



**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
ILLINOIS PROPERTY TAX APPEAL BOARD**

APPELLANT: Kenneth Close
DOCKET NO.: 10-24071.001-R-1
PARCEL NO.: 31-03-309-008-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are Kenneth Close, the appellant(s), by attorney Ronald M. Justin, of RMR Property Tax Solutions in Hawthorn Woods; and the Cook County Board of Review.

Based on the facts and exhibits presented, the Property Tax Appeal Board hereby finds no change in the assessment of the property as established by the Cook County Board of Review is warranted. The correct assessed valuation of the property is:

**LAND: \$ 3,500
IMPR.: \$ 10,001
TOTAL: \$ 13,501**

Subject only to the State multiplier as applicable.

Statement of Jurisdiction

The appellant timely filed the appeal from a decision of the Cook County Board of Review pursuant to section 16-160 of the Property Tax Code (35 ILCS 200/16-160) challenging the assessment for the 2010 tax year. The Property Tax Appeal Board (the "Board") finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of the appeal.

Findings of Fact

The subject consists of a one and one-half-story dwelling of frame construction with 1,650 square feet of living area. The dwelling is 50 years old. Features of the home include a slab and a two-car garage. The property has a 20,000 square foot site, and is located in Country Club Hills, Rich Township, Cook County. The subject is classified as a class 2-03 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance.

The appellant's appeal is based on overvaluation. In support of this argument, the appellant completed certain portions of Section IV of the petition. The data on the petition indicated that the subject was purchased on September 2, 2009 for a price of \$42,500. The data indicated that the sale was not a transfer between related parties; that the property was advertised for sale; and that the seller's mortgage was not assumed. The form's question regarding whether the property was sold in settlement of an installment contract, a contract for deed, or in lieu of foreclosure was left unanswered. In addition, copies of the first two pages of a settlement statement were submitted. It indicated that the property was purchased by Kenneth C. Close, while the seller was identified as "Citifinancial Services, Inc." The price was listed as \$42,500, while the sale date was listed as September 9, 2009. The Board notes that this sale date is different than the sale date listed in Section IV of the petition. The remaining pages of the settlement statement were not submitted, and the pages that were submitted are not signed by either party to the transaction. Based on this evidence, the appellant requested a reduction in the subject's assessment to reflect the purchase price.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" disclosing the total assessment for the subject of \$13,501. The subject's assessment reflects a market value of \$151,018, or \$91.53 per square foot of living area, including land, when applying the 2010 three year average median level of assessment for class 2 property of 8.94% as determined by the Illinois Department of Revenue.

In support of the subject's assessment, the board of review submitted four equity comparables and four sale comparables.

At hearing, Ronald Justin, counsel for the appellant, stated that he had no personal knowledge of whether the subject's sale was an arm's length transaction or the sale's specifics. He argued that a recent sale is the best evidence of market value. The board of review's representative rested on the evidence previously submitted. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board's Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") asked Mr. Justin to answer the following question: "Was the sale of the subject pursuant to a foreclosure, a short sale, or was it otherwise a 'compulsory sale' as that term is defined in the Property Tax Code?" The ALJ granted Mr. Justin two weeks to submit an answer to this question.

After two weeks, Mr. Justin submitted a spreadsheet to the ALJ. The Board notes that the spreadsheet contained information for other appeals that were set for hearing before the Board on the same day as the hearing for the subject. "Column A" of the spreadsheet listed the PIN, "column B" stated whether the subject was a compulsory sale or not, while "column C" stated the time the property was listed on the MLS. For the subject, column B said "Foreclosure."

After receiving the spreadsheet, the Board issued a written Order (the "Order"). The Order, *inter alia*, excluded from the record all information in column C of the spreadsheet, as it was new evidence and not responsive to the ALJ's question at hearing regarding whether the sale of the subject was a compulsory sale. The Order also allowed the board of review two weeks to respond to the information contained in column B. The board of review did not submit anything in response to column B.

Conclusion of Law

Initially, the Board finds that the information submitted by the appellant in Section IV of the petition regarding the sale date is inaccurate. The settlement statement states the address of the property, as well as the sale date. Therefore, the Board finds that the settlement statement represents the sale of the subject offered into evidence by the appellant in this appeal. The sale of the subject, therefore, is alleged to have taken place on September 9, 2009 for a price of \$42,500, or \$25.76 per square foot of living area, including land.

The appellant contends the market value of the subject property is not accurately reflected in its assessed valuation. When market value is the basis of the appeal the value of the property must be proved by a preponderance of the evidence. 86 Ill.Admin.Code §1910.63(e). Proof of market value may consist of an appraisal of the subject property, a recent sale, comparable sales or construction costs. 86 Ill.Admin.Code §1910.65(c). The Board finds the appellant did not meet this burden of proof and a reduction in the subject's assessment is not warranted.

The Board finds that the sale of the subject in September 2009 for \$42,500 was a compulsory sale. A "compulsory sale" is defined as:

- (i) the sale of real estate for less than the amount owed to the mortgage lender or mortgagor, if the

lender or mortgagor has agreed to the sale, commonly referred to as a "short sale" and (ii) the first sale of real estate owned by a financial institution as a result of a judgment of foreclosure, transfer pursuant to a deed in lieu of foreclosure, or consent judgment, occurring after the foreclosure proceeding is complete.

35 ILCS 200/1-23. The Board finds that the sale of the subject in September 2009 is a compulsory sale, in the form of a foreclosure, based on the appellant's admission in the spreadsheet submitted after hearing.

Real property in Illinois must be assessed at its fair cash value, which can only be estimated absent any compulsion on either party.

Illinois law requires that all real property be valued at its fair cash value, estimated at the price it would bring at a fair voluntary sale where the owner is ready, willing, and able to sell but not compelled to do so, and the buyer is likewise ready, willing, and able to buy, but is not forced to do so.

Board of Educ. of Meridian Community Unit School Dist. No. 223 v. Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, 961 N.E.2d 794, 802, 356 Ill.Dec. 405, 413 (2d Dist. 2011) (citing Chrysler Corp. v. Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, 69 Ill.App.3d 207, 211, 387 N.E.2d 351 (2d Dist. 1979)).

However, the Illinois General Assembly recently provided very clear guidance for the Board with regards to compulsory sales. Section 16-183 of the Illinois Property Tax Code states as follows:

The Property Tax Appeal Board shall consider compulsory sales of comparable properties for the purpose of revising and correcting assessments, including those compulsory sales of comparable properties submitted by the taxpayer.

35 ILCS 200/16-183. Therefore, the Board is statutorily required to consider the compulsory sales of comparable properties submitted by the parties to revise and/or correct the subject's assessment. However, the Board finds that the appellant's evidence regarding this sale is insufficient to warrant a reduction in this appeal. The only evidence submitted

was the first two pages of the settlement statement. Neither of these pages was signed by a party to the transaction. The Board finds that such scant evidence is insufficient to prove that the subject is overvalued. Therefore, the Board finds that the appellant has not proven, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the subject is overvalued.

Even assuming, *arguendo*, that the settlement statement was sufficient, the Board would still find that the subject is not overvalued. In this appeal, the board of review submitted information on four comparable sales. The Board finds board of review comparables #1, #2, and #3 to be most similar to the subject. These comparables sold for prices ranging from \$89.74 to \$94.40 per square foot of living area, including land. The subject's sale price reflects a market value of \$25.76 per square foot of living area, including land, which is well below the range established by the best comparables in this record. Moreover, the subject's current assessment reflects a market value of \$91.53 per square foot of living area, including land, which is within this range. Therefore, the Board finds that the sale of the subject in September 2009 for \$42,500 was below the subject's fair cash value. Since there is no evidence that the sale price of the subject was at its fair cash value, the Board finds that the subject is not overvalued and a reduction is not warranted.

This is a final administrative decision of the Property Tax Appeal Board which is subject to review in the Circuit Court or Appellate Court under the provisions of the Administrative Review Law (735 ILCS 5/3-101 et seq.) and section 16-195 of the Property Tax Code.

Chairman



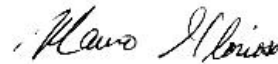
Member



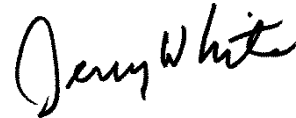
Member



Acting Member



Member



Acting Member

DISSENTING: _____

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

As Clerk of the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board and the keeper of the Records thereof, I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true, full and complete Final Administrative Decision of the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board issued this date in the above entitled appeal, now of record in this said office.

Date: January 22, 2016



Clerk of the Property Tax Appeal Board

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Section 16-185 of the Property Tax Code provides in part:

"If the Property Tax Appeal Board renders a decision lowering the assessment of a particular parcel after the deadline for filing complaints with the Board of Review or after adjournment of the session of the Board of Review at which assessments for the subsequent year are being considered, the taxpayer may, within 30 days after the date of written notice of the Property Tax Appeal Board's decision, appeal the assessment for the subsequent year directly to the Property Tax Appeal Board."

In order to comply with the above provision, YOU MUST FILE A PETITION AND EVIDENCE WITH THE PROPERTY TAX APPEAL BOARD WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THE ENCLOSED DECISION IN ORDER TO APPEAL THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPERTY FOR THE SUBSEQUENT YEAR.

Based upon the issuance of a lowered assessment by the Property Tax Appeal Board, the refund of paid property taxes is the responsibility of your County Treasurer. Please contact that office with any questions you may have regarding the refund of paid property taxes.