



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

APPELLANT: John Nichols  
DOCKET NO.: 19-21461.001-R-2  
PARCEL NO.: 05-20-400-086-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are John Nichols, the appellant, by attorney Robert Rosenfeld, of Robert H. Rosenfeld & Associates, LLC in Chicago; the Cook County Board of Review; the New Trier H.S.D. #203 intervenor, by attorney Scott L. Ginsburg of Robbins Schwartz Nicholas Lifton Taylor in Chicago.

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:** \$153,657  
**IMPR.:** \$319,615  
**TOTAL:** \$473,272

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 2019 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 consists of a 90,387 square foot parcel of land improved with two improvements. Improvement #1 is a 51-year-old, two-story, single-family dwelling of stucco construction with 9,324 square feet of living area. Improvement #2 is a residence with 1,000 square feet of living area. The property is located in Winnetka, New Trier Township, Cook County. The subject is classified as a class 2 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance.

The appellant contends assessment inequity as the basis of the appeal. In support of this argument the appellant submitted information on four equity comparables for improvement #1. All were improved with a single-family dwelling of either stucco or masonry construction, a partial or full basement and at least a 2.5-car garage. The improvements ranged in age from 28

to 64 years; in size from 8,403 to 10,474 square feet of living area; and in improvement assessment from \$18.47 to \$21.58 per square foot of living area. Based on this evidence the appellant is requesting an assessment for the subject of \$342,841.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" disclosing the total assessment for the subject of \$473,272. The subject property has an improvement assessment of \$319,615 or \$31.43 per square foot of living area. In support of its contention of the correct assessment the board of review submitted information on four equity comparables for improvement #1; one of which contained sales data. All were improved with a two-story, single-family dwelling of either stucco or masonry construction with at least a three-car garage. The improvements ranged in age from 4 to 13 years; in size between 6,075 and 8,795 square feet of living area; and in improvement assessment from \$34.99 to \$45.94 per square foot of living area. All of the comparables were within a quarter mile of the subject property.

While the board of review did not submit separate comparables for improvement #2, they did submit in its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" information that improvement #2 is contains 1,000 square feet of living area and has an improvement assessment of \$26.54 per square foot of living area.

New Trier High School District No. 203 is acting as an intervenor in this matter and filed evidence in support of the assessment. In support of their argument, the intervenor submitted five equity comparables. All were improved with a two-story, single-family dwelling of masonry construction with either no basement or a full basement. The improvements ranged in age from 33 to 58 years; in size between 5,476 and 6,302 square feet of living area; and in improvement assessment from \$28.43 to \$35.13 per square foot of living area.

In written rebuttal, the intervenor argued that the appellant's four suggested comparable properties should be given less weight because they were too dissimilar to the subject property and contained inaccuracies. In support of this argument the intervenor submitted a grid highlighting the dissimilar characteristics. The intervenor reaffirmed the request to deny an assessment reduction.

### **Conclusion of Law**

The taxpayer asserts assessment inequity as the basis of the appeal. The Illinois Constitution requires that real estate taxes, "be levied uniformly by valuation ascertained as the General Assembly shall provide by law." Ill. Const. art. IX, §4 (1970); Walsh v. Property Tax Appeal Board, 181 Ill. 2d 228, 234 (1998). This uniformity provision of the Illinois Constitution does not require absolute equality in taxation, however, and it is sufficient if the taxing authority achieves a reasonable degree of uniformity. Peacock v. Property Tax Appeal Board, 339 Ill. App. 3d 1060, 1070 (4<sup>th</sup> Dist. 2003).

When unequal treatment in the assessment process is the basis of the appeal, the inequity of the assessments must be proved by clear and convincing evidence. 86 Ill.Admin.Code §1910.63(e); Walsh, 181 Ill. 2d at 234 (1998). Clear and convincing evidence means more than a preponderance of the evidence, but it does not need to approach the degree of proof needed for a

conviction of a crime. Bazyldo v. Volant, 164 Ill. 2d 207, 213 (1995). Proof of unequal treatment in the assessment process should consist of documentation of the assessments for the assessment year in question of not less than three comparable properties showing the similarity, proximity and lack of distinguishing characteristics of the assessment comparables to the subject property. 86 Ill.Admin.Code §1910.65(b). The Board finds the appellant did not meet this burden of proof and a reduction in the subject's assessment is not warranted.

With regard to improvement #1 the Board finds the best evidence of assessment equity to be the appellant's comparables #1 and #4 and the board of review comparable #1. These comparables had improvement assessments that ranged from \$18.47 to \$35.56 per square foot of living area. The subject's improvement assessment of \$34.28 per square foot of living area falls within the range established by the best comparables in this record.

Like the subject property, these comparables are each improved with a two-story, single-family residence of either stucco or masonry construction with a partial basement or crawl space, central air conditioning, at least two fireplaces and at least a 2.5-car garage. The dwellings on these comparables have living areas that are within 530 square feet of the size of the subject property's living area. These comparables are within the same subarea as the subject, while two are within a block. The Board finds the appellant did not demonstrate with clear and convincing evidence that the subject's improvement was inequitably assessed and a reduction in the subject's assessment is not justified.

The intervenor's statement in rebuttal regarding the appellant's inaccurate building assessment information for comparables two and four was given no weight as there was no evidence submitted in support.

With regard to improvement #2 neither the board of review nor the appellant submitted any comparables. As such, the Board finds that the appellant did not meet the burden of clear and convincing evidence, as there is no range of comparables with which to compare the subject. Therefore, the Board finds the subject's improvement assessment is equitable and a reduction in the subject's assessment 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. Pursuant to Section 1910.50(d) of the rules of the Property Tax Appeal Board (86 Ill.Admin.Code §1910.50(d)) the proceeding before the Property Tax Appeal Board is terminated when the decision is rendered. The Property Tax Appeal Board does not require any motion or request for reconsideration.



Chairman



Member



Member



Member



Member

DISSENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATION

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:

August 22, 2023



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 or years of the same general assessment period, as provided in Sections 9-125 through 9-225, 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 such subsequent year or years 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 OR YEARS. A separate petition and evidence must be filed for each of the remaining years of the general assessment period.

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.

PARTIES OF RECORD

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