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J.S. Waterman Langone Chapel

580 Commercial Street, Boston, MA



OBITUARY

Carl M. Sapers

JULY 16, 1932 - JULY 18, 2018



Carl Sapers died on Wednesday after a brief illness.

Boston lawyer with a wide-ranging corporate career who specialized in working with architects. He was a partner and then managing partner at Hill and Barlow for 45 years, retiring in 2002.

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He was one of the country's pre-eminent lawyers in architecture and construction law. He was awarded the American Institute of Architects' Allied Professions Medal in 1975 for outstanding achievement in a non-design profession and taught and published widely on the subject.

Born in Boston in 1932 and educated at Harvard College and Harvard Law School, he joined the law firm of Hill and Barlow and after a leave to serve on the Massachusetts Crime Commission returned to become a partner in 1966. He traveled to the Middle East on behalf of The Architects Collaborative in connection with a project for the University of Baghdad in 1959. By the time of his AIA award, he had represented more than 50 architectural firms as general or special counsel. Among those were Hugh Stubbins and Associates, Shepley Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott, Sert Jackson and Associates, Jung/Brannen and PietroBelluschi. In 1968, he became general counsel to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, a role he continued in until the early 2000s. He also served as interim counsel to the AIA, which made him an honorary member in 1988. His practice became international in scope.

In 1972, he began teaching a course called "Legal Problems in the Construction Process" to students in civil engineering and architecture at MIT. Thereafter he became an Adjunct Professor of Legal Practice in Design at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design from 1984 to 1993 and an Adjunct Professor of Studies in Professional Practice in Architecture from 1993 to 2009.

He retired from Hill and Barlow in 2002 after 45 years during which he mentored young lawyers and rose to become managing partner. He retired from the Graduate School of Design in 2010. During his career he participated in a wide range of public-spirited activities. He founded the Foundation for Brookline housing which sought to promote housing for black families in the suburb in which he lived. He later served for nine years as the town's moderator. Toward the end of his life, he was a prominent member of a mostly Canadian group that successfully opposed the development of Liquid Natural Gas near Passamaquoddy Bay in Maine.

A proud liberal Democrat, he was an avid sailor, reader, lover of classical music, and cooking, whose favorite activity at his summer house in St. Andrews, NB, Canada was digging for clams and foraging for chanterelles and cooking the results into wonderful concoctions. He leaves his wife of more than 50 years, Judith Thompson Sapers, his children, Jonathan, Rachel and Benjamin, and five grandchildren. Also survived by his brother, William R. Sapers, as well as nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Service will be held at a later date. For online condolences, please visit:
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Carl M. Sapers

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Lori Noto

August 22, 2018

I just heard moments ago about Carl leaving us. I am heartbroken. He was such a force in my life, shaping and supporting my confidence in myself and my beliefs, from the late 90's through my current career. While I was working at the Liberty we would visit over dinner -- i'll never forget his stories, his smile, his wisdom. The world is less, now.

Sending my love and thoughts for all of you -- my most sincerest of condolences --

Lori Noto

Wolfram(Wok) Rohde-Liebenau

August 15, 2018

Carl has been a wonderful friend for 67 years – welcoming me as an exchange student from WestBerlin at Harvard College in 1951. We visited each other ever since and I was grateful for his and Judith's wonderful friendship and international hospitality to me and my family.

David Hoffman

August 9, 2018

Carl was one of my mentors at Hill & Barlow, and I am grateful for his guidance and encouragement. When I was a very junior lawyer, I told him that I was interested in alternative dispute resolution. He not only encouraged me but offered to co-author an article with me (on the use of summary judgment in arbitration -- then considered a novel idea). Carl, along with other senior lawyers at Hill & Barlow, insisted that law should be more than just a way to make a living but rather a true profession, and that set the firm apart in terms of its commitment to teaching, public service, and pro bono work. Carl had a big heart and a great mind. May his memory be a blessing to all who knew him.

Julie Idlet

August 8, 2018

My heart is broken. I am so sad. I loved visiting with Carl. They are some of my most treasured memories. I still remember fondly going out on the sailboat at St. Andrews and

having him show us some of his favorite places. The twinkle in Carl's eyes will be with me always.

Patricia Huston

July 29, 2018

Bob and I were most saddened to hear that Carl is no longer with us. We knew him from St Andrews. For me it all began when he and Judy came to our wedding in August 2011. Bob had been their summertime neighbour for decades.

We shared lovely suppers and sunny visits together. He and Judy hosted wonderful parties on the 4th of July replete with fireworks over the water. And they both took me under their wing to share some of their love of St Andrews.

Bob and I will miss the twinkle in his eyes, his sharp wit and sharing engaging and wide-ranging discussions.

Our deepest condolences to Judy and all his family.

Trish Huston and Bob Clark

EMILIANO DUCH

July 25, 2018

Our condolences to Judith and the family. Carl and his family were an inspiration for us and I imagine for many. His values transpired and enriched us and our children, we will always be thankful for having known him and learned from him. A bit of him is within us forever.

The Duch Clerici family

Trevor J Hall

July 24, 2018

A true gentleman shewing compassion, tolerance and wisdom he welcomed an unlettered graduate from the other Cambridge to his home many times wherein I was able to glimpse his wonderful family and friends and his powerful intellect.

I will miss him.

My best wishes to Judith and his family.

Ann Chaintreuil

July 24, 2018

Rennie joins me in sending our sympathy to Carl's family.

What a wonderful man, liberal and smart, generous and engaging. I am forever grateful for the 10 years or so I spent in the NCARB family. Carl was the reason so many of us stayed involved in this organization. It was a pleasure to be in that same room when his mind was in full swing.

Ted Mularz

July 23, 2018

Carl was a giant among friends. As a member of the NCARB Board of Directors and president, I was very appreciative of Carl's participation in all aspects of the organization. Not only did he provide essential legal advice but he was a mentor, advisor, and dear friend. Carl's input and advice on all matters be they legal, educational, procedural or related to professional conduct, was unparalleled. I have many great memories of business as well as pleasure with Carl. He will be missed by so many that he touched as attorney and friend.

Harold Petersen

July 23, 2018

Carl was one of the great ones. I had the good fortune of getting to know Carl and Judy through the Foundation for Brookline Housing. We had many memorable meetings in their home in Brookline. Carl not only recognized a problem, but he did something about it. Our town of Brookline is a better place for the person he was and the action he took.

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