



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

APPELLANT: Scott Schafer  
DOCKET NO.: 23-20980.001-R-1  
PARCEL NO.: 15-36-102-025-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) are Scott Schafer, the appellant, by attorney Dora Cornelio, of Schmidt Salzman & Moran, Ltd. in Chicago; and the Cook County Board of Review.

Based on the facts and exhibits presented in this matter, PTAB hereby finds **No Change** in the Cook County Board of Review's assessment of the property is warranted. The correct assessed valuation of the property is:

**LAND:** \$21,228  
**IMPR.:** \$68,772  
**TOTAL:** \$90,000

Subject only to the State multiplier as applicable.

**Statement of Jurisdiction**

The appellant timely filed the appeal from a Cook County Board of Review decision pursuant to section 16-160 of the Property Tax Code (35 ILCS 200/16-160) challenging the assessment for the 2023 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 4,735 square feet, two-story frame structure situated on a 19,298 square feet parcel in Riverside of Riverside Township, Cook County. The 96-year-old, class 2-06 residence under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance featured air conditioning, a full basement, and a three-car garage.<sup>1</sup>

The appellant pleads assessment inequity as the basis of the appeal, arguing that the subject improvement assessment should be reduced to \$11.38 per living square foot. As evidence of subject assessment nonuniformity, the appellant presented five class 2-06 properties in the subject's neighborhood. These suggested comparables included one to four bathrooms, a full

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<sup>1</sup> The Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) notes inconsistencies between the appellant's description of the subject and the board of review's description. PTAB considered the discrepancies in evaluating the parties' evidence and finds the disparity immaterial to the ultimate outcome.

basement, and a one- to 2.5-car garage. The appellant's selections spanned 64 to 120 years in building age; 2,587 to 3,976 square feet in improvement area (absent the apparent outlier of comparable #5); and \$10.46 to \$11.68 per living square foot in improvement assessment.

The board of review countered that the subject improvement assessment of \$68,772, or \$14.52 per living square foot, was equitable in its "Notes on Appeal." In defense of the \$89,999 total subject assessment, the county board of review introduced into evidence three two-story buildings within a quarter mile of the subject as assessment comparables. The county board of review's preferred comparators contained 3.5 or 4.5 bathrooms, a full basement, and a three- or four-car garage. These improvements ranged from 92 to 145 years in age; from 4,418 to 4,994 square feet in size; and from \$14.73 to \$15.53 per living square foot in improvement assessment.

### **Conclusion of Law**

The taxpayer contends assessment inequity as the basis of the appeal. The Illinois Constitution requires 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). Yet this uniformity provision of the Illinois Constitution does not mandate absolute equality in taxation; instead, a reasonable degree of uniformity in the taxing authority's assessments suffices. Peacock v. Property Tax Appeal Board, 339 Ill. App. 3d 1060, 1070 (4th Dist. 2003).

When unequal treatment in the assessment is the basis of a property tax appeal, appellants must prove the inequity of the assessments 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 required for a criminal conviction. Bazyldo v. Volant, 164 Ill. 2d 207, 213 (1995). Proof of unequal treatment in the assessment process should comprise documentation for the year in question of similarly situated properties of compelling proximity to, and with a lack of distinguishing characteristics from, the assessment subject. 86 Ill.Admin.Code §1910.65(b). The Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) finds the appellant did not overcome this burden of proof.

In this record, only the board of review submitted properties within 317 square feet of the subject's living square footage. Because of their similarity to the subject improvement in size and attributes, board of review comparables #1 and #3 provide the best guidance for equitable subject assessment in this record. Board of review comparable #3 was inferior to the subject because it lacked the subject's air conditioning, though it featured more living space and an extra full bathroom. Board of review comparable #1, meanwhile, lacked some of the subject's living area but otherwise matched the subject's amenities. Given this record, the subject improvement would be equitably assessed around \$14.73 to \$15.53 per living square foot. Because the subject's \$14.52 improvement square foot assessment falls below this range, PTAB finds the appellant did not provide sufficiently clear and convincing evidence that the subject assessment was inequitable or that a reduction thereof is 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:

May 19, 2026



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

State of Illinois  
Property Tax Appeal Board  
William G. Stratton Building, Room 402  
401 South Spring Street  
Springfield, IL 62706-4001

APPELLANT

Scott Schafer, by attorney:  
Dora Cornelio  
Schmidt Salzman & Moran, Ltd.  
111 W. Washington St.  
Suite 1300  
Chicago, IL 60602

COUNTY

Cook County Board of Review  
County Building, Room 601  
118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60602