

An Interview With Linda Kabot, Former Town Official, Current Real Estate Professional

John A. Viteritti | October 20, 2016



According to the National Association of Realtors, for a large body of its approximately 1 million active members, real estate is a second career. Over the past twenty years I have been teaching real estate classes in the Hamptons, I have found this to be true. I recently met with [Linda Kabot](#), a relatively new Hamptons agent with [Town & Country's](#) Southampton office who has moved from the public to private sector. The fact that both career paths have taken place within the town of Southampton, where she and her family reside, I thought would provide some interesting commentary for our readers. These are the issues we discussed.

Please summarize the positions you held in the Town of Southampton Government.

LK: I served for fourteen years, first, six years as Executive Assistant to the Town Supervisor, then elected as a Councilwoman for six years, and finally served a two-year term as Town Supervisor.

How long have you held a real estate license?

LK: It's just about a year.

What made you choose real estate as a second career?

LK: At first I thought I wanted to become a lawyer. I had acquired knowledge of land use and zoning in local government and the property rights side was of particular interest to me. In order to apply that knowledge and try to help people with respect to those issues, my thought was to become a lawyer. But as is often the case with pursuing one's ambitions, life's circumstances - family illness, kids in college - got in the way. And then I took a step back and asked myself the question?

Do I really want to do all aspects of the law and all that the practice of law involves? No. That's when I decided to become a licensed real estate professional.

Has anything surprised you since you started your new career?

LK: There's a lot more work than I had anticipated. But I do love working with the people, I enjoy representing both sellers and buyers, especially the challenge of finding the great fit for both. I also like working with tenants and land lords, and because of my experience as a photographer, which I didn't mention, I enjoy taking photographs of the properties.

Given your background and experience, I would expect that any real estate company would be glad to have you on board. What made you choose Town & Country?

LK: Well what I liked about Town & Country was that my background and their brand model dovetailed. The power of deep roots. As a life-long resident of the town, born and raised, having served my community in both administrative and elected positions, I liked the idea that Town & Country was home grown, the largest independently owned brokerage firm on the East End of Long Island. The fact that it is controlled by three women, that appealed to me.

How you ever worked as an independent contractor before?

LK: Yes, I have. Before government I worked as a wedding photographer. So I have worked outside of the corporate and government cultures. Ironically, now I feel that I am campaigning all the time. I used to ask for votes, now I ask for listings. Networking and promotion is something I have great experience with. I am always helping people to achieve their goals. It's been a natural transition.

What else about real estate brokerage surprised you?

LK: The Rea Net system that we use in the Hamptons requires a lot of time entering and updating data and photos is more of a time consuming project than I would have thought.

Do you see yourself eventually having an administrative assistant to relieve you of a lot of that work?

LK: At some point I think I will probably join forces with another agent. That is part of my business plan. At this point, doing the grunt work is part of the learning experience and very valuable. Fact checking is critical, and that is something that I prefer doing myself because I am responsible for what I represent to the consumer. Much of the material is a matter of public record with the town. I'm not ready to delegate that responsibility to anyone just yet. When I represent buyers I double check the information that the listing broker has provided. It's time consuming but critical.

You mentioned buyer agency. That is becoming more and more popular in the Hamptons. Do you like representing buyers?

LK: Yes, I do but I also like representing sellers. Starting out I didn't have many listings, so that gave me the opportunity to ask buyers if they wanted me to represent them as a buyer's agent, and that has worked out very well.

What else has surprised you?

LK: The reality of having to reconcile the competitiveness of independent contractors with the need to work as a team. Fortunately, in my office we are able to achieve that.