

Katie Edwards-Walpole



Of Counsel

West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale
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Practice & Industry Areas

- Real Estate Law
- Environmental & Land Use Law
- Government Affairs Law & Lobbying

Education

- Florida International University, Miami, FL, J.D., 2012
- Clemson University, Clemson, SC, B.S., 2002

Bar & Court Admissions

- Florida, 2013

Overview

Katie Edwards-Walpole hails from a Central Florida beef cattle ranching family. She learned, from a young age, that women in agriculture have a strong influence on the success of a farm and whether it continues as part of a family's future. Katie developed a keen understanding of how stakeholder groups influence government regulations while serving as Executive Director of the Dade County Farm Bureau from 2003 to 2010, a role she assumed at the age of 22. Today, Katie's diverse clientele is comprised primarily of women-owned farms across Florida as well as real estate developers, plant nurseries, horse boarding and training facilities, and cattle ranchers.

Katie also counsels equestrian clients involved in all stages of the site selection and development process, from preliminary due diligence to the presentation, evaluation and negotiation of offers to purchase, and ultimately managing the process for obtaining

environmental permits, floodplain approvals, building permit approvals and exemptions, and site development approvals and waivers. Katie also advises agricultural landowners on applications for agricultural classification or “Greenbelt,” as well as appeals of denials and assessments to local value adjustment boards.

Katie’s professional, policymaking and personal experiences allow her to provide clients with a pragmatic yet persistent approach to cost-savings. Katie is skilled in resolving permit conditions through the meticulous application of a rule’s definitions, legislative intent, and process for adopting and challenging prohibited governmental exactions. Katie saved a condominium association client over \$700,000 in construction costs and associated design and permitting fees by successfully challenging a city-imposed building permit condition. Katie also spared a client from spending over \$400,000 to connect to municipal water by successfully challenging permit conditions.

In addition, Katie helps clients navigate the state’s five water management districts. She has represented clients before the South Florida Water Management District facing a variety of challenges, including the negotiation of cattle grazing lease agreements for ranchers, the purchase of surplus government lands, release of permit-imposed conservation easements, procurement involving a design-build contract to construct a stormwater treatment area, representation of contractors during mediation involving contractual disputes, the transfer and application of Water Use and Right of Way permits, and exchanges of interests in real property. She has also negotiated franchise fee agreements and exchanges of real property interests.

Representative Matters

- Negotiated an exchange of land interests between a water management district and national media company for the relocation of an AM radio broadcast facility
- Secured land use and permitting approvals for a water bottling facility in Central Florida
- Saved a condominium association client over \$700,000 in construction costs and associated design and permitting fees by successfully challenging a city-imposed prohibited permit exaction
- Prevented client from spending over \$400,000 to connect to municipal water by successfully challenging permit conditions
- Served as a consultant to a large South Florida County on agricultural building and zoning matters
- Represented parimutuel facility owner before the Value Adjustment Board, securing approval of agricultural classification for its training track and horse stables
- Negotiated franchise fee agreement with a city for client’s natural gas and liquid petroleum pipelines
- Secured variance approvals for energy client’s terminalling and storage operations

Honors

- Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Linda C. Cox Champion of Justice Award, 2013 and 2014
- Soref JCC Humanitarian of the Year, 2016
- Florida Association of Community Developers, Legislator of the Year, 2016
- Florida Cattlemen’s Association Lawmaker of the Year, 2018
- Dade County Farm Bureau Hall of Honor, 2008
- Greater Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce Agriculturist of the Year, 2005

Publications & Presentations

- “Balancing Floodplain Management Regulations for Agricultural Structures with State Statutory Building Permit Exemptions for Non-Residential Farm Buildings, Fences and Signs,” Palm Beach County Agricultural Enhancement Council, presenter, 2022
- “Rising to the Challenge: Adapting to Sea Level Rise,” Fort Lauderdale Forum, co-presenter, 2018
- “South Florida Water Quality and Quantity Challenges,” Florida Water Forum, moderator, 2015
- Medical Marijuana, Sayfie Review Florida Leaders Summit, panelist, 2014

Professional Associations & Memberships

- Broward County Bar Association
- Florida Bar Association, Environmental and Land Use Law Section
- American Agricultural Law Association
- American Agri-Women, 2001-2008, Secretary, 2004-2006, National Convention Chairman, 2006

Civic & Community Service

- City of Plantation Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, Chairman, 2022-Present
- Florida House of Representatives, State Representative, 2012-2018
- Temple Kol Ami Emanu-El, Board of Directors, 2012, 2022-Present