



John P. Slagter

Partner

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Passionate about real estate and development, John Slagter has dedicated his 30-year career to protecting clients' property rights and achieving their goals.

Practicing in all facets of real estate – including acquisition, disposition, leasing, finance, construction, eminent domain, and real property tax – John represents national and regional clients in industry sectors including commercial, office, retail, industrial, and residential.

Notably, John devotes a significant part of his practice to land use and zoning, where he delivers unparalleled solutions in protecting and advancing property rights. He represents clients on a daily basis in matters involving applications for site approvals, variances, conditional use approvals, rezonings, economic development incentives, and litigation related to these issues. He develops and implements strategies to overcome objections by governmental authorities and community activists to secure approvals for clients in some of the most controversial and difficult cases. John is actively involved in the real estate community on a local and national level, including his engagement as a frequent speaker, writer, and contributor on real estate and land use issues.

John also provides valuable insight to public companies, middle market businesses, and private equity and venture capital clients. He draws on his years of experience as a successful business manager and leader in providing strategic business advisory counsel. He skillfully identifies solutions to clients' most difficult business issues and guides them through their toughest decisions. He takes the time to understand clients' business objectives, as well as anticipate unforeseen issues that may negatively affect the health of a business.

John is ranked in Chambers USA in the area of Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use (Ohio), where one client remarks that he is "a superlative lawyer in every respect." Another client notes that "John is an excellent attorney. He's extremely intelligent and always aims to resolve disputes effectively for his clients." Another source comments that "John is one of the leading zoning and entitlement lawyers in Ohio. He is a fantastic litigator who possesses a strong sense of commercial and practical awareness."

Education

- Case Western Reserve University School of Law (J.D., 1991)
- John Carroll University (B.A., 1988)

State Admissions

- Ohio, 1991

Federal Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- United States District Court, Northern District of Ohio

Service Areas

- Real Estate
- Real Estate Finance
- Construction
- Public & Structured Finance
- Environmental
- Tax Services
- Appellate & Legal Issues
- Business Litigation
- Hospitality
- Middle Market
- Venture Capital
- Private Equity

Publications & Events

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- “Real Estate Litigation,” Introduction to Real Estate Practice Webinar, Ohio State Bar Association (April 2026)
- “Land Use Meetings, Hearings, and Records Law Updates” and “Eminent Domain and Land Valuation – Current Issues and Litigation Developments,” Land Use and Zoning Issues 2026, National Business Institute (NBI) (December 2025)
- “Land Use, Zoning, and Development Updates,” Ohio Advanced Real Estate Law Guide 2024, National Business Institute (NBI) (December 2024)
- “Changes and Appeals in Zoning,” 45th Annual Real Estate Institute, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (November 2023)
- “Land Use Approvals” and “Hearing Best Practices and Appeals,” National Business Institute (NBI) (June 2023)
- “Legal and Fiduciary Duties of Board Members,” Role of the Board, Business Volunteers Unlimited, Cleveland, Ohio (May 2023)
- “Practical Guide to Zoning and Land Use Law in Ohio,” National Business Institute (November 2022)
- “Tips from the Trenches: Strategies to Obtain Land Use and Zoning Approval,” 44th Annual Real Estate Law Institute, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (November 2022)
- “Beyond the Billable: Business Development and Pro Bono Work – Maximizing Your Meaning/Fulfillment,” New Lawyers Bootcamp, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (January 2022)
- “Land Use and Zoning Law,” 29th Annual Bradley J. Schaeffer Real Property Institute, Ohio State Bar Association (December 2021)
- “Real Estate Tax Valuation Complaints and Procedures,” 43rd Annual Real Estate Law Institute, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (November 2021)
- “Your Paycheck Protection Program Forgiveness Was Denied – Now What?,” Panelist, 2020 In-House Counsel Summit Webinar, Tucker Ellis LLP (December 2020)
- “Eminent Domain/Just Compensation Issues for Infrastructure Takings,” Moderator, 42nd Annual Real Estate Law Institute, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (November 2020)
- “The Art of Persuasion,” Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (December 2019, December 2018)
- “Tips from the Bench for Real Estate Lawyers,” Moderator, 41st Annual Real Estate Law Institute 2019, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (November 2019)
- “Fighting City Hall: Legal Strategies for Project Approval,” ICSC U.S. Law Conference, San Diego, California (October 2019)
- “Land Use, Takings and Zoning Law,” Advanced Commercial Real Estate Seminar, Ohio State Bar Association, Columbus, Ohio (October 2019)
- “Pay Less Taxes – Preserving Your Property Rights,” Tucker Ellis Commercial & Industrial Property Real Estate Forum, Cleveland, Ohio (September 2019)
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“Leadership Development,” Moderator and Presenter, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (2018)

- “Land Use Law,” International Council of Shopping Centers National Law Conference, Orlando, Florida (2018)
- “Law Firm Profitability,” panelist, Thomson Reuters Legal Executive Institute, Cleveland, Ohio (2017)
- “World War Z: Surviving the Zoning Apocalypse,” Old Republic Land Title Seminar, Columbus, Ohio (2016)

PUBLICATIONS

- “[Clean Up and Reduce Your Real Property Tax Liabilities by March 31, 2024](#),” Tucker Ellis Client Alert (March 2024)
- “[Zoned Out of the American Dream: The Impact of Land Use and Zoning Policy on Affordable Housing](#),” *Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Journal* (October 2022)
- “[Ohio Adopts New Lien for Design Professionals and Surveyors](#),” Tucker Ellis Client Alert (October 2021)
- “[Spring Cleaning Your Ohio Property Tax Liability](#),” Tucker Ellis Client Alert (February 2020)
- “5 Techniques to Master the Craft of Effective Communication,” *Crain’s Cleveland Business* (July 2017)
- “The Art of the ‘Short-Term Deal’ – Negotiate Like Trump,” *Properties* (June 2016)
- “Ohio Supreme Court Protects Property Rights When Zoning Laws Change,” *Properties* (April 2014)

MEDIA

- “[Stow City Council Hears Miller’s Landing Developer’s Plan, Residents’ Objections](#),” *Akron Beacon Journal* (October 2023)
- “[Strongsville Planning Commission Approves \\$32 Million Proposal for 82 Townhomes at Ohio 82 & Prospect Road](#),” *cleveland.com* (April 2023)
- “[Crocker Park Developer, Westlake Wrangle Over Site](#),” *Crain’s Cleveland Business* (October 2022)
- “[A Wrong Righted, Architects Land Lien Rights](#),” *Crain’s Cleveland Business* (January 2022)
- “[Commercial Foreclosure Activity Is Picking Up](#),” *Crain’s Cleveland Business* (January 2015)

Honors

- Chambers USA
 - » Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use (Ohio) (2021–2026)
- Ohio Super Lawyers® (2004–2026)
 - » Top 100 Ohio Super Lawyers (2012, 2015, 2016)
 - » Top 50 Cleveland Super Lawyers (2012, 2015, 2016)
- The Best Lawyers in America® (2007–2026)
 - » 2026 Cleveland Lawyer of the Year (Real Estate Law)
 - » 2025 Cleveland Lawyer of the Year (Land Use and Zoning Law; Litigation – Land Use and Zoning)
 - » 2020 Cleveland Lawyer of the Year (Land Use and Zoning Law)
 - » 2017 Cleveland Lawyer of the Year (Land Use and Zoning Law)
 - » 2016 Cleveland Lawyer of the Year (Litigation – Real Estate)
 - » 2013 Cleveland Lawyer of the Year (Litigation – Real Estate)
- Martindale-Hubbell® AV Preeminent® Peer Rating
- America's Top 100 Attorneys® Lifetime Achievement
 - » Land Use & Eminent Domain Litigation (Ohio)
 - » Real Estate Law (Ohio)

In the Community

- International Council of Shopping Centers
- Case Western Reserve University School of Law
 - » Society of Benchers
 - » Adjunct Faculty (2024)
- Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association
 - » Board of Directors
 - » Real Estate and Litigation Sections
 - » Legal Fee Dispute Committee
 - » Real Estate Institute Planning Committee
- American Bar Association
 - » Litigation, Real Property, and Construction Law Sections
- Ohio State Bar Association
 - » Real Estate and Litigation Sections
 - » Governmental Law Subcommittee, Past Chairman
 - » Council of Delegates for Real Estate Law Committee
- The William K. Thomas American Inn of Court (2017-present)
- Akron Zoo, Board of Directors
 - » Board Chair (2025)
 - » Co-Vice Chair
 - » Executive and Governance Committee
- Akron Zoo Foundation, Chair
- The 50 Club of Cleveland
- YMCA of Greater Cleveland
 - » Executive Board of Directors, Immediate Past Board Chair
 - » Executive Committee
 - » Governance Committee
 - » HR Committee, Chair