



REAL PROPERTY SECTION

Douglass W. Dewing, chair

This year of *Kelo v. New London* marked a return to public awareness of the uniqueness of real property. With a membership hovering over the two thousand mark, the Real Property Section's goal was to better serve the public through improving our knowledge and skills.

The board and area representatives of the section met quarterly, discussed issues in our practices in an informal collegial setting, and took those discussions to the membership through continuing legal education seminars and our newsletter. The active participation of the membership in this year's programs resulted in a CLE offering second to none.

In cooperation with Virginia CLE, the section cosponsored two top-of-the-line programs. The Tenth Annual Advanced Real Estate Seminar offered "Is *Kelo* Possible in Virginia?" and multiple-track programs for the commercial and residential practitioner. Our twenty-fourth annual Real Estate Seminar presented two longtime favorites—Current Case Law and Current Legislation (no simple task with this year's General Assembly). Topics that included "Who Is Your Client in a Real Estate Transaction?" and "The Mechanics of Mechanic's Lien Coverage."

With the Environmental Law and Local Government Attorneys sections, our summer meeting program on "Debunking the Myths of Traditional Neighborhood Development" examined the development process from several perspectives: Local governments', developers', purchasers' and future generations', and provided a thoughtful framework for the practitioner involved in the process.

Section members continue to raise the standards of our newsletter, *The Fee Simple*. For the first time in many years, the section actively sought articles from law students on real property topics—a practice that will continue in the future through the inauguration of a student writing competition. The article selected for publication in this year's competition offered a contrarian view of the significance of *Kelo*. Other articles of interest included a summary of changes in the Bankruptcy Code affecting real estate practitioners and a summary of title issues to be considered in transactions as churches begin to explore holding title in a corporate form after two hundred years of constitutional prohibition.

The section has been fortunate to have enthusiastic, dedicated and outstanding members step forward as the need arose during this year. I have confidence that the section will continue to grow and adapt, as it has done for more than fifty years.

Our Web site—www.vsb.org/sections/rp/index.htm—shows where we've been. More importantly, it shows why real estate practitioners remain essential members of their local communities.

