



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

APPELLANT: Noel & Roberta Squitieri  
DOCKET NO.: 07-04060.001-R-1  
PARCEL NO.: 09-06-414-008

The parties of record before the Property Tax Appeal Board are Noel & Roberta Squitieri, the appellants, and the DuPage County Board of Review.

Based on the facts and exhibits presented, the Property Tax Appeal Board hereby finds a reduction in the assessment of the property as established by the DuPage County Board of Review is warranted. The correct assessed valuation of the property is:

**LAND: \$80,600**  
**IMPR.: \$37,473**  
**TOTAL: \$118,073**

Subject only to the State multiplier as applicable.

**ANALYSIS**

The subject parcel of 10,875 square feet of land area has been improved with a 55-year old, one-story single-family dwelling of frame and masonry construction containing 1,300 square feet of living area with a partial, unfinished basement,<sup>1</sup> central air conditioning, a fireplace, and an attached two-car garage of 440 square feet of building area. The property also features a deck and enclosed porch; the property is located in Downers Grove, Downers Grove Township, DuPage County.

The appellants' appeal is based on overvaluation of the subject property. In support of this market value argument, the appellants submitted an appraisal and a grid analysis of four suggested comparable properties.

The appraiser, Melissa J. Daly of Watson Appraisal Group in Palatine, a State Certified Residential Real Estate Appraiser, used the sales comparison approach to value in concluding an

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<sup>1</sup> As recorded by the assessor and reported by the appellants.

estimated market value of \$355,000 for the subject property as of May 7, 2007. In the report, the cost approach was not considered a good indicator of value given the age of the subject dwelling and difficulty in estimating depreciation. The purpose of the appraisal was for a "refinance transaction."

The appraiser described the subject as containing 1,313 square feet of living area and having a full basement of which 80% was said to be finished with an office, a recreation room and a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bathroom.

In the sales comparison approach, the appraiser used sales of three comparable homes located between 0.73 and 0.93 miles from the subject property. The comparable parcels range in size from 9,801 to 12,804 square feet of land area and have been improved with one-story frame or masonry exterior constructed dwellings which were from 49 to 55 years old. The comparables ranged in size from 1,232 to 1,363 square feet of living area. Each of the comparables had a full finished basement, two of which included a bathroom. Additional features included central air conditioning and a one-car or two-car garage. One comparable also had a fireplace. These comparables sold between August 2006 and January 2007 for prices ranging from \$301,000 to \$342,500 or from \$240.28 to \$262.65 per square foot of living area, including land. In comparing the comparable properties to the subject, the appraiser made adjustments for exterior construction, condition, room count, basement bathroom(s), garage size, fireplaces and other amenities. The analysis resulted in adjusted sales prices for the comparables ranging from \$331,000 to \$363,000. From this process, the appraiser estimated a value for the subject by the sales comparison approach of \$355,000 or approximately \$273.08 per square foot of living area including land which the appraiser noted best reflects the actions of a typical buyer.

Of the four comparable sales presented in a grid analysis by the appellants, comparables #1 and #2 were presented in the appraisal discussed previously. Comparables #3 and #4 were described as parcels of 6,600 and 9,306 square feet of land area, respectively, which were improved with one-story frame dwellings that were 22 and 29 years old, respectively. The comparables contain 1,308 and 1,335 square feet of living area each. One comparable had a full partially finished basement and one had an unfinished partial basement; one comparable had a fireplace. Each property had a garage of 480 and 594 square feet of building area, respectively. The properties sold in June 2005 and May 2007 for \$405,000 and \$415,000 each or \$309.63 and \$310.86 per square foot of living area, land included.

The appellants argued that properties like the subject sell for prices between \$301,000 and \$415,000 and based on this evidence, appellants requested a reduction in the subject's total assessment to \$128,300 or a market value of approximately \$384,900.

The board of review submitted its "Board of Review Notes on Appeal" wherein the subject's final assessment of the subject totaling \$153,020 was disclosed. The subject's assessment reflects an estimated market value of \$460,072 or \$353.90 per square foot of living area, land included, using the 2007 three-year median level of assessments for DuPage County of 33.26%.

In support of the subject's assessment, the board of review presented a memorandum from the township assessor with a grid analysis reiterating the appellants' sales comparables from the grid analysis and setting forth four comparable sales which in the assessor's opinion support the subject's estimated market value.

The four board of review sales comparables were said to be in the same neighborhood code assigned by the assessor as the subject; an included map depicts comparable #3 closest in proximity to the subject. The four comparable properties were described as one-story frame dwellings that range in age from 42 to 85 years old. The dwellings range in size from 1,196 to 1,584 square feet of living area. The comparables have full or partial basements, three of which included finished area; each comparable also has a garage ranging in size from 264 to 540 square feet of building area. These comparables sold between June 2005 and December 2006 for prices ranging from \$370,000 to \$592,500 or from \$309.36 to \$378.27 per square foot of living area, including land.

In reiterating the appellants' grid data, the board of review reported a second sale price for appraisal sale #3/appellants' sale #2 that occurred seven months after the previously reported sale and at a higher sale price of \$435,000 or \$353.08 per square foot of living area, land included. In the memorandum, the assessor noted two of the comparables in the grid analysis were located in a different neighborhood code assigned by the assessor than the subject; a map included in the board's evidence indicates one property is within two blocks of the subject and the other property is about eleven blocks from the subject.

On behalf of the board of review, the assessor also included data and arguments contending the subject property was uniformly assessed.

Based on the foregoing evidence, the board of review requested confirmation of the subject's assessment.

In written rebuttal, the appellants noted board of review comparable #3, adjacent to the subject, has 27% more land than the subject property. Appellants also argued that based upon personal observation, board of review comparable #4 featured a highend kitchen, new hardwood floors, a large multilevel deck, a and a completely finished basement, which are features not present in the subject. Appellants also acknowledged the two different sale prices in 2007 for appraisal sale #3/appellants' sale #2 and argued the "average" sale price for this property was \$368,000.

After reviewing the record and considering the evidence, the Property Tax Appeal Board finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this appeal. The Board further finds a reduction in the subject's assessment is warranted.

The Board finds the equity data submitted by the board of review was not responsive to the appellants' overvaluation claim in this matter and will not be addressed further in this appeal.

The appellants contend the assessment of the subject property is excessive and not reflective of its market value. When market value is the basis of the appeal the value of the property must be proved by a preponderance of the evidence. National City Bank of Michigan/Illinois v. Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board, 331 Ill.App.3d 1038 (3<sup>rd</sup> Dist. 2002). The Board finds the evidence in the record does support a reduction in the subject's assessment.

The Board finds the appellants submitted an appraisal of the subject property with a final value conclusion of \$355,000 or approximately \$273.08 per square foot of living area including land, along with two additional suggested comparable sales, while the board of review did not address the appraisal and instead focused on the appellants' four sales listed in the grid analysis and presented an additional four sales to support the subject's market value. In examining the eight sales comparables presented in the respective grids of the parties, the Board has given less weight to appellants' suggested comparables #3 and #4 due to their significantly newer ages than the subject dwelling, which leaves as more similar appellants' comparables #1 and #2 which were set forth in the appraisal report. The Board has also given less weight to board of review comparables #1 and #4 due to their significantly older ages than the subject dwelling.

Thus, the Board finds the most comparable sales are derived from the appellants' appraisal with an opinion of value of \$355,000 or approximately \$273.08 per square foot of living area including land and board of review comparables #2 and #3 which had sale prices of \$309.36 and \$374.05 per square foot of living area, land included, respectively. The subject has an estimated market value of \$460,072 or \$353.90 per square foot including land using the 2007 three-year median level of assessments for DuPage County of 33.26% which is within the range of the most similar comparables presented by the board of review. However, while the appraisal may lack some details as to the manner in which various conclusions were reached and questions can be raised as to adjustments made by the appraiser, in the end the Property Tax Appeal Board finds that the appraisal submitted by the appellants estimating the subject's market value at \$355,000 or approximately \$273.08 per square foot of living area including land is still the best evidence of the subject's market value in the record given the consideration of comparable sales and adjustments made thereto.

Based upon the market value as stated above, the Property Tax Appeal Board finds that a reduction is warranted. Since market value has been established, the three-year median level of assessments for DuPage County for 2007 of 33.26% shall be applied.

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.

*Ronald R. Cuit*

Chairman

*K. L. Fern*

Member

*Frank A. Huff*

Member

*Mark Morris*

Member

Member

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

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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 23, 2010

*Allen Castrovillari*

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 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 the subsequent year 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.

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.