

Case Study

FIRST REALTY | CROSSROADS ON THE CHARLES

In May 2014, a pressurized standpipe burst at Crossroads on the Charles, a luxury condominium building in Watertown, Massachusetts, flooding the building with more than 27,000 gallons of water. Fortunately, no one was injured, but the majority of the 66 condominium units in the building were completely destroyed.

before



The water cascaded down stairwells, into an elevator shaft, through individual units and into common areas, causing millions of dollars in damage. First Realty, Crossroads' management company, brought in Swerling Milton Winnick to handle the insurance claim.

SMW's team was onsite immediately, and over the next year, worked with individual unit owners, the management company, the condo association and the myriad professionals (remediation and construction companies, attorneys, insurance representatives, etc.) involved in the reconstruction process. Diane Swerling oversaw the claim, and attended dozens of evening condo association meetings, met individually with each unit owner, and took over so that the management company could focus on their work instead of the insurance claim issues.

With 40 units deemed uninhabitable by the town's building inspector, the recovery was complex, and Diane helped navigate the differences in improvements to each unit (for example, one with a professional chef's kitchen, another with a valuable art collection), and the overlap or gaps between the building policy and the individual unit owners' insurance policies. She was in daily contact with various owners, insurance professionals, condo association representatives and managers from First Realty.

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“Throughout the entire process, beginning from the first day after the flood through this past spring and summer, Diane has been an incredibly knowledgeable resource to First Realty, the condominium association’s Board of Directors, as well as individual residents.

Diane initially focused on the common area damages and the scope of coverage outlined in the master association’s insurance policies; however, she was soon doing a lot more. She offered guidance and advice to many individual unit owners, some of whom were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the damage and from being plunged into an insurance process for which they had little to no experience.



after

Diane was patient, attentive and very generous with her time. Diane’s effervescent personality and positive outlook throughout the arduous 14-month process certainly eased the tension, lightened the burden for numerous entities and made a difficult journey easier to navigate.”

- Jan Brandin, CPM | Chief Operating Officer, First Realty



DIANE SWERLING is a Principal at Swerling Milton Winnick, and current Vice President of the Massachusetts Association of Public Insurance Adjusters. She has particular expertise in claims involving condominium associations and commercial policies.