



by Douglas H. Frazer

## Our Village Attorney

**Fox Point's Village Attorney is Eric Larson.** Larson, a partner with Arenz, Molter, Macy, Riffle & Larson S.C., has served in this contracted role since 2004.

Wisconsin law does not specify the responsibilities of the Village attorney. Fortunately, the Wisconsin League of Municipalities has provided guidance; thus the Village has entrusted our Village attorney with the following responsibilities:

- Provides legal advice and opinions to the Village board, other boards and commissions, and to department heads.
- Recommends and prepares resolutions, ordinances, and other legal documents, including writing new ordinances or conforming old ordinances to new law.
- Serves as the Village's legal adviser on all legal issues and represents the Village's interest in legal proceedings.
- Attends Village board meetings, many meetings of the Plan Commission, and as appropriate, meetings of other boards or commissions.
- Reviews governing body agendas and agenda packets to identify potential legal problems – including those involving the open meetings and the open records laws.
- Develops policies and procedures to standardize operations and ensure the Village is proceeding lawfully.
- Ensures that Village bodies are acting consistently with due process requirements and are making an adequate evidentiary record of their deliberations and actions.
- Assists the Village in connection with land acquisition and development. Working in tandem with the Director of Public Works, this frequently includes the negotiation and drafting of easements. (An easement is written legal permission a property owner gives to another party for access to the property. For instance, an easement gives a village a right of way and more ready access to drinking water, storm water, or sewer lines.)
- Prepares or reviews contracts on a large range of legal issues as well as advises the Village on contractual matters.
- Advises Village officials regarding their obligations under state and municipal ethics codes.
- Works on the Village's team to serve Fox Point's mission statement: To protect and enhance the quality of life of its residents by providing cost-effective, efficient and innovative services, preserving and maintaining Village neighborhoods and public amenities, fostering community pride and spirit, and encouraging active citizen participation.

The Village Board and Village manager consult with the municipal attorney when the Village or its officers or employees are the subject of legal actions, such as complaints or subpoenas. Through the department head, staff consults with the municipal attorney for legal guidance, including code and ordinance interpretation.

Larson very much enjoys being Fox Point's attorney. He appreciates the fact that Village residents are well-educated and understand the importance of good government. Larson observes that Fox Point residents are "to an impressive degree" involved and engaged in Village matters.

Larson grew up in Northfield, Minnesota. He earned his undergraduate degree in 1987 at Earlham College and graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1990. After law school he served as an assistant county attorney in Minnesota. Larson has been with his present firm since 1996 and focuses on local government matters.

The firm concentrates its practice of law on representing municipalities and does not represent property owners, developers, or citizen groups. It represents approximately 50 municipal entities in South-east Wisconsin, including Greendale, West Milwaukee, St. Francis, Muskego, Delafield (town), Pewaukee (city), Oconomowoc Lake, Mukwonago (town), Summit, Sussex, Slinger, Richfield, and dozens more. His firm also regularly serves as special counsel for municipalities when they face unusual municipal concerns, currently including La Crosse, Brookfield (city), Menomonee Falls, and Waukesha. Larson is a regular speaker at annual attorneys' meetings of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and the Wisconsin Towns Association.


All nine lawyers in his firm focus their practice on various aspects of municipal law and all bring their expertise to the representation of each municipal client, including Fox Point.

Neither Larson nor his firm represents the Village in matters pertaining to labor negotiations, municipal bonding, or the prosecution of municipal citations. The Village contracts with specialized labor counsel, bond counsel, and a Village prosecutor for those legal services.

The Village Board, the Village manager, and department heads consistently look to our Village attorney for legal guidance. The smooth functioning of Village government rests, in many important ways, on the prompt and sensible advice our Village attorney provides.


*Douglas H. Frazer is a trustee on the Fox Point Village Board. The views expressed are his own and not necessarily those of the Village, the Village Board, other Village Board members, or Best Version Media, LLC.*





**BELL  
ORTHODONTIC  
SOLUTIONS**

Gregory D. Bell, DDS, MS  
Specialist in Orthodontics  
& Dentofacial Orthopedics



DIPLOMATE  
AMERICAN BOARD  
OF ORTHODONTICS

**\$250 OFF**  
of Full Treatment Including  
a Free Consultation  
(Affordable Payment Plans)

**CEDARBURG**  
W68 N930 Washington Ave.  
Cedarburg, WI 53012  
(262) 377-7410

**PORT WASHINGTON**  
1000 Wisconsin Centre, Suite 6  
Port Washington, WI 53074  
(262) 284-5080

**GLENDALE**  
5800 N. Bayshore Dr., Suite B256  
Glendale, WI 53217  
(414) 332-3840

**www.bellortho.com**

\*Offer valid on many other dental services. Offer only at sites of Bell Orthodontic. Must be presented at time of service.

Consider **Invisalign** to get the beautiful straight teeth you've always wanted without braces!



Call today to schedule a free consultation.

