



Edward J. O'Connell III

PARTNER; CO-CHAIR OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS SECTION

eoconnell@whitefordlaw.com

FALLS CHURCH, RICHMOND

T: 703.280.9266

BIOGRAPHY

Mr. O'Connell has almost 20 years of experience in all facets of common-interest associations, from day-to-day business operations to litigation between boards and owners. This form of ownership, which includes condominiums, co-ops and homeowners' associations, has spread rapidly in the past few decades and raises its own unique legal issues of relations between boards, who operate in some ways like elected city councils, and homeowners.

Mr. O'Connell, who is admitted in both Washington DC and Virginia, represents communities in both jurisdictions, and has been active in the Washington chapter of the CAI for many years. He has been a board member since 2008 and served as Vice-President prior to becoming the President. He is also a member of the Chapter's Virginia Legislative Committee and a frequent contributor to Quorum Magazine, the chapter's publication. In 2024, he was named a Fellow of the College of Community Association Lawyers (CCAL).

PRACTICES & INDUSTRIES

[Community Associations](#)

[Condemnation / Eminent Domain](#)

[Developer/Warranty Issues](#)

[Interpretation/Amendment of Governing Documents](#)

[Contract Negotiations and Dispute Resolution](#)

[Financial Transactions](#)

[Counsel to Boards of Directors](#)

[Associations, Nonprofits and Political Organizations](#)

[Real Estate](#)

[Golf](#)

EDUCATION

Catholic University of America,
Columbus School of Law, 1994,
J.D.

University of Richmond, 1986,
B.A.

RECOGNITIONS

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Community Association Law (2020–2027), Real Estate Law (2025–2027)
- "Lawyer of the Year" Community Association Law (2023)

MEMBERSHIPS & ACTIVITIES

- Fellow: College of Community Association Lawyers
- Member: Virginia State Bar
- Member: District of Columbia Bar
- Member: Fairfax Bar Association
- Member: Community Associations Institute – Washington Metropolitan Chapter
 - WMCCAI Board of Directors (2008 – present)
 - WMCCAI Vice President (2012)
 - WMCCAI President (2013)
- Member: WMCCAI Virginia Legislative Committee
- Member: Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation – Structural Integrity and Reserves Work Group

COMMON-INTEREST COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

- Mr. O'Connell is experienced in representing community associations in Virginia and the District of Columbia

COUNSEL TO BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

- Advises common-interest community association boards on day-to-day business operations, compliance with governing documents, operating procedures, meetings (including quorum, voting and proxy issues), insurance matters, director issues and disputes, member issues and disputes, financial and real property transactions, land use and rezoning issues, assessment collections, employment issues and appropriate responses to changing federal, state and local laws

ADMISSIONS

Virginia
District of Columbia
U.S. Court of Appeals: Fourth Circuit
U.S. District Court: District of Columbia
U.S. District Court: Eastern District of Virginia
U.S. Tax Court

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- Experienced in negotiating agreements for construction, maintenance and improvements of the common interest community association property and common facilities

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

- Experienced in negotiating financing for capital improvement and repair projects for common-interest community associations

REAL ESTATE AND LAND USE

- Represents master property owner association clients in obtaining rezoning for capital improvements to the community facilities
- Represents common-interest community association clients before county and city governments on land use and zoning issues
- Represents large and small association clients in real property transactions involving the acquisition and sale of land, boundary dispute issues, and the negotiation of public and private easements, licenses and covenants, including considerable experience in negotiating bulk cable television and internet contracts

GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

- Extensive experience in consulting on and preparing amendments to the governing documents for both traditional and age-restricted adult active communities
- Prepares corporate and governing documents for large master property owners' associations and smaller property owners' associations in Virginia

DEVELOPER/WARRANTY ISSUES

- Negotiated favorable results for common interest community associations in statutory warranty claims in Virginia

ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS & PROCEEDINGS

- Represents common-interest community associations in responding to investigations by federal, state and local administrative agencies on fair housing complaints
- Represents common-interest community associations in responding to investigations by the Virginia Common-Interest Community Board on complaints filed by owners and citizens

CONDEMNATION / EMINENT DOMAIN

- Negotiated favorable settlement with VDOT relating to condemnation proceeding for client impacted by the Capital Beltway Hot Lanes Project
- Represents common-interest community associations in condemnation/ eminent domain proceedings in Virginia

ACTIVE ADULT AND CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

- Provide regulatory and governance advice and assistance to directors, officers and management of active adult community and continuing care retirement community clients

GOLF

- Provide governance, regulatory, real estate and contractual advice and assistance to directors, officers and management of community association owned golf courses and to community associations located in golf course communities

INSIGHTS

Presenter: “The Rippling Consequences of an Aging Infrastructure”, CAI Annual Conference & Expo (February 2026)

Contributing Author: Quorum Magazine - WMCCAI publication

Co-Presenter: “COVID-19: The Legal Implications – What Managers Need to Know!”, Webinar (May 2020)

Author: "[How to Get Rid of a Board Member](#)," Quorum Magazine, a Washington Metropolitan Chapter Community Associations Institute publication (January 2020 Issue)