



Virginia C. Robbins

Of Counsel

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Profile

Virginia chaired the firm's environmental and energy practice from 2000 to 2016 and was a member of the firm's management committee from 2014 to 2015 and 2004 to 2005.

She is experienced in advising clients on the review and preparation of major project applications, environmental reviews, and hearings subject to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and federal and state cultural and historic preservation laws. Examples of these projects include landfills, airport facilities and wastewater treatment facilities. Virginia has represented public authorities, municipalities, school districts, real estate developers and numerous industrial clients on matters involving major projects. With respect to SEQRA and NEPA compliance, the majority of the projects she has handled have involved coordinated review and frequent interaction with numerous involved and interested agencies.

Virginia has counseled clients on projects involving significant permitting requirements (including, for example, air, water discharge, wetland and solid waste permits), the development of legal strategies to minimize potential litigation, advocating client positions before regulatory agencies, host municipalities and citizen groups, representing clients in DEC issues conferences and adjudicatory hearings and negotiating permit conditions. Furthermore, she has worked on projects that have confronted organized citizen opposition groups, contesting various aspects of the environmental reviews and challenging the issuance of the requested permits.

Virginia has also advised clients extensively on real estate transactions involving contaminated properties. Regarding "Brownfields," she has provided counsel to Empire State Development, the state's economic development organization, under the ReBuild Now-NY Program. This program promotes the cleanup and reuse of brownfields having significant economic potential. Virginia has also counseled municipal clients and private developers on the provisions of New York's new Brownfield Cleanup Program.

Honors & Affiliations

- Listed in:

Education

- Rutgers Law School (J.D., *with honors*)
- Middlebury College (M.A.)
- Rutgers University (B.A., *magna cum laude*)

Bar/Court Admissions

- New York
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York

Practices

- Environmental and Energy

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Environmental Law, 2007-2025 (listed for more than 15 years)
- Lawyer of the Year (Syracuse), Environmental Law - 2013; 2017; 2019; 2022; 2024
- *New York Super Lawyers*®, Environmental, 2021 (listed for more than 10 years)
- Top 25 Female Upstate New York Super Lawyers, 2013-2014
- *Chambers USA* 2019, Environmental
- *Martindale-Hubbell*®, AV Preeminent Rated
- *2013 Top Rated Lawyer in Energy, Environmental, & Natural Resources*
- American College of Environmental Lawyers (ACOEL), College's Executive Committee and Board of Regents; Co-Chair, International Pro Bono Committee
- ACOEL Foundation, President (2022)
- American Bar Association, Section of Environment, Energy and Resources
- New York State Bar Association, Environmental and Energy Law Section, Past Chair, 2004-2005; Member, Executive Committee; Co-Chair, Global Climate Change Committee
- Central New York Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association, Founding Chair, 1995-1996
- ESF College Foundation, Inc., State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Board Member and Past President, 2005-2007
- New York Chiropractic College, Board of Trustees
- Phi Beta Kappa
- Sol Feinstone Environmental Award, 2017, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
- Syracuse City Ballet, Grand Jeté Award, 2017
- WCNY, Women Who Make America Award, 2015
- YWCA, Academy of Diversity Achievers, 2015

Representative Publications

- *American College of Environmental Lawyers*, Blog Posts:
 - *Interior Secretary Debra Halland: Restorer of Balance?*, 2021
 - *Comments on "The Geography of Risk, Epic Storms, Rising Seas and the Cost of America's Coasts" by Gilbert Gaul*, 2019
 - *Troubled Waters: New York's Algal Blooms*, 2018
 - *Energy Storage Transforming the Grid in New York State*, 2017
 - *Cap and Trade is Alive and Well in New York State*, 2016

Representative Presentations

- An Interview with Virginia Robbins, Environmental and Energy, Legally Bond Podcast, July 19, 2021

- New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, American Council of Engineering Companies, Central NY Region, March 2021
- *County of Maui, HI v. Hawaii: Clean Water Act 2020 - Law and Regulations*, American Law Institute, December 2020
- New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, CNY Chapter Air & Waste Management Association, November 2020
- Panelist, Energy Storage and the Modern Grid, NYSBA Annual Meeting, Environmental & Energy Law Section, January 2018
- Nano Utica Initiative, 20th Annual Joint Technical Conference of the CNY Chapters of the Air & Waste Management Association and American Industrial Hygiene Association, March 22, 2016
- What Could Possibly Go Wrong? Assessing Environmental Compliance, Bond, Schoeneck & King CLE Program, December 9, 2015
- Panel Member, Gaming Casinos: Learn from the Past to Prepare for the Future, New York State Bar Association's Annual Meeting, January 30, 2015

Other Activities

- Syracuse University College of Law, Interim Assistant Dean of Career Services
- Abby Lane Housing Corporation, President and Board Member, 2015-present
 - Serving the housing needs of students at SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry, Syracuse
- Syracuse City Ballet, Inc., Board Member, Past President, 2013-2015
- Syracuse Friends of Chamber Music, Vice President