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Alan Koslow
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Visionary Makes Things Happen by Thinking Outside the Box



There are people who can make things happen and change the course of communities for better or worse. One such person is Alan Koslow, a leading gaming, sports and entertainment lawyer who has been credited with helping shape Hollywood into the city it is today.

Often called a lobbyist for residential and commercial developers in Hollywood, Koslow insists he is a visionary, not a lobbyist. His passion for the area and his work are what motivate him to push for projects he believes are unique for Hollywood and will enhance the city. "I like to think of myself as a lawyer, not a lobbyist as I've been pegged. It is not just the political contacts; you need to think outside the box – figure out how to get things done and make it all come together. I like to excite people about a project. I like to win because we have the best project. I like to win because we figured out an angle nobody else thought of," he explained.

Koslow joined Hollywood-based Becker & Poliakoff as a partner in 1994, after resigning his post as Hollywood's city attorney in 1993. A shareholder and one of the more "famous" faces of the firm, Koslow leads Becker & Poliakoff's entertainment, gaming and sports law group, representing many of Hollywood's major developers, entrepreneurs, hotels, restaurants, as well as gaming companies, pari-mutuels and others. He is also responsible for developing the firm's property tax appeal and zoning practices.

One of a handful of Florida attorneys involved in the International Association of Gaming Attorneys and the American Bar Association's committee on gaming law, Koslow is also a member of the Florida Bar committee on entertainment and sports law.

He has represented national, publicly traded casino and lottery companies, gaming machine manufacturers and distributors, and pari-mutuel operators, including Pompano Park Racing owned by the Isle of Capri in Pompano. He led the negotiation and closing on the definitive acquisition agreements for the track and was successful in securing an agricultural tax exemption for half of all track land, saving his client hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings annually.

Koslow has drafted legislation to authorize new products for Florida's pari-mutuel industry and was instrumental in helping win passage of *Amendment 4* in 2004, allowing for slot machines at pari-mutuel facilities in Miami Dade and Broward Counties. He is currently working with industry leaders and developers to bring more gaming products and hospitality developments into South Florida, with an eye on Hollywood.

"The city has stated that one of its goals was to benefit from gaming, which it currently doesn't do. It is my goal to make sure that Hollywood realizes its goal, one way or another," Koslow said. "With gaming and entertainment coming to the city, there can be tremendous jobs created and additional entertainment meccas that people will enjoy. Florida cries out for more destination resort and gaming venues. The Isle of Capri and the Hard Rock are a good start, and both will get better over time," he said.



The Futurist

Koslow has played a leading role in the rebirth of Hollywood Beach, including the Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa, Trump Hollywood and a future 41-story hotel on A1A, just north of Hallandale Beach Boulevard. In addition, he has been credited for getting the approval of the city's planned 17-story, \$150 million four-star hotel/resort and garage to anchor Johnson Street, as well as the Hollywood Beach Marriott; for bringing the state and local governments together to propose a new stadium in Fort Lauderdale for the Baltimore Orioles; the approval of an additional 350 rooms for the Westin Diplomat; and many other projects, including the Sian, Radius and Ocean Palms. He represents the Walsh family's Ocean Properties for both the Hollywood Beach Marriott and the Johnson Street development.

"I still get goose bumps when I see the Westin Diplomat. I helped get that approved and to think the plans sat on my desk before it got up and running... wow!" he exclaimed.

"Alan is a great ambassador for progressive change and for all of Hollywood. He's been a great partner for me in projects," said Mark Kukulski, general manager of the Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa.

To draw businesses and developers to the downtown area and beach, Koslow obtained millions in financial incentives for all the downtown CRA developer clients, including Chip Abele, Steve Berman, Lane, WSG, JPI and MCZ. "It's about vision, thinking out of the box," he said. "I enjoy bringing new ideas to the table. The more complicated it is, the more I like it because I can figure it out," he continued. "There are great

development and redevelopment opportunities in Hollywood that are possible with the right strategy and winning attitude. All we need to do is be creative and be tenacious. We can bring unbelievable things to Hollywood.”

“Alan pioneered the use of financial incentives to bring business people and developers to downtown and the beach,” said Alan Becker, managing shareholder of Becker & Poliakoff. “He cares deeply about this community and his clients; he is passionate about his work, and it shows.”

Giving Back

The legal business means a hectic schedule. Yet, Koslow manages to find time to give back to the community, helping raise millions of dollars for local charities. “I love it, and I believe in it. My mom believed in giving back to the community. Everyone needs to find a cause they believe in and give both time and money,” he said.

Koslow sits on a number of charitable boards and enjoys chairing their fundraising events, including the Marti Huizenga Boys & Girls Club of Hollywood, the Hollywood Art & Culture Center, the Fort Lauderdale Film Festival, the Capital Campaign for the Broward Outreach Center, the Chamber of Commerce, among others.

For Koslow, the fundraising efforts allow him to mix business with pleasure. “My charitable work excites me. I try to create fun events where we all work together for causes we believe in,” he said.

“Alan is truly a role model,” said Joy Saterlee, executive director for the Hollywood Art & Culture Center. “He gives so much of his time and effort; he believes it is his responsibility as a person to do that.”

A founding member of the Greater Hollywood Arts Foundation board, which is responsible for ArtsPark in downtown Hollywood, Koslow has been recognized for his service to the community with numerous awards, including ArtServe’s *Professional ProBono Award*, Broward Outreach Center’s *Community Covenant Award* and the Chamber of Commerce *Community Spirit Award*.

On May 15, 2008, Koslow was awarded the Boys & Girls Club’s *Community Hero Award* for his outstanding contributions to the Marti Huizenga Boys & Girls Club of Hollywood. In September, he was named “Outstanding Trustee 2008” by the Florida Association of Museums (FAM). The award is presented to individuals who make significant contributions to the advancement of Florida’s museums, either locally or statewide. Koslow was nominated by Saterlee for his work with the Hollywood Art & Culture Center. “He’s so important to me, and the dedication and work he does is so important, that I nominated him for this,” she said.

Though tough in business, Koslow does have a soft side that shines through when he talks about his family. In fact, he gushes. Koslow and his wife have three children: daughter Starr is a surgeon, son Ian is a pre-law student at the University of Florida and their youngest, Tori, is a high school sophomore who enjoys debate.



At 54, Koslow values his family and the time they spend together. “Before, I was too young to really appreciate it. It’s nice to spend quality time with my wife, Sharon, and my three kids. My brothers and sister have also come to the area, so family has become more of a priority now in my life. I’m looking forward to growing older and relaxing more,” he said. “I remember taking my son to his first Super Bowl... that’s what it’s all about,” he beamed as he looked at a photo of his son on his desk.

Koslow enjoys living in Hollywood. “I try to live my life to the fullest and take advantage of what Florida has to offer,” he said.

Koslow doesn’t see work slowing down and believes he has a tremendous opportunity to make more contributions to Hollywood and the legal world. He established the Alan B. Koslow Endowed Scholarship in Entertainment, Gaming & Sports Law at Hofstra University School of Law, his alma mater. He also gives of his time, speaking on zoning and gaming law and works hard at creating relationships with his clients to help further their business goals.

He has his eyes on Block 55 near the Hollywood Circle. “We knocked the Greyhound Bus station down, now we need to clean up that area. The idea is to build an upscale retail and residential mix with beautiful buildings. Imagine looking down Hollywood Boulevard to the ocean with iconic buildings forming an H. That is what it is all about – having a vision and finding creative ways to make it happen,” he said.

Koslow is also taking his ideas outside Florida. Presently, he is working with a major land owner on a casino/hotel venture in Panama. Wanting to be ahead of the curve, he doesn’t sit back and wait for things to happen. “I try to make it happen; I like to see the results of our hard work.

“We are at the very beginning of gaming law in Florida. It dominates a lot in the newspapers – the Seminoles, the Diplomat and the racetrack. The amount of business that will be generated from gaming and entertainment will be tremendous. Just wait, and you will see my vision come true,” he said. ④