Message from the Section Chair

The Real Property Law Section continues to expand its commitment and welcome to recently admitted attorneys and to law students. To encourage attendance at our 2015 Summer Meeting, to be held at the Basin Harbor Club & Resort on Lake Champlain, Vermont, from July 16-18, 2015, we are offering a 75% discount of meeting registration fees and hotel accommodations to first time attendees and to attorneys admitted less than 10 years. Mindy Stern will be our Program Chair for the 2015 Summer Meeting and assures us that we have a spectacular venue and wonderful program planned for all. You can register now on our website to assure your place at the meeting.

We welcome Professor Shelby D. Green of Pace Law School as our new co-chair of the Law School Internship Committee. She is working with co-chair Ariel Weinstock to create more internship opportunities for law students who wish to participate in the work of our Section's many committees and publications. In addition, Professor Green is working with the administration and faculty of Pace Law School to encourage participation in our Student Internship Program, making it the seventh school to send its law students to intern with members of our Section.

Our Section remains focused on the practical needs of its members. The Task Force on Title Agent Licensing continues to work with the NYS Department of Financial Services to assure that its regulations do not curtail an attorney's right to act as title agent.

We reconstituted our Attorney Escrow Agent Task Force to (1) review the disclosures that an attorney acting as escrow agent for a client should provide to the client and other parties to the transaction; (2) prepare model escrow agent disclosure forms for use in such transactions; (3) review the escrow language in the form contracts of sale to determine whether any changes should be made to the forms, placed in a rider or set forth in a separate escrow agreement; (4) review the practices of upstate and downstate practitioners to determine whether the differences require different disclosures or forms; and (5) consider proposing legislation to protect attorneys acting as escrow agents and their clients, such as legislation that would require banks to send escrow account monthly statements to both the attorney and person for whose benefit the account was established. We are fortunate to have Gilbert Hoffman and Benjamin Weinstock as co-chairs of the Task Force.

I hope to see many of you at the RPLS CLE program to be held on Thursday, January 29, 2015 at the New York Hilton Midtown during the NYSBA's Annual Meeting. Leon Sawyko, our Program Chair, promises an interesting CLE session and wonderful luncheon at the 21 Club. Please check our event calendar for other CLE programs sponsored by our Section and its committees and for social events scheduled by our District Representatives.

My best wishes to all for a very happy and healthy New Year!

David L. Berkey

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