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September 15, 2016

Thank You to my Association Clients:

You may wonder how an attorney who is certified as a specialist in maritime law and admitted to Florida federal bankruptcy courts ends up practicing Association law. Actually, it is the other way around. I started early in my law career and continue today to represent developers and individuals in their applications and administrative actions involving county land use, dock permitting, environmental actions and law. It was a natural progression that I continued representing the Associations after turnover by the developers, defending the Associations against administrative environmental actions by the county and prosecuting Association actions against owners for breach of covenants and non-payment of assessments.

The damage from the 2004-2005 hurricanes generated many disputes between insurers and the marinas, Associations, dock owners, and vessel owners that I represent. Along with defending and prosecuting those maritime disputes came my need to acquire knowledge unique to that area of law, and afterward board certification in 2008 in maritime law.

The 2008-2009 depression in real estate values, following lenders' no-doc mortgage lending practices and home equity loans based on exuberantly irrational high values, led to many foreclosures and bankruptcies and the need for me to obtain the specific knowledge necessary to represent my clients' interests as creditors in bankruptcy actions and as junior lienors in foreclosure actions. In order to represent clients in bankruptcy matters, bankruptcy courts require attorney certification of knowledge in that area of law.

I am a member of the Florida Bar's Real Property Section and Condominium and Planned Unit Development Committee, whose mission includes proposing and drafting legislation and lobbying on behalf of Condominium and Planned Unit Development Homeowner Associations. I remain current in and report on Association law obtained through membership in that Section and Committee. Association representation continues to be a large part of my practice. The Florida Bar as of this year approved and now offers certification in Association law, and I intend to pursue that certification. Thank you for allowing me to represent your interests.

Regards,

Barbara Cook