



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

APPELLANT: Tom DeCoste
DOCKET NO.: 14-28314.001-R-1
PARCEL NO.: 04-34-413-095-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are Tom DeCoste, the appellant(s), by attorney Abby L. Strauss, of Schiller Strauss & Lavin PC in Chicago; and the Cook County Board of Review.

Based on the facts and exhibits presented in this matter, 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: \$8,645
IMPR.: \$18,634
TOTAL: \$27,279

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 2014 tax year. The Property Tax Appeal Board finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of the appeal.

Findings of Fact

The subject property is a 59 year-old, one-story dwelling of frame and masonry construction containing 1,210 square feet of living area. Features of the home include a full unfinished basement, a fireplace and a one and one-half-car garage. The property has a 9,880 square foot site located in Northfield Township, Cook County. The property is a Class 2 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 submitted a settlement statement disclosing the subject property was purchased from the Federal National Mortgage Association REO #C13151H (hereinafter, "Fannie Mae") on March 4, 2014 for a price of \$249,900. The subject's sale price of \$249,900 reflects a market value of \$206.53 per square foot of living area including land. The appellant also information in Section IV–Recent Sale Data of the Residential Appeal that the subject was not sold as a transfer between

related parties. Based on this evidence, the appellant requested a reduction in the subject's assessment to reflect the purchase price when using the 2014 level of assessment of 10.00% for Class 2 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" disclosing the total assessment for the subject of \$27,279. The subject's assessment reflects a market value of \$272,790 or \$225.45 per square foot of living area when using the 2014 level of assessment of 10.00% for Class 2 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance. In support of its contention of the correct assessment, the board of review submitted information on four suggested comparable sales and on the March 2014 sale of the subject for \$249,900.

In rebuttal, the appellant argued that the comparables submitted as evidence by the board of review should be given diminished weight because they were dissimilar to the subject in various key property characteristics and were based on raw, unadjusted sales data. The appellant reaffirmed the request for an assessment reduction.

Conclusion of Law

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 has not met this burden of proof and a reduction in the subject's assessment is not warranted.

In addressing the appellant's market value argument, the Board finds that the sale of the subject in March 2014 for \$249,900 is a "compulsory sale." The appellant's evidence disclosed the subject was sold to the appellant directly from Fannie Mae REO #C13151H. 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.

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.

Bd. of Educ. of Meridian Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 223 v. Ill. Prop. Tax Appeal Bd., 961 N.E. 2d 794, 802 (2d Dist. 2011) (citing Chrysler Corp. v. Ill. Prop. Tax Appeal Bd., 69 Ill. App. 3d 207, 211 (2d Dist. 1979)).

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

The Property Tax Appeal Board shall consider compulsory sales of the 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 compulsory sales of comparable properties submitted by the parties to revise and/or correct the subject's assessment.

In determining the fair cash value of the subject property, the Board may consider the evidence presented by the parties. The appellant did not submit comparables or other evidence to establish that the sale of the subject was for fair cash value. The board of review submitted sale comparables that sold from April 2011 through October 2013 for prices ranging from \$267.62 to \$430.36 per square foot of living area, including land. The subject's assessment reflects a market value of \$225.45 per square foot of living area, including land, which is below the range established by the best comparable sales in this record. Moreover, the subject's sale price of \$249,900, or \$206.53 per square foot of living area, including land is below the range established by the market data.

Therefore, based on all relevant factors, the Board finds that the appellant did not submit sufficient evidence to show the subject was overvalued. Therefore, the Board finds that the appellant has not met its burden by a preponderance of the evidence and that the subject does not warrant a reduction based upon the market data submitted into evidence.

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.