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## **Local Attorney Speaks to Wisconsin Condominium Association**

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Elkhorn – Local attorney John L. Maier, Jr., was the keynote speaker at the July 19, 2010 meeting of the Wisconsin Condominium Association. The meeting, attended by officers and board members of regional homeowner and condo associations was held in Milwaukee, and Attorney Maier spoke on the topic “Taking Care of Your Maintenance Costs by Giving Your Roads Away”.

“Maintenance and reconstruction costs associated with the ownership, use and operation of private streets, storm water collection facilities, sanitary sewer and water well and delivery systems serving our communities are big ticket items” began Attorney Maier. “So big, in fact, that these costs can grow beyond the capability of the community to financially support,” he continued.

“While private roads and parks may have seemed to be a good idea at one time,” Maier reflected, “the responsibility for ongoing maintenance has now turned the dream into a nightmare for some Associations, who just can not continue to maintain these amenities in a cost-effective manner.”

In response to the collective question of what to do about it, Attorney Maier suggested that some homeowner associations are considering asking the local government to “take it over”. He then went on to conduct a “workshop” with those in attendance, designed to review the “pros and cons” of public vs. private ownership of streets, parks, sewer and water lines, and other infrastructure.

The presentation gave community association leaders a healthy peek “behind the scenes” of what legal and engineering issues have to be considered, and included a checklist of “things to consider” when pondering the question of a turnover to municipal ownership, as well as a list of procedural steps that have to be undertaken before the question can even be put to a vote by either the Association or the local municipality.

John is President of Sweet, Maier & Coletti, S. C., of Elkhorn, Wisconsin, and has practiced law in Wisconsin and Illinois for over 35 years. Sweet, Maier & Coletti, S.C. provides legal services throughout Wisconsin and Northern Illinois, and prides itself on small town personal service, coupled with technical expertise developed over many years of practice. The firm maintains a website at [www.wisclaw.com](http://www.wisclaw.com).

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