REBA Dispute Resolution, Inc.
A Subsidiary of the Real Estate Bar Association for Massachusetts

HON. ALEXANDER H. SANDS III (RET.)

Mediator | Arbitrator | Case Evaluator

Judge Sands comes to REBA/DR with more than 45 years of experience as a judge, attorney, and ADR practitioner. Judge Sands served as an Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Land Court from 2002-2015, and as a recall justice from 2015-2017, where he authored many decisions of first impression. During his time on the bench, Judge Sands was a pro-active participant in the Land Court's robust court-connected alternative dispute resolution program, always stressing the mediation option at initial case management conferences. He also drafted revisions to the Time Standards of the Land Court, implemented in 2004.

With 15 years on the Land Court bench, his experience on municipal boards and more than 30 years in a transactional real estate practice, Judge Sands is uniquely qualified to mediate any real estate dispute, particularly zoning, permitting and land use matters. He also has extensive experience in affordable housing, with many such cases on the Land Court, resulting in his teaching a unique course on the subject in several Massachusetts law schools. All of these experiences have honed his role as a communicator and facilitator in ADR matters. In fact, several attorneys involved in recent mediations have remarked that he was able to settle "impossible" real estate situations.

In 1977, Judge Sands was a founding partner in the Boston law firm of Lynch, Brewer, Hoffman & Sands, and was head of the Real Estate Department, specializing in complex transactional projects in both the residential and commercial fields. From 1984 to 1991, he was a member of the Gloucester Planning Board, where he focused on zoning, land use and subdivision law. From 2005 to 2010, he was on the Massachusetts Bar Association Law Review. Judge Sands has taught seminars for MCLE and the MBA in real estate law, and he has been a judge on moot court panels for Harvard Law School and for high school competitions with the Massachusetts Federal Courts. He is a member of the Abstract Club and the Massachusetts Judges Conference, where he received an award in Judicial Excellence, presented in November 2017. In 2016, he was a primary speaker for the International Land Registration Conference held in Dubai, UAE.

Judge Sands has served on many civic, religious and charitable organizations, including Chairman of the Board and Artistic Director of the Annisquam Village Players, one of the oldest continually operating community theaters in the US (where he has directed an annual summer musical for the past 25 years), and on many committees of the Annisquam Village Church in Gloucester, MA. His zest for life has inspired him to write two legal mystery novels, and to run the Boston Marathon annually from 1991 to 2007. In 2014, he received a Gloucester Citizenship Award. In 2016, he fulfilled a bucket list challenge by climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa. Judge Sands is a member of REBA/DR's Board of Directors.

Judge Sands received his J. D. from the University of Virginia School of Law, and his B.A. from Williams College.

"Judge Sands brings a really unique combination of empathy and experience to mediation. His good-natured personality combined with his usual frank assessment of a case helps the lawyer maintain credibility, while moving towards a resolution. I always highly recommend Judge Sands for my real estate disputes."

Richard D. Vetstein, Esq.
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