

Michael W. Davis

Counsel

Environment & Energy Industry Group Chair

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OVERVIEW:

Michael W. Davis is an attorney with Barley Snyder and concentrates his practice in the areas of environmental, real estate, agribusiness, higher education and municipal law. Mike's more than 30 years of practice have provided him with experience representing a wide range of clients ranging from large Fortune 500 companies to small closely held businesses, agricultural ventures, colleges, economic development companies, industrial development organizations and government entities including counties, townships, boroughs, zoning hearing boards, housing authorities, and industrial development authorities.

Environmental

As chair of Barley Snyder's Environmental Law Group, Mike routinely assists his clients with the environmental aspects of real estate and business transactions including site remediation, permitting, cleanup compliance, and Brownfield development. Mike's 30-plus years of experience in the environmental area have provided him with ample experience interfacing with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on regulatory issues. Additionally, Mike has extensive experience in handling issues regarding:

- Act 2 including attaining relief of liability and Act 2 Buyer-Seller Agreements
- HSCAandCERCLA
- TSCA
- RCRA
- The Nutrient Management Act and Act 6 compliance
- The Chesapeake Bay Strategy Initiative
- Marcellus Shale leasing and contracting/permitting issues associated with natural gas removal and

fracking procedures

- Environmental regulatory compliance issues including EPCRA Section 313 Form R reporting and lead based paint notifications and enforcement actions

Recently, Mike has handled high profile environmental projects including the Northwest Gateway Project and the Turkey Hill Experience:

- The Northwest Gateway Projectis a two phase project that involves the restructuring and redevelopment of an entire quadrant of the City of Lancaster. Mike has served as the primary counsel for the project partners on both phases of the Project. The first phase included the redevelopment of a 47-acre portion of the former Armstrong World Industries, Inc.s Liberty Street Flooring Plant. Working on behalf of Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster General Hospital and EDC Finance Corporation, Mike assisted in securing and negotiating appropriate legal documentation for federal, state and local funding including Business In Our Sites and Growing Greener II funding. Mike secured the rezoning of the 47-acre parcel as well as an Act 2 Buyer-Seller Agreement for impacted soils and groundwater at the site. Mike also negotiated appropriate agreements with the impacted municipalities to assure coordinated development of the site and related infrastructure improvements. The second phase of the Project involves the relocation of Norfolk Southern Railway Companys Dillerville Rail Yard. On behalf of Franklin & Marshall College and Lancaster General Hospital, Mike successfully negotiated a Master Development Agreement with Norfolk Southern Railway Company that details the process for the development and construction of the new rail yard over a former municipal landfill with the existing Dillerville Rail Yard then transferring to the College and the Hospital. This second phase of the Project involves securing Act 2 clearance for the new rail yard site and significant infrastructure improvements. When complete, this $70 million plus project will transform the northwest quadrant of the City of Lancaster and will provide Franklin & Marshall College and Lancaster General Hospital with the opportunity to develop a state-of-the-art Meds and Eds campus.
- The Turkey Hill Experienceproject is a private/public partnership aimed at redeveloping an abandoned industrial facility in Columbia Borough, Lancaster County into a major tourist attraction. Mike was retained by the Borough to provide guidance on Act 2 issues and the site clean-up plan. Mike successfully negotiated an Act 2 Buyer-Seller Agreement positioning this unique project to move forward to completion.

Real Estate

Mike's real estate practice dovetails with his work in the environmental, municipal and agribusiness areas. In addition to land use, zoning, easement, tax assessment appeals, leasing and conveyance matters, Mike has handled a number of eminent domain matters.

- In a recent prominent takings case, Mike served as a primary counsel to Lauxmont Holdings, LLC, the developer and condemnee, in both the validity and valuation trials regarding 79 acres of land at the Lauxmont Farms property (Highpoint) in Lower Windsor Township, York County, Pennsylvania.

This highly controversial case involved York Countys taking of land for a public park where the land in question was approved for development and under development by Lauxmont Holdings. While the Court of Common Pleas upheld the taking, a York County jury awarded Lauxmont Holdings a judgment of $17.25 million plus interest at the conclusion of the valuation trial. The Countys initial offer of just compensation was only $2.0 million.

Agribusiness

In the agribusiness area, Mike has significant experience with securing zoning, soil conservation district approvals and permitting associated with developing Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). These CAFO projects also typically involve Nutrient Management Act and Act 6 issues including manure importer and exporter agreements. Mike is also well-versed on nutrient credit trading and related trading agreements as well as storm water issues associated with agricultural operations.

Higher Education

In the higher education area, Mike serves as a primary contact for several private colleges and a community college in the region on issues relating to board governance, redevelopment activities, non-profit status, environmental compliance and environmental audits, safety and security concerns including police powers, faculty, personnel and student matters, contract review and negotiation including sole source contracting, zoning and land development, and real estate acquisition and leasing. Mike is experienced in dealing with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Campus Security Act and is a member of the National Association of College and University Attorneys.

Municipal

In his municipal practice, Mike focuses on the representation of public bodies including boroughs, municipal authorities, economic development companies, industrial development companies, and zoning hearing boards. Mike works closely with municipal officials and staff in dealing with public bidding issues, the Sunshine Law, the Right-to-Know Law, the Ethics Act, the Eminent Domain Code, zoning determinations, permitting issues, Environmental Hearing Board proceedings, DEP enforcement actions, leasing issues, reviewing and revising bid specifications and construction contracts, vendor contracts and personnel issues.

- Mike serves as the solicitor for theLetterkenny Industrial Development Authority(LIDA) in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. LIDA is a local reuse authority under theDefense Base Closureand Realignment (BRAC) regulations and is responsible for the development of the Cumberland Valley Business Park. As solicitor, Mike negotiated with the United States Environmental Protection Agency one of the only depth limited conveyances of real estate in the United States under the BRAC guidelines and finalized the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Defense and LIDA. In addition, Mike provides guidance on LIDA board of director issues and prepares appropriate legal documents to facilitate the transfer of the BRAC property from LIDA to third parties within the business park.

EDUCATION:

- Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law, J.D.
- Franklin & Marshall College, B.A., Phi Beta Kappa

ADMISSIONS:

- Pennsylvania
- U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania
- U. S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

PRACTICE AREAS:

- Real Estate
- Higher Education
- Crisis Management
- Land Use

INDUSTRY GROUPS:

- Environment & Energy
- Municipal
- Food & Agribusiness
- Senior Living
- Health Care
- Construction

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

EDC of Lancaster County
Board member

Tennis Central
Former Board member

EDC Finance Corp. of Lancaster County
Former President of the board

Lancaster Family YMCA
Former board member

St. Anne School
Former school board member and former president

Lancaster Integrated Specialized Transportation System (LISTS)
Former board member

RECOGNITIONS:

- The Best Lawyers in America, Litigation Real Estate (2027)
- Top Lawyers of Chester County List - Municipal Court, Daily Local News (2025, 2027)
- Select Lawyer, Polk-Lepson Research Group; Environmental Law
- Corporate American Legal Elite Agricultural Ventures (2015)
- Pennsylvania Super Lawyers; Real Estate Law (2014)

MEMBERSHIPS:

- American, Pennsylvania and Lancaster Bar Associations
- Pennsylvania Borough Solicitor's Association
- National Association of College and University Attorneys

PRESENTATION:

- "Ever-Changing Challenges of Construction & Development in PA", Wake up with Barley: A Morning on Real Estate (June 2018)

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Penn State University Continuing Education Program for Realtors (Instructor)

RELATED NEWS:

- Barley Snyder Attorneys and Real Estate Practice Earn Recognition on 2026 Top Lawyers of Chester County List
  August 13, 2026
- Barley Snyder Attorneys Named to 2025 Top Lawyers of Chester County List by Daily Local News
  July 18, 2025
- Barley Snyder Welcomes Attorney Alice Solomon to Malvern Office
  June 16, 2025
- Barley Snyder Attorneys Named to the Lists of 2014 Pennsylvania Super Lawyers and Pennsylvania Rising Stars
  May 27, 2014