

## Vinette D. Godelia



Shareholder

Tampa Office

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### PRACTICE AREAS

Land Development/Land  
Use/Zoning

Environmental & Natural  
Resources

Litigation- Land Use,  
Environmental & Property Rights  
Real Estate

Government & Administrative  
Tax

### OVERVIEW

Vinette Godelia is a skilled negotiator and highly-regarded litigator in the Land Development, Zoning & Environmental arena. She represents private and public sector clients before local, regional and state agencies, courts and elected bodies regarding land use and real estate development issues.

Vinette focuses her practice on the defense and negotiation of complex approvals under Florida's growth management laws and local government regulations. She leads, coordinates and oversees legal and expert consultant teams on complex planning issues throughout the state. She is also experienced in challenging, securing and defending development entitlements in formal hearings before the Division of Administrative Hearings and circuit and appellate courts.

Vinette counsels clients in a wide-range of matters involving entitlements, permitting, compliance, licensing, rezonings, special districts, Development of Regional Impact (DRIs) review and rescission, comprehensive planning, zoning and strategic planning as well as development agreements. She is experienced in developing strategic and targeted revisions to comprehensive plans and land development regulations to facilitate site-specific project development and the negotiation of local development order terms.

Vinette is skilled in understanding complex land use intricacies in relation to residential, commercial and mixed-use communities, as well as for industrial facilities including mines and oil and gas exploration and production companies.

Prior to joining the Firm, Vinette was a Shareholder in a boutique law firm in Tallahassee, Florida. Before her legal career, she worked with Visit Florida, the state's official tourism organization, in various capacities including public relations and destination sales. She completed her career with Visit Florida as head of the Mid-Atlantic office in Washington, D.C.

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## REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Represents Mosaic, the world's leading integrated producer of concentrated phosphate and potash, in permitting issues for their mine operations including work on over 50,000 acres in Manatee, DeSoto, Polk and Hardee Counties. Representation includes large area approvals, DRI rescissions, creation of comprehensive plan mining overlays, special exceptions, master plans and other development orders and resource impact approvals.

Routinely negotiates with local regional and state agencies on approvals for oil and gas exploration and production in Calhoun, Santa Rosa and Gulf counties within the state of Florida.

Represented the New Wales, Bartow Chemical Plant and Green Bay facilities in developing the regulatory and public involvement strategy for DRI exemptions and local government review of gypsum stack expansions in Polk County, Florida. The entitlements were supported by negotiations with the Department of Economic Opportunity and Department of Environmental Protection on mitigation of impacts involving significant monitoring requirements.

Represented Duke Energy with the development process for a new Combined Cycle Power Plant. The matter involved procuring land use entitlements including comprehensive plan amendments and rezoning approvals for a 1,640-megawatt combined cycle natural gas plant in Citrus County.

Represented Duke Energy in amending the Hamilton County Comprehensive Plan and the Hamilton County Land Development Code to allow the establishment of solar generating facilities in rural areas. The proposed amendments add solar electrical generating facilities as a permitted activity, governed by special permit. The companion land development code amendment add definitional components and performance standards for purposes of providing objective criteria for evaluating and siting a request for a special permit to locate such facilities.

Represented Seminole Electric in the development process for a new Combined Cycle Power Plant. The matter involved procuring land use entitlements including comprehensive plan amendments and rezoning approvals for a 1,130-megawatt plant in Putnam County.

Represented client in the reworking of historic entitlements for a mixed use project located off Florida Interstate 4 in Polk County, Florida. The matter required the negotiation of significant changes to the regulatory scheme applicable to the project including the removal of development of regional impact restrictions through novel interpretations of state and local law, approval of new comprehensive plan and code amendments, negotiation of infrastructure related development agreements and other related issues.

Represented developer and conducted due diligence review before the City of Tallahassee and other community groups to allow the purchase and development of student focused multi-family housing development in a historic African-American community. The project was met with significant public opposition and required negotiation of terms that the neighborhood could find acceptable to incorporate design elements and uses supportive of the history of the area and the neighborhood.

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## PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Florida State University

The Center for Real Estate Education & Research, Executive Board, Board Member, 2022-Present

## The Florida Bar

Real Property, Probate Trust Law Section, 2010-Present  
Membership & Inclusion Committee, 2020-Present  
Development & Land Use Committee, 2014-Present

City, County and Local Government Law Section, 2008-Present

Environmental and Land Use Law Section, 2002-Present

American College of Environmental Lawyers (ACOEL), Fellow, 2020

American Planning Association (APA) Florida Chapter, 2014-Present

Zonta International, 2014-2021

Florida State University College of Law

Juris Doctor Advisor, 2014-2021

Adjunct Professor

Life Cycle of a Real Estate Deal, Spring 2020

Practicing Environmental Law in Florida, Spring 2019

Florida Real Estate Law Practice – Beyond the Fundamentals, Spring 2018

Foundation for Leon County Schools, 2017-2019

Children's Home Society, Pro Bono Counsel, 2004-2017

Big Bend Habitat for Humanity, 2008-2014

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## RECOGNITION

*The Best Lawyers in America*, 2018-2023

*Florida Super Lawyers*, 2020-2023

Rising Star, 2010-2012

*Florida Trend*, Florida Legal Elite, 2014-2015, 2018-2019, 2022

Leadership Florida, Class XXIX

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## PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Land Development News Update, Publications: [Hillsborough County Proposes Significant Updates to Comprehensive Plan](#)

Stearns Weaver Miller News Update | October 2022

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Events: [Turning Dirt – Opportunities for Women in Real Estate Development](#)

**Events: [Women in Planning -> Making Moves](#)**

APA Florida Planning Conference | | September 2022

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**Government Affairs News Update, Land Development News Update, Publications: [Hillsborough County Proposes Significant Updates to Comprehensive Plan](#)**

Stearns Weaver Miller News Update | July 2022

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**Government Affairs News Update, Land Development News Update, Publications: [What's Developing | Fall 2021](#)**

Stearns Weaver Miller News Update | September 2021

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**Events: [Exactions Toolbox: From Dedications to Development Fees, a Legal Primer](#)**

2021 Florida APA Conference: UF Speaker Sessions | | September 2021

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**Events: [Growth Management - Legislative & Case Law Update](#)**

The Florida Bar Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020, 2021 | August 2021

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**Events: [Practical Guide to Zoning and Land Use Law Challenges to Development Orders](#)**

NBI Inc. | August 2013

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**Events: [What's Left of Development Permitting](#)**

Legislative & Case Law Update Seminar, The Florida Bar Real Property | April 2013

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**Events: [Comprehensive Planning & Impact Fees Under the New SB 360 Paradigm - Environmental and Land use Considerations for Real Estate Transactions Seminar](#)**

Florida Bar Environmental and Land Use Law Section and the Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section | | June 2010

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**Events: [What's Ahead for DRIs?](#)**

Growth Management, Energy, Climate Change and the Environmental Short Course, Florida Chamber, 2009 & 2010 | April 2010

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**Events: [Implementation, Cluster Development, Urban Infill, Reducing VMT](#)**

Energy & Climate Change Panel, Florida Chamber's Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School | July 2009

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**Events: [The Intersection of Transportation and Florida Law](#)**

Planning Law and Ethics Workshop, Florida Section of the Institute of Engineers (FSITE) | June 2009

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**Events: [Understand the Development and Utilization of the Comprehensive Plan](#)**

Land Use Law: Current Issues in Subdivisions, Annexation and Zoning, NBI, Inc. | February 2009

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**Publications: [Environmental Agencies, Florida Administrative Practice](#)**

The Florida Bar | August 2008

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**Events: [Litigating Land Use](#)**

Litigating Land Use Conference, CLE International | March 2008

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**Publications:** [Administrative and Judicial Review of Land Use Decisions](#)

Florida Land Use and Environmental Law | November 2006

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## NEWSROOM

**In the Media:** [Movers: New Arrivals](#)

The National Law Journal | | October 2021

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**Firm Announcements:** [Carl Eldred Joins Stearns Weaver Miller's Statewide Land Development, Zoning & Environmental Practice](#)

| September 2021

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**Firm Announcements:** [Stearns Weaver Miller Expands Statewide Land Development, Zoning & Environmental Practice with Five New Additions](#)

| September 2021

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## EDUCATION

J.D., *with honors*, Florida State University School of Law, 2002

B.S., *with high honors*, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, 1995

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## ADMISSIONS

Florida