige wants prospective clients to know that they benefit from a cooperative relationship between their attorney and agent because it limits confusion and can streamline the process, as each professional has a clearly defined role to ensure every aspect of the transaction is handled properly and efficiently.

"I'm really passionate about what I do," she states. "I love real estate, and I really enjoy seeing people acquiring their dream homes, whether it's a new or growing family, or the start of a new chapter. It's part of the joy of the industry, and having the chance to see people connecting to their communities is very gratifying."

To fellow NEXUS members and their clients, Paige offers the following advice: Don't be hesitant to bring a lawyer onto your transaction team. An attorney's role is not to make a deal more difficult to close, but to help spot problems in advance and improve the closing process – which can be especially helpful in this volatile market. Everyone on the team is striving for one goal: to close the deal smoothly.

If you'd like to connect with Paige, you can contact her by email at pbellino@mb-firm.com or give her a call at 856.281.1101. You can also visit the McNally & Bellino, LLC website [here](#).