



SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS



Charlton man takes over Allied Appraisal

FOR PECULIS, IT'S A LABOR OF LOVE

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Ask John T. Peculis why he enjoys his job as a real estate appraiser, and the answer may surprise you.

"What excites me most about real estate is they are not making any more of it," Peculis, a 30-year-old Charlton resident and owner and President of Worcester-based Allied Appraisal Associates of New England Inc., said during an interview Friday, Jan. 8.

Peculis, a 1997 graduate of Shepherd Hill Regional High School, has even more to be excited about. He took over ownership in September of the business fulfilling a life-long goal to own his own company.

Alliance, which also performs consulting services, does business across the entire state but focuses on the Worcester County area. In addition to examining single-family homes, the firm works on multi-family abodes, condominiums and retail developments.

The former owner, Daniel E. Jalbert, is still with the company as an appraisal reviewer.

Peculis's dream started after his late father, John, who worked for the Charlton-based Alliance Realty company as a salesman and broker, started taking him on appointments.

"I knew I wanted to own a business," he said. "[My father] ingrained that in me very, very young."

Peculis's father later joined Alliance as a staff appraiser in 1991 and became Vice President before his death in 2005.

From there, the younger

Peculis's interest grew. After graduating in 2001 with a degree in business management from Nichols College in Dudley, Peculis joined his company as an appraiser.

For Peculis, however, appraising a home is not just about putting a value to it. When he walks into a house, he carefully observes crucial details, such as the age or type of wood used in beams. To Peculis, the details form a decent picture of more than just the house's value — it reveals much about the history of it.

"You immediately get a feel for it," he said he thinks when he walks into a house. "I love hearing the stories [of various buildings]. People take pride in that."

Peculis, energetic and outgoing, typically starts his day when he rises at 5:30 a.m. and leaves his Carpenter Hill Road home at 6:30 a.m. and arrives at his desk by 7 a.m. Although he does not see it as working, he reads the newspaper, trade magazine and drinks coffee until 8 a.m. when he starts briefing his office manager on the day's workload. A half hour later he starts reviewing appraisals until lunchtime. He eats with a coworker or client. In the afternoon, he goes out on inspections or writes reports. He typically performs between eight and 10 home appraisals monthly and up to four commercial ones.

Peculis said he prefers certain types of homes to others, but typically likes seeing a wide range of them. Appraising old New England homes gives him the most satisfaction, but walking through a "McMansion" — an

unreasonably large home typically found in wealthy suburbs like Newton or Brookline — does not excite him.

"Every property is a challenge," he said.

Despite his obvious love for job, there are some low points. Peculis said the biggest challenge is a client not agreeing with the dollar value he assigns to the property.

"That really does bother me," he said.

Regardless, Peculis said, he still feels compelled to give them his honest assessment because it helps avoid future problems with the land.

Sometimes property, and not clients, becomes the problem. Peculis said the hardest part of his job is determining the value of special-use properties, such as a golf course. In these cases, it can be difficult to determine the value, what its value would be if, for example, a housing development were on it.

Only months into his ownership tenure, Peculis is already making changes to improve his company. He plans to hire another appraiser in addition to the four (including himself) already with the firm. Peculis also uses two contractors when the workload increases.

He also plans to launch a new Web site, Monday, Feb. 1, which will let clientele download appraisal reports or request them. The new site is intended to reflect his company staying on "the cutting edge," of what he sees is as an ever-changing industry.

"We have to adapt," he said.

Peculis has made other physi-

cal changes to the business. In



Ryan Grannan-Doll photos

John T. Peculis, owner and President of Allied Appraisal Associates of New England Inc., discusses the future of his company last week.

November, he moved the firm to its new office space on Shrewsbury Street in Worcester from its old location on Main Street.

The future of more than just his company was also on his mind last week. While some people get bored after years in one career, that likely won't happen with Peculis. When asked what other career he would get into, he said, "I would still be involved in real estate."

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