

Comprehensive Counsel for Complex Construction

Zetlin & De Chiara LLP



Michael De Chiara
Senior Partner

It takes chops and vision to stake a claim in the urban skyline.

Complex building projects require top-notch engineers, architects, contractors, and—not surprisingly—lawyers. Construction cannot begin until well-crafted contracts, which anticipate issues before they become problems, are negotiated and drawn. Knowing where to push and when to compromise takes years of experience and deep knowledge of the technical aspects of construction.

Urban construction is an art form unto itself, and the lawyers who play a role in it are a highly select group. When the leading design and engineering firms and

real estate owners need pragmatic, creative construction counsel and legal representation, they call Zetlin & De Chiara LLP. With its extensive experience, the firm is highly sought after for sophisticated construction counsel and legal representation.

“Name an iconic project in New York City within the last 25 years and it is very likely that we represented one of the parties in its contract negotiations. Name a highly visible dispute and it is very likely that one of the parties turned to us to represent them,” says Michael De Chiara, Senior Partner, noting that the firm is often called upon to represent other law firms and their clients in complex construction matters.

“Our firm has one focus: construction law. Many of our attorneys have backgrounds in engineering, in design, or as in-house counsel for construction firms. They have seen the construction process through multiple perspectives, and this provides them with a better understanding of the entire process and makes them better advocates on behalf of our clients,” adds Michael Vardaro, Managing Partner.

Leading the Way

Zetlin & De Chiara represents many of the most respected players in construction, including owners, architects, engineers, and contractors. Known

SELECTED CASES

- Negotiated the design contract for a state-of-the-art corporate campus for a Fortune 100 company, which required ingenuity and creativity to overcome issues that arose from “standard construction language” on the highly complex \$550 million project.
- Served as lead counsel in representing the interests of a large engineering procurement construction company in its claims for additional compensation on a large multiyear project in the Caribbean. The litigation involved productivity, loss of efficiency, and scheduling claims.
- Proceeding to trial on behalf of an international engineering firm in defense of negligence claims associated with the collapse of a marine structure.
- Representing the owner of a major public-private project renovation in arbitration in a dispute relating to cost overruns and delays on the project.

for its creative solutions to issues concerning new building technologies, regulations, and labor agreements, the firm is highly recognized by all of the peer review publications, such as Chambers USA, The Legal 500, Best Lawyers®, and Super Lawyers®.

The attorneys are at the forefront of legal issues relating to cutting-edge design and construction topics, advising clients on the benefits and challenges of new technologies, innovative methodologies, alternative construction delivery methods, and industry trends—including Project Labor Agreements (PLAs), design build, public-private

partnerships (P3s), building information modeling (BIM), integrated project delivery (IPD), and license agreements for construction.

“We’re immersed in this world and enjoy being part of where it’s headed,” says Vardaro.

“We’re often brought in on ‘save the firm’ cases, which can be fact-intensive and require in-depth understanding of the technicalities of design and building. That’s a tremendous responsibility, and we take that very seriously. We’re confident in handling complex projects that require unique solutions,” adds De Chiara.

“We have incredible talent from the next generation, and, with our national reputation, we’re excited about our future.”

ZETLIN & DE CHIARA LLP