



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

APPELLANT: John Merikoski
DOCKET NO.: 22-23357.001-R-1
PARCEL NO.: 05-29-103-050-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are John Merikoski, the appellant(s), by attorney Abby L. Strauss, of Schiller Law P.C. 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: \$60,679
IMPR.: \$131,983
TOTAL: \$192,662

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 2022 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 53-year-old, one-and-a-half-story building of masonry construction with 7,942 square feet of living area. Features of the home include a full basement, a two-car garage, air conditioning, and heat. The property has a 43,342-square-foot site and is located in Winnetka, New Trier Township, Cook County. The subject is classified as a class 2-04 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance.

The appellant contends that assessment inequity is the basis of the appeal. In support of the inequity argument, the appellant's petition lists four equity comparables. These properties are described as one-story dwellings with masonry construction. They range in age from 63 to 71 years old; in size from 4,175 to 8,346 square feet of living area; and have an improvement assessment from \$8.50 to \$14.03 per square foot of living area.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal," disclosing the subject's assessment of \$192,663 with an improvement assessment of \$131,984 or \$16.62 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. These properties are described as one-and-a-half-story dwellings of either frame and masonry or masonry construction. They range: in age from 41 to 71 years old; contain from 5,793 to 9,060 square feet of living area; and have an improvement assessment from \$22.77 to \$24.15 per square foot of living area.

The matter was set for a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge on August 12, 2025. On August 12, 2025, however, the parties entered into a written agreement to waive the hearing and have the matter decided on the evidence that had been submitted.

Conclusion of Law

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.

The Board finds the best evidence of assessment equity to be the appellant's comparables #2 and #4, and the board of review's comparable #1. These comparables ranged in improvement assessment from \$9.83 to \$24.15 per square foot of living area. The subject's improvement assessment of \$16.62 per square foot of living area falls within the range established by the best comparables in this record. These comparables were selected due to similarities in living area square footage, age, and/or location. The Board finds that the appellant did not demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the subject was inequitably assessed and, therefore, 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: _____

September 16, 2025



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

AGENCY

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