



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

APPELLANT: Raafat Boutros
DOCKET NO.: 19-39674.001-R-1
PARCEL NO.: 03-19-208-025-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are Raafat Boutros, the appellant(s), by attorney Ciarra Schmidt, of Schmidt Salzman & Moran, Ltd. 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: \$5,538
IMPR.: \$18,379
TOTAL: \$23,917

Subject only to the State multiplier as applicable.

Statement of Jurisdiction

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 61-year-old, 1-story, single-family dwelling of frame and masonry construction with 1,161 square feet of living area. The property has a 10,550 square foot site located in Arlington Heights, Wheeling Township, Cook County. The subject is classified as a class 2-03 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance.

Appellant contends assessment inequity and contention of law as the bases of the appeal. In support of its inequity argument, appellant submitted information on five suggested equity comparables. Each of the comparable properties were improved with a one-story residence of either masonry, frame, or frame and masonry construction. They ranged in living area square footage between 1,442 and 1,568 and in assessment between \$8.28 and \$9.12 per square foot of living area. In addition, appellant requests a reduction in the subject property's assessment

contending a negative impact on the subject property as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Appellant also submitted a copy of the board of review's written decision reflecting a final assessment for the subject property of \$23,917. Based on this evidence, appellant requested a reduction in the subject's assessment to \$15,325.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" disclosing the total assessment for the subject of \$23,917 and an improvement assessment of \$18,379, or \$15.83 per square foot of living area. In support of its contention of the correct assessment, the board of review submitted information on four suggested comparables. Each were improved with a one-story residence of frame and masonry construction. They ranged in living area square footage from 1,135 to 1,161 and in assessment per square foot from \$16.38 to \$19.04. In addition, the board of review included information in its grid analysis indicating the subject property sold in November of 2017 for \$258,000 and one of its comparables sold in May of 2016 for \$208,000.

Conclusion of Law

As a preliminary matter, the appellant requests that the PTAB grant it relief based on the COVID-19 pandemic. The PTAB distinguishes between a request for relief just because the pandemic occurred ("COVID Relief") and a request based on the pandemic's effect on market conditions or the income-producing capacity of a given property. The former would only require the appellant to show that the pandemic occurred -not that the pandemic affected or contributed to changes in the relevant market or other factors related to the property's assessment. The latter would require the appellant to meet its burden to provide substantive evidence or legal argument sufficient to challenge the property's assessment.

As an administrative agency, the Property Tax Appeal Board only has the authority that the General Assembly confers on it by statute. *Spiel v. Property Tax Appeal Bd.*, 309 Ill. App. 3d 373, 378 (2d Dist. 1999). Consequently, to the extent that the PTAB acts outside its statutory authority, it acts without jurisdiction. See *Bd. of Educ. of City of Chicago v. Bd. of Trustees of Pub. Sch. Teachers' Pension & Ret. Fund of Chicago*, 395 Ill. App. 3d 735, 739-40 (1st Dist. 2009). The Board has no statutory authority to reduce assessments solely because the pandemic occurred (i.e., to grant "COVID Relief"). However, if an appellant presents evidence demonstrating the pandemic resulted in or contributed to a reduction in the subject property's assessment, that may serve as the basis for a reduction. But the appellant is not entitled to a reduction just because the pandemic occurred. More importantly, the pandemic had not yet occurred during the lien at issue in the instant appeal and the Board finds appellant is not entitled to relief on that basis.

The taxpayer contends assessment inequity as the basis of the appeal. 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). 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 appellant *did not meet* this burden of proof and a reduction in the subject's assessment *is not* warranted.

The Board finds the best evidence of assessment equity to be *the board of review's comparables #1, #2, #3 and #4*. These comparables were either identical to or most similar to the subject property in living area square footage. They had improvement assessments that ranged from \$16.38 to \$19.04 per square foot of living area. The subject's improvement assessment of \$15.83 per square foot of living area falls below the range established by the best comparables in this record. Based on this record, the Board finds 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.

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: February 20, 2024



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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