

Steven J. Wernick

Partner

Miami, FL | (305) 373-4076

swernick@daypitney.com

Overview

Steven J. Wernick is an experienced land use attorney and maintains a multi-disciplinary practice throughout South Florida. He has significant experience representing real estate developers, property owners, and other real estate industry clients – skillfully navigating the intricacies of local government regulations and the development approval process to help clients deliver on great projects and revitalize urban core neighborhoods.

Steve's work in recent years has been most prominent with projects under development in Wynwood, Miami's emerging arts district undergoing a significant transformation into a 24/7 live, work, play neighborhood that has become an epicenter for global art tourism and expansion of Miami's tech hub. Starting with his work for Goldman Properties on a portfolio of adaptive reuse projects and the award-winning Wynwood Garage, Steve has worked with local and national developers on entitlements for over 7 million square feet of new retail, office, multifamily and hospitality development constructed in Wynwood over the past decade.

Previously, Steve worked as special counsel for the Wynwood Business Improvement District (BID) in the creation and adoption of the Wynwood Neighborhood Revitalization District (NRD-1), recognized by the American Planning Association with the 2017 National Planning Award in Economic Development. Additionally, he has secured zoning and development approvals on multifamily office, and hospitality projects within the City of Miami, Bay Harbor Islands, North Miami, Miami Beach and other waterfront communities in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties. Steve was intimately involved in securing entitlements for the Miami Design District Retail Street Special Area Plan – including infrastructure improvements, nonstandard covenants and a regulating plan to facilitate over 1 million square feet of development of luxury retail, art and civic space.

Steve has built a reputation as a trusted advisor for creative zoning tools to support neighborhood revitalization in South Florida's emerging neighborhoods. As a trained urban planner and credentialed by American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), Steve has the ability to communicate with diverse community stakeholders, and experience shepherding code amendments and overlay districts to unlock the potential for mixed use redevelopment. In 2021, Steve secured approval from City Commission for adoption of the Wynwood Norte Neighborhood Revitalization District (NRD-2), including land use map amendments and rezoning of 140 acres to spur development of multifamily housing and millions of dollars in reinvestment in one of Miami's oldest neighborhoods.

Practices & Industries

Commercial Real Estate

Florida Land Use & Zoning

Land Use, Zoning & Redevelopment

Steve is regularly asked to speak at conferences and to media outlets on evolving trends in planning and zoning and is cited by courts and secondary law sources nationwide, including Powell on Real Property and Land Use Planning and the Environment: A Casebook (2010).

Experience

No aspect of this advertisement has been approved by the highest court of any state. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.

Represented developer of 250 Wynwood, an 11 unit 6-story live/work building and the first new construction under the Wynwood NRD-1 zoning district

Represented developer of CUBE Wynwood, a 90,000+ SF 8-story boutique office building

Represented developer of Wynwood 25, Wynwood's first market-rate apartment building, rising 8-stories and 400,000 SF+ floor area, with 289 units and 31,000 SF of ground floor retail; and securing the first transfer of development rights (TDRs) from a qualified Legacy Structure in Wynwood

Represented developer of 545 Wyn, a 300,000 SF 10-story class A office building and parking garage with green roof deck developed by Sterling Bay

Represented Goldman Properties securing zoning approvals for Wynwood Garage, a 8-story artistic parking garage with ground floor retail/restaurant uses and co-working space, and the first large scale new construction project approved by the Urban Development Review Board in Wynwood

Represented joint venture between L&L Holdings and Oak Row obtaining design and development approvals for Wynwood Plaza, a 1 million square feet mixed-use development, including 200,000+ square feet class A office building and 500+ multifamily residential units, anchored by grand courtyard connecting Wynwood Norte and Wynwood Arts District

Represented Magellan Housing, developer of Wynwood Works obtaining a warrant special permit and waivers for a 120-unit mixed-income multifamily residential building, including units priced for low-income, moderate-income and workforce households through a public-private partnership agreement with the Omni Community Redevelopment Agency

Represented developer of Mohawk at Wynwood, securing design and development approvals or a 12-story 400,000+ Square feet market rate multifamily residential building including 226 units

Represented developer of The Rider, a 12-story 131-apartment hotel building adjacent to future Wynwood/Edgewater commuter rail station in Wynwood's NE Quadrant

Represented developer of Wynwood Urby, securing WDRC Approval and waiver special permit for 1.3 acre site to be redeveloped as 289 dwelling units, 17,000 square feet of commercial space and curated art program

Represented Fifield Companies' Wynwood Station, an 8-story building which includes 210 apartments and 11,000 sq. ft. of retail space, secured WDRC Approval, waiver special permit and other development approvals

Represents developer of Metro at Edgewater, including platting, site plan approval, waivers and UDRB approval for multiphased project in Edgewater

Represented Blue Road LLC and partners on Emblem Tower, securing Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan Approval for 20-story market rate multifamily building on NW 7 Avenue in City of North Miami

Assisted with drafting and advocating for City of Miami Zoning Reform Legislation; including amendments to Miami 21 zoning code and land development regulations to harness new technologies and building industry innovations; led a research effort to support micro-unit legislation sponsored by Miami Mayor Francis Suarez to incorporate best practices from Austin, TX, Seattle, WA, and other first-tier markets to expand housing options tied to transit-served districts in Miami

Wynwood Arts District NRD-1; Contributed to crafting and security City Commission approval of legislation implementing the Wynwood Neighborhood Revitalization District (NRD-1), which brought recognition to the City of Miami's first NRD, including 2017 APA Award: Best Economic Development Plan

Underline Special District & Impact Fee Allocation; Worked to secure up to $65 million in park impact fees from City of Coral Gables and City of Miami to be allocated to The Underline – Miami's ambitious urban trail project stretching 10+ miles through multiple jurisdictions; currently chairs a committee studying The Underline Special District, including value capture mechanisms for long-term sustainability

El Portal Form-Based Zoning Code; Acted as special counsel to the Village of El Portal's Planning Director advising on creation/adoption of the Village's Form Based Code in 2017

Wynwood Norte NRD-2, Co-authored and guided the Wynwood Norte Neighborhood Revitalization District (NRD-2), the City of Miami's 2nd NRD, through community engagement and public hearing approvals; as a 141-acre overlay district, the NRD-2 was the largest neighborhood rezoning ever adopted under Miami 21 and brought together diverse stakeholders to support a measured and context-sensitive rezoning that allows for additional density while promoting the character of the neighborhood

Education and Credentials

Education

University of Florida, J.D., Order of the Coif, *Florida Law Review*

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, M.R.P., Masters in Regional Planning, Real Estate Development

Boston University, B.A., *magna cum laude*, Bachelors Degree in American Studies

Admissions

State of Florida

U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida

Affiliations

American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)

Recognition and Community

No aspect of this advertisement has been approved by the highest court of any state. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. See Awards Methodology.

Recognitions

Chosen for inclusion in the *Chambers USA Legal Directory* (Chambers & Partners), of recognized practitioners for Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use in Florida, 2026

Chosen for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America* (Woodward/White, Inc.), Land Use and Zoning Law, 2026-2027; Real Estate Law, 2026-2027

Selected to the list of Florida Trend's Legal Elite Honorees in Real Estate, 2025

Daily Business Review, Unsung Hero Award, 2022

Builders Association of South Florida, President's Award, 2021, 2025

Selected to the list of Florida *Super Lawyers*®, Land Use/Zoning, 2013-2026

Daily Business Review, Real Estate Lawyer of the Year, 2017

Builders Association of South Florida, Joseph G. Goldstein

Legislative Leadership Award, 2017

South Florida Business Journal 40 under 40, 2017

CHS Child Advocate of the Year, 2015

Community Involvement

University of Miami School of Architecture, Adjunct Professor, 2021–Present

ULI SE Florida Caribbean, Advisory Board Member, 2018-2020

Friends of the Underline, Inc., Board Member, 2017–Present

Wynwood Community Enhancement Association, Advisor/Pro Bono Counsel, 2019–Present

Children's Home Society of Florida, Inc., State Board of Directors, 2016-2019

City of Miami Waterfront Advisory Board, Chairman, 2015- 2017

Builders Association of South Florida, Chair, City of Miami Working Group, 2019-Present

Insights

Florida's Live Local Amendments Remove Barriers and Open New Doors for Workforce and Affordable Housing
June 26, 2026

Florida's Infill Redevelopment Act (Senate Bill 1434) Signed into Law by Governor DeSantis: Unlocking Infill Residential Development in South Florida
Day Pitney Alert, June 1, 2026

Creative Zoning Solutions to Enable Missing Middle Housing
Pro Builder, April 1, 2026

3D Zoning: Miami's TSND Legislation Expands Toolbox for Transit Oriented Development
Day Pitney Alert, September 16, 2025

Florida Legislative Update: Senate Bills 1730 and 784 Aim to Boost Housing Production
Day Pitney Alert, May 14, 2025

Innovative Solutions to South Florida's Housing Crisis: How the Private Sector is Leading the Way
September 24, 2024

City of Miami Proposes Administrative Site Plan Review Ordinance to Streamline Permitting Process
July 25, 2024

Florida Sales Tax Rate Imposed on Rentals, Leases, or Licenses to Use Commercial Real Property Reduced to 2 Percent (Effective June 1)
May 31, 2024

Governor Signs SB 328, Reinforcing Florida’s Live Local Act To Spur Mixed Income Housing Development
May 17, 2024

News

Day Pitney's Daniel Diaz Leyva and Steven J. Wernick Named to Florida Trend's NOTABLE Real Estate/Land Use Attorneys List
August 27, 2025

Day Pitney Miami Land Use Attorneys Steven Wernick and Joseph Ruiz Receive President's Awards by Builders Association of South Florida
Day Pitney Press Release, May 12, 2025

Day Pitney Continues Growth Trajectory of Corporate Department with Addition of Wernick & Co. in South Florida
February 29, 2024

In The Media

Miami officials consider upzoning 661 parcels in Little Havana, The Roads and Riverside
South Florida Business Journal, October 21, 2026

2026 Florida Planning Conference "Unlocking Neighborhood Potential with Interim Uses"
October 15, 2026

How will Carnegie Mellon change Wynwood? Housing and transit at a crossroads
Miami Herald, October 12, 2026

Rising Rates, Construction Costs Force Developers to Get Creative With Financing
Commercial Observer , September 29, 2026

Construction Costs Reshape CRE Development Financing
CRE Daily, September 29, 2026

The Tangled Relationship Between Zoning and Multifamily
Units Magazine, July 15, 2026

Live Local Act, three years in
June 26, 2026

Is More Affordable Housing Left To Novices?
Forbes, June 29, 2026

June 1, 2026, News and Notes
Florida Bar News, June 1, 2026

As Development Boom Comes For Little Haiti And Little River, Pressure Builds To Prevent Displacement
Bisnow, April 26, 2026

Developers discuss housing, transit, culture in two changing Miami neighborhoods
Miami Herald, April 24, 2026

Fla. Lawmakers Expanded Housing Efforts in Slow Session
March 20, 2026

Shuttered Miami wedding hall could be replaced with apartments
South Florida Business Journal, February 13, 2026

Miami Developers Keep Raising The Stakes In The Amenities Race. Renters May Pay The Price
Bisnow, November 13, 2025

Charting Florida Housing Affordability Stressors In Hollywood And Beyond
Forbes, September 15, 2025

Attys Navigate Tangle Of Transit-Oriented Zoning In Miami
Law360, August 27, 2025

What to Watch in Florida Real Estate in 2025's Second Half
August 22, 2025

Steven J. Wernick Quoted in Miami Herald Regarding Bakehouse Art Complex Plans for Artist Housing
Miami Herald, June 20, 2025

Developer Proposes 68-acre Mixed-Use Project at Miami-Dade UDB line
South Florida Business Journal, June 4, 2025

June 1, 2025 News and Notes
The Florida Bar, May 30, 2025

Fla. Lawmakers Tackle Real Estate Issues, But Is It Enough?
Law360, May 15, 2025

Day Pitney Miami Land Use Attorneys Steven Wernick and Joseph Ruiz Receive President's Awards by Builders Association of South Florida
CityBiz, May 12, 2025

Building Beyond The Barriers
South Florida Business Journal, March 19, 2025

Zoning Review in Commercial Real Estate Financing Transactions (FL)
LexisNexis, January 14, 2025

Housing Policy To Watch in 2025
Law360, January 8, 2025

Zoning Review in Commercial Real Estate Financing Transactions (FL), August 2020, republished
Lexis Nexis, January 2025

New High-Rises and Vanishing Roots in West Grove
Miami Times, November 5, 2024

Wynwood Commercial Site Shifts to Hotel, Condo Units
Miami Today, October 8, 2024

Wynwood Walls Creator, Developer Partner on Hotel, Condo Building
South Florida Business Journal, September 6, 2024

Gov. Ron DeSantis Signed the Amendments into Law on Thursday
The Real Deal, May 17, 2024

Miami Not Immune to Office Distress, Foreclosure Bid Shows
Law360, May 15, 2024

Unlocking Miami-Dade's Housing Potential
RentCafe, April 11, 2024

28-Story Tower With Over 100 Apartments Planned in Miami
South Florida Business Journal, April 12, 2024

The End of Single-Family-Only Home Suburbs? Miami-Dade Zoning Rule Impact Could Be 'Sweeping'
Miami Herald, March 29, 2024

Day Pitney Adds Land Use Practice to Miami office
Miami Today, March 15, 2024

The Real Deal: Movers & Shakers
The Real Deal, March 4, 2024

Day Pitney Appoints Steven Wernick and Joseph Ruiz to its Miami Office
CityBiz, February 29, 2024

Revisions Show Fla.'s Dedication To Affordable Housing Law
Law360, March 1, 2024

Steven Wernick and Joseph Ruiz's Arrival to Day Pitney Featured in Law360
Law360, February 29, 2024

Horizon's Residences at NOMI Scores $48 Million Construction Loan
South Florida Business Journal, November 6, 2023

Goldman Properties Proposes Work/Live project in Miami's Wynwood
South Florida Business Journal, September 22, 2023

Envision 2035: City of Miami EAR Amendments: Encourage Redevelopment around Transit Stations
Day Pitney Alert, August 2023

New Florida Zoning Law Is A ‘Big Deal', But Questions Remain
Law360, June 29, 2023

Miami-Dade County Mobility Fee on Track for Funding Multi-Modal Transportation System
Day Pitney Alert, June 2023

Florida's Live Local Act is a Big Deal for Affordable Housing
Day Pitney Alert, April 2023

City of Miami Zoning Reform: A Tale of Two Cities
Day Pitney Alert, February 2023

Failed Vote May Not Slow Miami Beach Transformation
Law360, November 21, 2022

Wynwood Norte moves toward increased residential density
Miami Today, November 1, 2022

Multi-Skilled Lawyer Guides Urban Revitalization in Miami
Law360, July 14, 2022

Unsung Heroes: Steven Wernick Highlights How Pro Bono ‘Elevates' Lawyers
Daily Business Review, June 1, 2022

Wynwood Urby? Here are details about what likely will rise on old Art by God sit
Miami Herald, April 13, 2022

The Underline: Revitalizing Communities through Green Infrastructure
August 31, 2021

A great comeback story: Miami approves new zoning for neighborhood near Wynwood
South Florida Business Journal, March 26, 2021

Wynwood Norte Neighborhood Revitalization District wins preliminary commission approval
Miami's Community Newspapers, November 9, 2020

Wynwood Norte: Mitigating Displacement through Community Vision Plan
September 9, 2020

Miami 21 Revisited: Adaptation is Key to Miami's Future in Age of Coronavirus
Daily Business Review, April 2020

Smart Growth
Powell on Real Property, §78C, 2015

Wynwood gets serious, As new offices come to Wynwood, can the area's character survive?
Miami Herald, August 20, 2018

Evolution of Wynwood
June 2018

Irma Revealed Weaknesses, But Presented Opportunities for a More Resilient Miami
The Miami Herald, October 2017

100 Years of Zoning
November 3, 2016

Wynwood: From Garment District to 24/7 Neighborhood
September 2015

Smart Growth and Mobility: A Tale of Two Cities
August 1, 2011

Public-private partnerships help the economy
The Miami Herald, June 2011

Preserving Land Entitlements in a Recessionary Economy
Florida Real Estate Journal, Vol. 17, No. 4, June 2009

Golf Course Conversions: The Challenges of Urban Reuse
Powell on Real Property, §79.D08, 2008

Diamonds in the Rough: Judicial Reaction to Golf Course Conversions
Zoning & Planning Law Report, 2007

Zoning Out Sex Offenders Through Residency Restrictions in Florida
January 1, 2006