

# CONCRETE THOUGHTS

## A Love Letter To REBNY 01/17/12

Even with a staggering 264 networking events logged in 2011, the shindigs hosted last year by the Real Estate Board of New York managed to stand out among the meet-and-greet fray.

Throughout my career, I have been active in many different trade organizations and have always made networking a significant component of my annual brokerage business plan. Networking can take many forms. In 2011, I chalked up 264 such events, or more than one per business day on average. Clearly, this aspect of my business plan is something that I focus great attention on, as business opportunities frequently seem to be generated from these interactions.

While there are many wonderful trade organizations out there, one of the best, and one of the most beneficial and productive for my firm and I has been the Real Estate Board of New York.

This week, REBNY is celebrating its 116th Annual Banquet, so

I thought it appropriate to recognize the tremendous work that the board does on behalf of our industry. It also goes without saying that the personal success achieved by Paul Massey and myself, and the success of Massey Knakal, would not be close to what it has been without our involvement in REBNY. The hundreds of solid relationships we have forged, and the knowledge we have obtained through our active participation in the organization, have been priceless.



**Robert Knakal**

Our involvement in the Real Estate Board of New York began right from the start of our careers. In 1984, Paul and I began reading all of the trade publications and it became apparent that REBNY held a prominent position within the industry. We immedi-

ately became members and, shortly thereafter, noticed that REBNY had a Sales Brokers Committee. Regular attendance at the committee lunches and events followed, leading to wonderful and lasting relationships with other committee members. As time has gone on, Paul and I have made other rewarding relationships with our fellow sales brokers through involvement with this committee.

Over the years, I've become active in several other REBNY committees. I have also served on the Board of Governors since 2000 and on the Executive Committee since 2004. This involvement has afforded me the opportunity to witness, firsthand, the incredible amount of work that the board does on behalf of our industry.

We are very fortunate to have Steven Spinola serving as REBNY's president. Steve's background in city government made him an excellent

candidate for the position in 1986, when he left the Ed Koch administration to join REBNY. Since then, Steve has been a leader in our industry from a number of perspectives. He is a thought-leader and has an uncanny ability to shepherd industry leaders, sometimes with disparate perspectives, to emerge with a unified voice. Add to this his dexterity with respect to city and state legislative leaders and we have an unparalleled captain steering REBNY's ship.

To be sure, Steve is backed up by a highly competent staff with a diverse array of skill sets. Their collective knowledge of issues impacting New York City's real estate industry is unsurpassed.

In addition to having a tremendous executive staff, REBNY is also lucky to have über-broker Mary Ann Tighe of CB Richard Ellis as its chairwoman. Mary Ann has brought her energy, dedication and multiple tal-

ents to the board and has done an inspiring job leading the organization since her appointment in 2010.

The efforts of all of these people have been focused on one thing: making the industry better for each of its participants.

Clearly, I personally owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the Real Estate Board of New York for all it has done for me and for my firm. I encourage any of you who are not REBNY members to consider joining and becoming active. It will be one of the best moves you could make to enhance your real estate career.

[Rknakal@masseyknakal.com](mailto:Rknakal@masseyknakal.com)

*Robert Knakal is the chairman and founding partner of Massey Knakal Realty Services and in his career has brokered the sale of more than 1,175 properties, having a market value in excess of \$7.8 billion.*