

## James H. Rowland

PARTNER

801 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

D 212.300.1457  
jrowland@zdlaw.com



James H. Rowland is a Partner of Zetlin & De Chiara. With more than 20 years of litigation experience, Mr. Rowland represents clients in complex commercial and construction litigation matters, including the resolution of claims through trial, mediation and arbitration. He also drafts construction contracts for owners and design professionals and advises clients on business-related matters, professional licensing, insurance issues and risk management. Mr. Rowland has extensive experience with negotiating License Agreements between adjoining property owners as well as prosecuting and defending RPAPL Section 881 Proceedings. He represents architects, engineers, contractors, owners, developers, and construction managers in all aspects of the construction process, and he has appeared in New York State and Federal Court.

Mr. Rowland has successfully obtained pre-answer dismissals of numerous lawsuits against design professionals including wrongful death and substantial property damage claims. He has also represented design professionals in connection with both governmental and private investigations and lawsuits concerning alleged Federal, State, and local accessibility non-compliance. Mr. Rowland has successfully represented a design professional in connection with ADA and FHA Claims asserted by the United States Department of Justice.

He also represents design professionals in Administrative hearings in front of the the NYC Department of Buildings, Fire Department, and Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH).

Mr. Rowland Serves as General Counsel to the AIA Staten Island and to Society of American Registered Architects, New York City Chapter. He was recognized by the Queens Center of Progress with a **Business Leaders Award**. He was also recognized by **Super Lawyers**.

## Education

Fordham University School of Law, J.D.

New York University, B.A.

## Admissions

New York

## Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York

## EXPERIENCE

### Representative Matters

The following are select representative matters:

#### Aviation

##### **Multi-Million Dollar Airport Terminal Design Defect Claim**

We represented a leading design professional in connection with a multi-million dollar design defect claim arising out of the design and construction at an airport.

#### Commercial

##### **Federal Court ERISA/Alter Ego Action**

Represented a union contractor in a Federal Court ERISA/alter ego action. The action was commenced by three separate union trust funds arising out of a project that was part of a major New York City development. Plaintiffs alleged in excess of \$3,000,000 in damages and sought additional damages for work performed by the alleged alter ego company on a separate project. Plaintiffs also sought to recover all costs and legal fees incurred in the litigation. The Court granted the defendants' summary judgment motion and dismissed the case in its entirety.

### **Pro Bono Dispute Resolution For a Not-For-Profit Corporation**

We obtained a temporary restraining order on behalf of a Not-For-Profit Corporation preventing a landlord from removing a curtain painted by a world-renowned artist owned by the Not-For-Profit without its permission and consent.

## **Education**

### **Public School Building Construction Litigation**

We successfully obtained dismissal of claims asserted against an architectural firm in a multi-million dollar federal litigation involving allegations of defective design and construction administration services in connection with the construction of a public school building.

## **Hospitality**

### **Prevailed on Behalf of an Owner/Developer in a Virtual Bench Trial**

Zetlin & De Chiara successfully represented a New York City real estate Owner/Developer in a virtual bench trial against its general contractor for a large hotel project. Our client sought the recovery of unused portion of the funds it paid to the general contractor for the project's insurance after the parties entered into a voluntary termination agreement.

## **Mixed-Use**

### **Compensation for Extensive Damage to a Landmarked Building**

We obtained compensation for our client, a plaintiff property owner of a landmarked, mixed-use building in SoHo, New York City in a lawsuit against the neighboring property owner and its design professionals and contractors.

## **Residential**

### **Property Damage Claims Against a Utility Company**

We represented a homeowner in connection with property damage claims against a utility company.

### **Condominium Project Litigation**

We represented an architectural firm and its principles, individually, against claims of breach of contract and malpractice brought by the developer of a condominium.

#### **Post Hurricane Sandy Reconstruction Litigation**

We successfully represented an engineering firm in connection with claims asserted against a State for substantial unpaid engineering fees arising out of a post Hurricane Sandy rehabilitation, reconstruction and mitigation program.

#### **Summary Judgment Granted in a Residential Project Lawsuit Involving a Defective Design**

We defended an architect in a lawsuit brought by the developer of a residential development in New York City in a suit claiming \$13M in damages.

## **HONORS**

### **Honors & Recognitions**

- Business Leadership Award, Queens Center for Progress
- Super Lawyers

## **NEWS & EVENTS**

### **News**

Super Lawyers 2024 Recognizes 13 Zetlin & De Chiara Attorneys  
10.24.2024

Super Lawyers 2023 Recognizes 14 Zetlin & De Chiara Attorneys  
09.22.2023

Super Lawyers 2022 Recognizes Zetlin & De Chiara Attorneys for Their Expertise in Construction Law  
Super Lawyers

Zetlin & De Chiara Attorneys Widely Recognized in Super Lawyers 2021  
09.30.2021

Super Lawyers Selects 10 Zetlin & De Chiara Attorneys for Its 2020 Ranking  
11.05.2020

Eleven Zetlin & De Chiara LLP Attorneys Recognized by Super Lawyers 2019  
09.25.2019

James Rowland Honored for Business Leadership by the Queens Centers for Progress

As Famous Churches Seek To Sell Air Rights, The City Demands Its Cut  
03.21.2016

Zetlin & De Chiara Names James H. Rowland as Partner

James Rowland Presenting Seminar on Risk Management to Society of American Registered Architects

Bill Chimos and James Rowland of Zetlin & De Chiara LLP Promoted  
02.17.2010

Zetlin & De Chiara LLP Recognizes Excellence Within The Firm  
02.01.2010

Stamp It: Requirements When Sealing and Altering Documents Which Have Been Previously Sealed  
12.30.2009

Extension of TRIA Includes New Provisions by James Rowland

An article written by James H. Rowland titled "Like It or Not, Here It Comes, Building Green" appeared in the March/April 2007 issue of Building Long Island.

Reform of Wicks Law by James Rowland

Summary of Workers Compensation Reform Act of 2007 by James Rowland

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## Speaking Engagements

Zetlin & De Chiara's 30th Anniversary Celebration  
12.14.2022

## Publications

NYC Department of Buildings Issues Rules for Major Project Development Program  
02.11.2022

The MTA's New Statutory Rules of Debarment  
Zetlin & De Chiara LLP, 07.29.2019

Zetlin & De Chiara LLP Fall 2017 Update  
10.12.2017

Design Professional Good Samaritans Face Rough Road in New York  
Zetlin & De Chiara LLP Newsbulletin, 01.08.2013

Growing Trend of Government-Mandated Green Building  
Long Island Builders Magazine, 05.2007

## AFFILIATIONS

### General Counsel / Board Membership

- American Institute of Architects, Staten Island - General Counsel
- Society of American Registered Architects - General Counsel (New York City Chapter)

### Organizations

- The American Bar Association
- American Institute of Architects, Staten Island
- The New York City Bar Association
- Society of American Registered Architects, New York City
- Structural Engineers Association of New York