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Robinson+Cole Helps Reopen New London Harbor Lighthouse

Lawyers' pro bono representation results in first lighthouse tour since 2015

NEW LONDON, CT (March 18, 2019) – Robinson+Cole lawyers [John P. Casey](#) and [Evan J. Seeman](#) represented the New London Maritime Society *pro bono* in litigation that resulted in the New London Harbor Lighthouse being reopened to the public after the City issued a cease and desist order that prohibited public tours.

In 2015, the New London Maritime Society was barred from hosting tours as a result of neighbor complaints over the fear that the Lighthouse would become a commercial tourist destination. Mr. Casey and Mr. Seeman have worked on the case from the initial appeal of the cease and desist order, which was initially upheld by the New London Zoning Board of Appeals, to an appeal of the Board's decision to the Connecticut Superior Court that resulted in the order being overturned. The Honorable Kimberly A. Knox ruled that small-scale visits to the lighthouse by request were consistent with historic use of the lighthouse.

While the appeal was pending, the Society improved access to the lighthouse by creating a path that went down the middle of the narrow property, rather than visitors having to go too close to either of the neighbors. As part of Judge Knox's decision, she remanded the case to the Board to determine the proper scope of public visits to the lighthouse. Mr. Casey represented the Society during that process, which resulted in a decision that was issued February 28, 2019.

Mr. Casey concentrates his practice on land use and environmental matters, with particular emphasis on coastal management, development, permitting, and littoral and riparian water rights. He is the partner in charge of the firm's New London office. Mr. Seeman concentrates his practice in land use and zoning, real property litigation, and municipal law. They are both members of Robinson+Cole's [Land Use](#) and [Real Estate + Development](#) Groups.

First built in 1761 and rebuilt in 1801, the New London Harbor Lighthouse stands 89 feet tall making it the oldest and the tallest on Long Island Sound. It is also the fourth oldest lighthouse in the nation and was used during the American Revolutionary War. The New London Maritime Society became the owners of the Lighthouse in 2009 through the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000.

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