

Cassin Adds Veteran CMBS Attorney

Cassin & Cassin has hired veteran commercial-mortgage attorney **Rand Boyers Peppas** with an eye toward boosting its ongoing effort to attract a wider variety of lenders to its client roster.

Peppas, who spent the past nine years at **DLA Piper**, joined Cassin's New York headquarters on Nov. 16 as a partner in the 20-member real estate finance team. Plans call for adding several more attorneys with various levels of experience next year, said partner **Michael Hurley**, who heads the group.

In addition to working with commercial MBS lenders, Peppas will represent fund shops and other alternative lenders that originate bridge loans, Hurley said. Those players often focus on borrowers with maturing CMBS loans ineligible for refinancing via traditional lenders.

"That lending activity will have to go somewhere, and we want to be able to represent whatever lender is willing to do it," Peppas said. "Part of why I'm here is also to try to bring in the more-complicated deals involving multiple properties, multiple tranches of debt and even foreign jurisdictions."

For the past 25 years, Peppas worked with **Jeffery Steiner**, currently head of the commercial real estate lending practice at DLA Piper. In 1992, she joined Steiner's team at **Brown Raysman** and rose to partner in 1996. Brown merged with another law firm, **Thelen Reid**, in early 2007. Most of Steiner's group, including Peppas, followed him to DLA Piper the following year.

Overall, Cassin has about 40 attorneys — including senior partner **Joseph Cassin**, who co-founded the firm in 1986. ❖