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The protest 'nightmare': Why construction projects can be magnets for controversy, *Construction Dive, ft. Andrew Richards*

Andrew Richards, Co-Managing Partner at Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck, LLP in Long Island, was quoted in an article written by Kim Slowey for Construction DIVE, (August 25, 2016) —

She wrote: When it comes to large-scale construction projects, communities often welcome them, particularly when they bring the promise of tax dollars, economic activity for the surrounding community and jobs.

However, there are some groups who don't want new development in their cities or towns for a variety of reasons.

Groups fighting change in their communities

One reason people might rail against a new construction project is the not-in-my-backyard effect, also known as NIMBYism, according to Andrew Richards, co-managing partner at Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck. Shopping malls or multistory apartment buildings in single-family residential areas, he said, are some common types of projects that people don't want in their neighborhood, and often residents will fight owners and builders until they successfully block a development, or at least delay it for years.

Protests over union and local labor

Gilbane Building Co. has also been on the receiving end of union protests in New York. The contractor has approximately $1 billion worth of construction work going on in the city, and organized labor has pushed back against Gilbane's choice to use nonunion workforces on many of its projects, claiming that prevailing wages and union work rules are too cumbersome and costly.

Protesters have picketed in front of Gilbane's project sites and its New York headquarters, complete with a giant inflatable rat. Richards said live demonstrations like these are rare and less effective today because unions don't have the same foothold in the city as they had in the past.

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