

STEVEN BLOOMBERG

Providing Legal Services with Care

by **Bethany Krajelis**

For Steven Bloomberg, the practice of law encompasses more than providing legal services and resolving problems for clients.

“What I have found most rewarding in the practice of law is the value of the client relationship, whether established with a board of directors or with individuals,” he says. “I enjoy building lasting relationships.”

Bloomberg, a principal at **Chuhak & Tecson, P. C.** in Chicago, has represented condominium and homeowner associations since 1973. He has represented corporate clients like Itasca Bank & Trust Co. for more than three decades and Rosen Automotive Group since it was first formed about 25 years ago.

“You establish long-term relationships by being open and candid with clients and understanding their corporate needs,” he says. “With the amount of experience I have, I like to think that I can provide practical and legal advice to aid in the decision making process.”

Saul Rosen, president of Rosen Auto Group, couldn't be happier with the way Bloomberg approaches business. “It's beyond a professional business relationship. He has empathy for me and my family,” Rosen says. “He cares about me beyond my business. To me, he's almost like a doctor lawyer in the sense

he cares about me like my doctor does.”

Rosen appreciates his relationship with Bloomberg so much that, “I told him he can't retire until I retire.”

Building his Practice

Bloomberg's son, David Bloomberg, says his father's ability to build solid client relationships was one of several reasons he decided to leave his practice in New York to join his father at Chuhak & Tecson in June 2010.

The father-son duo work as a team, focusing on condominium and common interest community association law, as well as product liability, corporate, real estate, and local government matters.

“We talked about it over the years and when I was living in other states, he hinted at how great it would be to work together,” the younger Bloomberg says. “I saw over time that he had great client relationships and it was those relationships that allowed his practice to grow and thrive. That's where he derived meaning out of the practice of law, and I realized that's where I would derive meaning, too.”

Practicing with his father has been a rewarding and educational experience, with their practice relying on collaboration. The

elder Bloomberg listens to his son's ideas; the younger draws on his father's wisdom and experience.

“One of his strong skills is how he develops trust with his clients,” David Bloomberg says. “He grows with them to the point where he becomes an integral part of their institution.”

Not only does Bloomberg bring his ability to form relationships to their practice, but he has more than four decades of experience in the condominium and homeowner association field to boot.

He has represented hundreds of associations throughout the Chicagoland area over the years, litigating cases on their behalf and guiding boards of directors through a variety of issues.

Becoming a Lawyer

Bloomberg, 68, knew he wanted to be a lawyer from a relatively young age.

Born and raised in Chicago, Bloomberg grew up with a stay-at-home mother and a father who worked in the printing business as a lithographer. His interest in the law came from his desire to shape his own destiny.

In 1973, Bloomberg formed a partnership with a friend, Barry Moss. They built Moss & Bloomberg in Bolingbrook, concentrating on representing municipalities, condominium-homeowner associations and corporate clients for 32 years.

Moss retired in 2005, and Moss & Bloomberg merged with the firm Tressler, LLP. Bloomberg stayed with Tressler for five years before moving to Chuhak & Tecson, P.C. with his son in 2010.

“To start your own practice at 29 and establish client relationships over the years with a friend and partner is wonderful,” Bloomberg says. “However, to again build upon those relationships with your son is the greatest.”

In the 1970s, condominium and homeowner associations were a relatively untapped area of law, Bloomberg says.

“Condo associations are really small businesses, but they are very political,” he says. “They have elections and disputes between their members, all of whom are neighbors, so as an attorney you need to bring a business approach, understand the political dynamics and be a problem solver.”

In 1975, Bloomberg established the Community Association Institute of Illinois as a



way to get homeowners, associations, municipalities and developers together to share ideas and improve upon the laws affecting them.

“It was interesting because we were trailblazing in areas that needed resolutions,” he says.

One issue confronting suburban associations dealt with private streets. Some homeowners were upset that they were paying the state’s motor vehicle fuel tax, even though that money wasn’t used to repair their streets because the state classified them as private.

The group also worked to get rules and regulations of condo associations enforced. In the past, the only way to enforce a rule or regulation was to file a lawsuit. This changed after associations lobbied the legislature to adopt a fining procedure so boards of directors could enforce their rules and set fines rather than file injunctive lawsuits.

“It was a huge change at that particular time,” he says.

Bloomberg also brought about change through litigation. In the mid-90s, he was involved in *Apple II Condominium Association v. Worth Bank and Trust Co.*, a case that created the right of associations to amend their declarations to restrict the leasing of units.

“That case clarified the difference between rule making and amendments to declarations,” he says. “It is a widely quoted case and has established a significant precedent in Illinois.”

More than 35 years after he entered private practice, Bloomberg still approaches condominium law with the passion his clients have come to know and expect. And he could not be happier about the working relationship he and David have formed at Chuhak & Tecson.

“We very much wanted to practice together, so I looked for a good home,” Bloomberg says. “We found it here at Chuhak.”

The two Bloomborgs work closely together on a daily basis, with offices conveniently located right next door to each other.

“Working together and collaborating on cases is extremely rewarding,” Bloomberg says. “I’m proud of what David and I are accomplishing on behalf of our clients.”

Besides David, Bloomberg and his wife have two other children.

His oldest son, Michael, works as a sports announcer in Chicago, and his daughter, Amy, is a social worker. He and his wife stay busy with their four young grandchildren, all of whom live in the area.

And now that he owns an iPad, Bloomberg says has been reading more (he likes a good mystery). Not only has technology reignited his love for reading, but it’s also benefited his practice. Technology has increased his productivity, letting him multi-task and instantly

respond to clients.

“It’s not only important to be responsive through technology, but to be available in face-to-face discussions,” he says. “You can’t just give out information through email. It’s very difficult to build loyalty that way.”

Rosen can attest to that. Bloomberg is always available to handle whatever problems Rosen may have. Bloomberg handles anything and everything legal for Rosen’s business, from transactions and litigation to advice.

“I see a lot of lawyers who try to prove how smart they are and screw up the deals,” he says. “Steve makes the deal and protects me without trying to prove how smart he is.”

Rosen has given Bloomberg some difficult real estate tasks over the years.

For instance, he recently bought real estate on short sale, but during the deal, the bank that had the mortgage on the real estate got taken over by the FDIC, which added another layer to the deal.

“He was very patient and worked through all of the issues,” he says. “There were a lot of difficulties, but he got it done. He always gets it done.” ■