



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

APPELLANT: Paula Balushack  
DOCKET NO.: 24-20993.001-R-1  
PARCEL NO.: 23-27-416-007-0000

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are Paula Balushack, the appellant(s), by attorney Brian S. Maher, of Weis, DuBrock, Doody & Maher 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:** \$13,166  
**IMPR.:** \$28,337  
**TOTAL:** \$41,503

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 2024 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 35,109 square foot site improved with a one-story dwelling of frame and masonry construction with 2,129 square feet of living area. The dwelling on the property is approximately sixty-eight years old. Features include central air conditioning and a two-car garage. The subject property is located in Palos Park, Palos Township, Cook County and is classified as a 2-04 property under the Cook County Real Property Assessment Classification Ordinance.

The appellant asserts assessment inequity as the basis of the appeal. In support of this argument, the appellant submitted information on four suggested equity comparables with varying degrees of similarity to the subject property. The comparable properties offered by the appellant are constructed of either masonry, frame, or frame and masonry, have either a two-car or a three-car garage, and range in size from 2,033 to 2,843 square feet of living area. One of the comparables

has central air conditioning and three do not. The comparables range in age from forty-five to seventy-four years old and the appellant is silent as to proximity from the subject property. The comparables have improvement assessments ranging from \$11.44 to \$12.37 per square foot of living area. Based on this evidence, the appellant requested a reduction in the subject's assessment to \$38,395.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" disclosing the total assessment for the subject as \$41,503. The subject property has an improvement assessment of \$28,337 or \$13.31 per square foot of living area. In support of its contention of the correct assessment, the board of review submitted information on four suggested equity comparables. The suggested comparable properties range in size from 1,855 to 2,937 square feet of living area, are constructed of either masonry or frame and masonry, have central air conditioning, and either a two-car or three-car garage. The comparable properties range in age from twenty-seven to seventy-four years old and have improvement assessments ranging from \$16.88 to \$18.65 per square foot of living area. The board of review reports that three of the comparables are located within a quarter mile of the subject property and one is on the same block. Based on this evidence, the board of review requested that the assessment be confirmed.

### **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.

The Board finds the best evidence of assessment equity to be the appellant's comparables #2 and #3 and the board of review's comparables #1 and #4. These comparable properties had the most similar sized living areas, age, and features to the subject property than all other comparables. In comparison, the appellant's comparables #1 and #4 and the board of review's comparables #2 and #3 differed more significantly in square feet of living area and were afforded less weight.

The best evidence comparables had improvement assessments of \$11.68 to \$18.65 per square foot of living area. The subject's improvement assessment of \$13.31 per square foot of living

area falls within the range established by the best comparables in this record. After considering adjustments to these comparables for differences when compared to the subject, the Board finds the subject's improvement assessment is supported. Based on this record 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.

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: June 16, 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

Paula Balushack, by attorney:  
Brian S. Maher  
Weis, DuBrock, Doody & Maher  
1 North LaSalle Street  
Suite 1500  
Chicago, IL 60602

COUNTY

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