



REAL ESTATE COMMISSION



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Dear Mayor Bowser:

On behalf of the members of the District of Columbia Real Estate Commission (Commission), I am pleased and excited to have served as Chair of this regulatory body during fiscal year (FY) 2018. This year represented another highly productive year for the Commission, including its active participation with the [Association of Real Estate License Law Officials \(ARELLO\)](#) and the [Real Estate Educators Association \(REEA\)](#). These associations provide an opportunity for the Commission and staff to better administer real estate law and regulations, and a time to interface and dialogue with regulators throughout the world on important real estate issues affecting the public.

This year, I served as District One District Vice President, having responsibilities of leading district regulatory meetings of 13 member jurisdictions in the Northeast, from DC to Maine at the ARELLO mid-year and annual conferences. Our Legal Committee Chair, Ulani Gulstone, served as an alternate director, and also served as Chair of the Fair Housing Committee for the second consecutive year, where she was recognized at the 2018 annual conference for her work in fair housing. Several Commission members and staff served on several committees of ARELLO and REEA.

The Commission also welcomed two new members: Edward Downs, real estate broker member and David Forster, real estate salesperson member. Both of these individuals have served our community and have extensive expertise and industry backgrounds conducting real estate transactions and serving the public. Monique Owens returned to the Commission as a property manager member.

The vision of the Commission is to continue to serve as a regulatory leader in setting pre-licensing and continuing education standards, as well as enforcing the requirements of the Non-Health Related Occupations and Professions Licensure Act in order to protect the public interest. All Commission members continued to perform superbly in protecting the public interest through their time and devotion, and with their expertise as regulators.

The Property Management Task Force, created in FY 17, completed a major portion of its charges and responsibilities. These included the following:

- Completed regulatory recommendations to the Commission revising the broker and salesperson pre-licensing course outlines reflective of the management of common interest communities.
- Reviewed and made recommendations to current regulations on continuing education requirements for all real estate licensees, and developed continuing education required courses on property management, to include the management of common interest communities for real estate property managers, real estate brokers, and real estate salespersons.

The task force will work toward completing the following charges during the next fiscal year:

- Develop a pre-licensing course outline for property management licensure inclusive of the management of common interest communities for real estate educational providers delivering educational courses for applicants and real estate licensees consistent with [Bill 22-396](#).
- Review and assess the current bank of questions on the property management examination inclusive of the management plan, accounting systems, facilities management, management of common interest communities and District of Columbia laws, rules and regulations regarding property management.

The Commission, in its work over this fiscal year, reviewed over 60 complaints and legal matters brought by the public, licensees, and the Commission against real estate practitioners. The Commission took disciplinary actions against nine licensees.



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The Commission held all of its 11 scheduled meetings with a quorum. The number of real estate licensees in the District of Columbia continues to climb. The end of this fiscal year showed a total licensure count of over 15,000 licensees. This is attributable to a growing and continuing vibrant economy in the District of Columbia, as well as persons seeking to conduct business here.

The Commission held eight successful seminars this year at the Kellogg Center on the campus of Gallaudet University, which was enormously helpful to our licensees. Approximately 1,800 licensees attended the three mandated courses delivered concurrently over the course of the day, and over 250 licensees attended the Historic Preservation seminars held this year in conjunction with the Historic Preservation League and the Board of Real Estate Appraisers. The Commission and staff received excellent feedback from the licensees. Additionally, the Commission conducted a Fair Housing Instructor Development Workshop, where over 50 instructors were present. This course is mandatory for teaching Commission-approved fair housing mandates. The seminars and workshops are funded and authorized by the Commission with the use of the Real Estate Guaranty and Education Fund for licensees.

The important work described in this report could only be done with the unwavering commitment of Commissioners and the work and dedication of the entire Occupational and Professional Licensing Administration's staff and legal counsel; notably, Executive Director, Leon Lewis; Education Coordinator Kevin Cyrus; Education Specialist, Kathy Thomas; and Legal Counsel, Kia Winston have provided excellent leadership and worked tirelessly to ensure that the mandate of the Commission is well executed.

As we look ahead, the regulatory challenges we face will be impactful, yet our opportunities are even greater in protecting the public interest. I feel confident that with the continued dedication of Commission members and the support of staff, we will successfully serve the citizens of and visitors to the District of Columbia.



Sincerely,

Josephine Ricks

Josephine Ricks, Chair
DC Real Estate Commission

MISSION

To protect the public health, safety, and welfare and to assure the public that persons engaged in the practice of real estate have the specialized skills and training required to perform the services offered by the Real Estate Commission.

OBJECTIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Maintained active involvement with ARELLO by serving in leadership roles and on committees. The Chair of the Commission served as District Vice President of District One and the Legal Chair and one Commission member were elected as a Director and alternate Director, respectively. The Legal Chair served as Chair of the Fair Housing Committee and several Commission members and staff are members of various regulatory committees. The Legal Chair was singled out at the ARELLO Annual Conference for her outstanding work on fair housing.
- Participated in ongoing meetings with neighboring jurisdictions at ARELLO meetings regarding major reciprocity related issues and/or new requirements for licensees.
- Offered eight seminars and co-sponsored educational opportunities for over 800 licensees in collaboration with other DC government agencies and private organizations.
- Sponsored a Fair Housing Instructor Development Workshop for 51 instructors of fair housing.
- Monitored pre-licensing and continuing education programs.
- Published one newsletter and communicated via mass emails to licensees concerning current licensure information and regulatory issues.
- The Property Management Task force developed and revised the broker and salesperson pre-licensing education course subject area content outline inclusive of property and community association management. The Task Force also recommended a 3-hour property management pre-licensing course inclusive of community association management for all incoming applicants licensed in other jurisdictions. It developed core continuing education courses to include property and community association management for property managers, real estate brokers, and salespersons.
- Reviewed statutes and rule provisions governing the practice of real estate licensees to delete outdated provisions in conformance with present law.
- Drafted and recommended proposed legislation increasing the maximum monetary amount of a Real Estate Guaranty and Education claim per transaction from \$50,000 to \$100,000.
- Updated its email distribution list containing a data base

of over 15,000 addresses for the purpose of disseminating significant regulatory alerts to licensees. This system has enhanced the Commission's ability to notify licensees immediately of trends involving illegal practices that will result in disciplinary actions, and other important information on regulatory requirements.

- Approved 17 schools and programs to offer 182 approved courses through the CE Banking system.
- Maintained active involvement with ARELLO by serving as officers and committee chairpersons and forum leaders. One Commission member was recognized at the 2018 ARELLO Annual Conference for committee work completed on fair housing.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES THAT AFFECTED THE COMMISSION

The Commission developed and proposed legislation to increase the maximum amount of monies that claimants can collect from the fund from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per transaction to accommodate future claims reflecting higher amounts from the public.

The Commission proposed legislation to clarify the scope of practice for licensed property managers and to create pre-licensure education requirements for applicants seeking to possess a license as a property manager in the District of Columbia that includes education on the management of common interest communities.



FY '19 VISION

- Finalize fiscal year 2020 Real Estate Guaranty and Education Fund budget and continuous accounting of funds.
- Develop a pre-licensing course for property managers and publish regulations to require continuing education courses to include broker supervision, and core continuing education courses to include property management for property managers, brokers, and salespersons inclusive of community association management.
- Develop online and interactive webinars for licensees and expand the number of licensees for Commission-sponsored courses.
- Submit proposed legislation relating to the Real Estate Guaranty and Education amending a provision increasing the maximum amount of monies that claimants can collect from the fund from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per transaction consistent with present day real estate activities.
- Review the current bank of broker, salesperson, and property management questions on the real estate examinations to reassess validity and to monitor the effectiveness of new questions written on the broker, salesperson, and property management examinations.
- Review the current statute and regulations governing real estate comprehensively to accommodate industry changes and current regulatory needs.

OFFICIAL ACTIONS

Complaints/legal matters received - 46
Public Hearings held - 1
Commission-sponsored license training courses - 8
Fines imposed - 8 (totaling \$12,000)

Revocation- 1
Approved 32 schools to offer 182 courses

MEETING DATES

October 10, 2017
November 14, 2017
December 12, 2017
January 9, 2018
February 13, 2018
March 13, 2018
April 10, 2018
May 8, 2018
June 12, 2018
July 10, 2018
August - Recess
September 11, 2018

Website: <http://www.dcopla.com/realestate>

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Josephine Ricks, Broker, Chair
Frank Pietranton, Vice Chair
Ulani Gulstone, Attorney
Edward Downs, Broker
Christine Warnke, Consumer Member
David Forster, Salesperson
Danai Mattison Sky, Salesperson

COMMISSION STAFF

Leon Lewis, Executive Director
Patrice Richardson, Board Administrator
Cynthia Briggs, Program Manager
Kevin Cyrus, Educational Coordinator
Kathy Thomas, Education Specialist
Asia Dumas, Investigator
Stephanie Johnston, Program Support Specialist
Kia Winston, Esq., Legal Staff



IN MEMORIAM

Jo Ricks, Chair of the DC Real Estate Commission, a prominent real estate broker for over 25 years, a community activist in Washington's Logan Circle neighborhood, and a semi-professional musician for five decades, died October 25, 2018. She fought pancreatic cancer for the past three years.

Jo, born Josephine Holding Ricks in Mount Olive, North Carolina (the Pickle Capital of the South!), had lived in Washington for 50 years. Her early professional jobs in Washington included administrative positions with different private sector entities, but she found her calling as a real estate agent, concentrating her efforts in the vibrant Logan Circle section of the city. In 2009, she was appointed by then-Mayor Adrian Fenty to the DC Real Estate Commission and a few years later rose to the chairmanship of the Commission. She was an active participant in the national Association of Real Estate License Law Officials and served as its District One Vice President. Jo was an Associate Broker at City Houses, a boutique real estate firm based in DuPont Circle, where besides selling homes, she managed a large number of residences for Foreign Service officers stationed abroad.

Long active in the Episcopal Church, Jo at the time of her death served on the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Washington. She was a member of, and active participant in, St. George's Episcopal Church in Valley Lee, Maryland. The existing church was constructed in 1799, and is one of the oldest in Maryland.

Jo Ricks was married to Jeffrey Clark, a well-known international development specialist and widely published writer. They married in Washington in 1981 and lived their 37 years together in Logan Circle and at their second home on St. George Island, Maryland. In the waters of the Southern Potomac River, Jo and Jeff spent a

lot of time on several different boats they owned until the rigors of boat ownership dawned upon them. They were adventurous travelers, making their way in recent years to Ethiopia, South Africa, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. They toured the battlefields of Normandy in France and Stonehenge in Britain as well as spending considerable time in Key West, Florida. Earlier they made it to Cuba, Morocco, Nova Scotia and Kenya.

The musical career of Jo Ricks, known in some circles as The Diva, took a sharp turn in recent years when she suddenly pivoted from singing classic American standard ballads to rock 'n' roll. She was a founding member of Hook, Line & Sinker, a St. Mary's County, Maryland, based band which focused on cover songs of popular rock songs from the 1970s through more current times. Their CD entitled First Take in Reel Time was, by the standards of local semiprofessional bands, a big seller and their Southern Maryland concerts tended to be sold out performances. Jo was performing with her rock band as late as mid-September.

Jo's husband and close family members hope that all of those who have supported her during her illness know of their appreciation and gratitude for that successful attempt to keep her spirits and health elevated during that struggle. She remained true to her long-time advertising tag line, "Not Your Average Jo." She did not lose her spirit or zest for life during her epic struggle against cancer. Her radiant smile never dimmed.