

Weiss named chamber Person of the Year

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Fort Lee – Recently recognized by the Greater Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce as its Person of the Year for his successful real estate service to the borough, Jaime M. Weiss shared the reasons for his love of the town.

"Fort Lee is really my home," Weiss said. "I love living here. It's a great place with great services, great police, fire and EMS and a great local government that cares."

Weiss listed the perks of living in Fort Lee. "It's like living in the best of both worlds," he said. "You have the atmosphere of suburbia and the access to New York and the city's skyline. Fort Lee is the epicenter of the metropolitan area. You can get anywhere within 40 to 45 minutes from Fort Lee. You can't do that in Greenwich Village or anywhere in New York City."

Weiss, president of Weiss Realty in Moonachie, also received the 2010 Beautification Award for his work developing the Starbucks drive-through and the Bank of America kiosk on Route 4.

"I'm honored and very delighted but very surprised," he said upon receiving his recognition.

Weiss, 67, has a long list of accomplishments in the real estate business.

He recalled his first big deal with Sal Costa, a longtime Fort Lee resident, in moving of Northfield Cheese from Belleville to Northvale.

"That was my first significant deal coming into New Jersey," said Weiss, a Bronx native. "And that was my first significant deal as a solo real estate guy."

Weiss was attending Baruch College at night when a job placement officer from the college arranged an interview for him with the Manhattan real estate company Cross & Brown. To Weiss's surprise that interview sparked his passion for the business.

"I had gone on an interview with them, and I really didn't know anything about the real estate business," Weiss acknowledged. "My knowledge of the business was zero. But I remember heading into the building on Fifth Avenue in New York City, and you can't miss it. It has the big Tiffany clock; it was very prestigious. I was awe struck, and I wanted the job immediately."

He quickly started to climb the ranks and did several noteworthy deals, including the purchase of 1600 Queen Anne Road, a 35,000-square-foot, high-tech facility in Teaneck, and leasing it to Sony Broadcasting as well as a 147-acre Commerce Park in Decatur, Ill., and the 70,000 square-foot Colonial Village Professional Office Park and Shopping Center in Edison.

Weiss also made some marks in Fort Lee, where he was the sole broker who represented Philips Brothers Chemicals, the first major office tenant at Parker Plaza. Weiss called the Potomac Mills deal of the early 1980s "very historical" (he placed the first tenants in the building). Some other Weiss deals that Fort Lee residents may recognize are the North Jersey Community Bank on Lemoine and Palisades Avenues as well as the First Constitution Bank on Main Street.

Weiss also received industry recognition in 2005 from the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties and was a Deal of The Year award finalist for his role in arranging a series of three complex office-leasing transactions for North Fork Bank.

Though he grew up in New York, Weiss considers New Jersey as his real home.

"Growing up I didn't know anything about New Jersey," he said. "It was like a foreign world to me, but now New York is like a foreign world to me. I'm a New Jersey person inside and out."

For a time, Weiss and his wife, Susan, lived in Tenafly and raised their three children, Matthew, Jordan and Hayley. But soon after the children finished school, they couple moved back to Fort Lee and currently reside at the Horizon House, another deal he worked on.

He's now involved with Brick City Boxing and promoting boxing in the city of Newark.