



John V.N. Klein

In Memoriam

April 24, 1931- December 23, 2021

Education

University of Virginia, LL.B., 1955

University of Virginia, B.A., 1953

Prior to his retirement in 2014, John V.N. Klein was Co-Chair of the Real Estate practice and a member of Meyer, Suozzi, English & Klein, P.C. Mr. Klein concentrated his practice on counseling individuals and corporations during all stages of business growth and development. He advised clients on a full range of real property transactions and all matters relating to banking and financial institutions. His law practice included real estate purchases, sales, condemnation, and tax-free exchanges and financings, including Industrial Development agency transactions of commercial and industrial properties, land use rezoning, special exceptions, site plans, variances, environmental reviews, transfer of development rights, conservation and scenic assessments, as well as agricultural preservation transactions. He served as corporate general counsel to commercial and industrial enterprises engaged in local, national and international transactions, and to major industrial trade organizations. He also provided general advice and counsel to municipalities, including negotiations and the drafting of inter-municipal agreements. He was a recognized deal-maker in the Long Island business community and a trusted advisor to senior executives in every industry and at all levels of government.

A dedicated Long Islander, Mr. Klein was born and grew up in Smithtown. After receiving his law degree, Mr. Klein began a career-long practice of land use, environmental and real estate law. His professional dossier includes Town Attorney and then Supervisor of the Town of Smithtown from the mid-fifties until the end of the 1960s. Mr. Klein was rated "AV Preeminent" by Martindale-Hubbell, the highest level in professional excellence, and was recognized by *Long Island Pulse Magazine* in 2010 and 2011 as of the region's "Top Legal Eagles".

In the 1970's, Mr. Klein went on to serve two notable terms as Suffolk County Executive. As County Executive, one of his top priorities was resisting over-development and the preservation of farmland. When Mr. Klein was featured as a "Long Islander of the Century" by *Newsday* in March of 2000, he recalled taking a helicopter ride during his County Executive days over the East End in late November. As he looked down from his aerial perch, he viewed a beautiful scene of winter rye grass, and thought, "This stuff will disappear just like it did in Nassau and Western Suffolk." He subsequently began a County program to buy development rights to farmland on the East End keeping thousands of acres from being developed.