May 12, 2025

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

Day Pitney is proud to announce that Miami Land Use Partner Steven Wernick and Counsel Joseph A. Ruiz were recognized with President's Awards by the Builders Association of South Florida (BASF). The awards were presented to Wernick and Ruiz by Nelson Stabile, the Immediate Past President of BASF, during the 2025 Presidential Installation Gala held at the citizenM Miami Worldcenter on May 9. Wernick and Ruiz were recognized for giving their time, passion, and energy to BASF's working committees, particularly in advancing industry interests in regulatory reforms.

Wernick is the chairman of BASF's City of Miami Working Group. He is an experienced land use and real estate attorney and maintains a multi-disciplinary practice throughout South Florida. Wernick 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. His work in recent years has been most prominent with projects under development in Wynwood, Miami's emerging arts district being transformed into a 24/7 live, work, play neighborhood that has become an epicenter for global art tourism and expansion of Miami's tech hub. Known for his technical prowess and artful advocacy, Wernick spearheaded both the Wynwood Neighborhood Revitalization District (NRD-1) and Wynwood Norte Neighborhood Revitalization District (NRD-2), two of the largest rezonings in Miami in the past 20 years. He is a trained urban planner credentialed by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Wernick earned his B.A. from Boston University, his MRP from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, and his J.D. from the University of Florida School of Law. He is admitted to practice law in Florida.

Ruiz represents clients on matters involving land use, zoning, and local government affairs. He assists both landowners and developers navigating the local and state regulatory framework to support their real estate development and neighborhood revitalization goals. He represents landowners and developers at almost every stage of the development lifecycle, from pre-acquisition due diligence to entitlements, obtaining necessary development approvals for new construction or the adaptive reuse of existing structures. Ruiz has significant experience at the state, county, and municipal levels of government, and he served as the City of Miami Zoning Administrator/Director for the Office of Zoning before moving to private practice. Earlier in his public service career, he served as Chief of Staff to Miami Mayor Francis X. Suarez and as an Assistant City Attorney, focusing on public finance, land use, and municipal law. He earned his B.A. from Florida State University and his J.D. from the Florida International University College of Law. Ruiz is admitted to practice law in Florida.

Both Wernick and Ruiz are active members of the local Miami community. Wernick is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Miami School of Architecture, and a Board Member for Friends of the Underline, Inc. Ruiz currently serves as the Chairperson of the Miami-Dade County Transportation Planning Organization, Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee, as well as Chairperson for both the Business and Government Affairs Committee, and Public Policy Taskforce for the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce.

Established in 1944, the BASF is a non-profit trade association whose members are experienced industry leaders in southeast Florida. Each year, the BASF President's Award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication and service to the building industry. It is one of several honors the association presents annually to celebrate outstanding contributions across the field. For more information on the organization or the award methodology click here.

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

Key Contacts



Joseph A. Ruiz
Counsel

Miami, FL | (305) 373-4075

jruiz@daypitney.com



Steven J. Wernick
Partner

Miami, FL | (305) 373-4076

swernick@daypitney.com