

BOARD OF ASSESSORS MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 28, 2017

2:30 PM

City Hall Committee Room

Members Present:

Joshua A. Greenwald
Rita H. Johnson
John T. Newcombe
Daniel J. Langille, Chairman/City Assessor

Staff Present:

Diane C. R. Stauder, Assessment Tech.

Mr. Langille called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM.

Ms. Johnson moved and Mr. Greenwald seconded to accept the minutes of the May 17, and June 7, 2017 Board of Assessors meetings. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the May 17 and June 7, 2017 minutes.

Mr. Langille opened the Public Meeting by explaining the Board would make determinations on the petitions for abatement before them today. Mr. Langille stated that, once decided, notification would be mailed to the property owner. Mr. Langille explained that the Board's decision is final and if the property owner is dissatisfied with the decision, an appeal may be filed with the Board of Tax and Land Appeals, or with Superior Court.

The following property owners were present for the meeting:

1. King, Kenneth A. & Carol E. Rev. Family Trust – 13 Worcester St. - #066-01-010

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

Mr. King was present. He reviewed the comparable properties submitted with the application. Based on those comparables, in his opinion, the assessment of his property should be between 210,000 to 218,000, for an average of 214,000.

2. Cheshire Housing Trust – 86 Winter St. - #001-01-004

APPROVED. Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 363,900 to 312,000. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 363,900 to 312,000, resulting in an abatement of \$1,888.64.

Ms. Linda Mangones, Executive Director, was present to speak about this and the following two properties.

Ms. Mangones said this property is known as "Hampshire House", a rooming house which is HUD funded. She said HUD has reduced the rents which CHT is appealing. Ms. Mangones stated the rents don't support the costs to maintain the property.

The property is a rehabilitated 18-single room boarding house. There are rent restrictions and high expenses. To be consistent with similar properties owned by CHT, the Department recommends a -10% economic factor be applied to this property to account for these issues.

3. Cheshire Housing Trust – 29 Elm St. - #003-05-005

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

Ms. Mangones explained this property is leased to Southwestern Community Services for its emergency shelter program.

Based on analysis of the income stream, it was determined that the value is reasonable.

4. Cheshire Housing Trust – 218-228 Winchester St. - #052-04-015

APPROVED. Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 441,800 to 406,800. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 441,800 to 406,800, resulting in an abatement of \$1,273.65.

Ms. Mangones said although this property is located in a convenient area of Keene, it is also surrounded by Keene State College students. She said this property has rent restrictions and income restrictions on the tenants so it cannot be rented to KSC students. She said keeping tenants in this property is difficult due to offensive language and activities of some students. Due to the proximity of the College and the resulting negative influence, in her opinion, Ms. Mangones believes the assessment should not have increased.

5. Woodburn Associates – 28-34 Woodburn St. - #009-02-005

DENIED. Ms. Johnson moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

Gary Phippard, Partner, was present. He explained his company converted a former telephone building to an 18 unit apartment complex in 1985. The rear two buildings containing 24 units were constructed in 1985. Mr. Phippard said the company pledged to keep the rents low over the years. He pointed out that between 25-30% of tenants are families and, due to the lower rents, many have been able to move on to purchase their own homes.

The income approach was developed using income that mirrors the subject's actual income and a higher than normal expense rate. The value generated by this approach is 2,513,700. This is very supportive of the subject's 2016 assessment of 2,487,200.

6. Hamblet, Jeanna C. Rev. Trust – 31 Emerald St. - #046-03-008

APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 175,200 to 160,600. Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 175,200 to 160,600, resulting in an abatement of \$531.29.

Ms. Hamblet was present to speak about this and the following three properties.

Ms. Hamblet explained this property, along with the 6 & 12 Wilson Street properties, are in the Central Business Zone and are contiguous. She said values of other properties in this area have decreased and asked why they hadn't decreased in her case. Ms. Hamblet said no improvements were made. The properties, in her opinion, are in a bad neighborhood. She pointed out that of the three properties, 6 Wilson Street is the most difficult to rent. Regarding 31 Emerald Street, Ms. Hamblet said there is a

right-of-way which she doesn't own. She said she has approached the owners of the r-o-w on a few occasions but to no avail.

Mr. Greenwald asked if there are vacancies in any of the properties. Ms. Hamblet said the upstairs unit at 6 Wilson Street is vacant and 12 Wilson Street is vacant as well.

7. Hamblet, Jeanna C. Rev. Trust – 6 Wilson St. - #046-03-004

APPROVED. Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 170,100 to 148,800. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 170,100 to 148,800, resulting in an abatement of \$775.11.

See Ms. Hamblet's comments in #6 above.

Inspection revealed a two foot error in sketch of the front part of the building and an incorrect year built (it was listed as 1925 when the actual age is closer to 1850). The improvements are graded "C" with an "Average" depreciation factor. Due to the low cost materials utilized on the building's interior, the deferred maintenance and lack of upgrades, the Department recommends reducing the depreciation factor to "Fair". These changes and corrections result in a revised 2016 assessment of 148,800.

8. Hamblet, Jeanna C. Rev. Trust – 12 Wilson St. - #046-03-005

APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 202,100 to 185,500. Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 202,100 to 185,500, resulting in an abatement of \$604.07.

See Ms. Hamblet's comments in #6 above.

9. Hamblet, Jeanna C. Rev. Trust – 31 Wyman Rd. - #918-09-035

APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 516,200 to 462,500. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 516,200 to 462,500, resulting in an abatement of \$1,954.14.

Ms. Hamblet said this is her residence, which is a 1770 Colonial. She said the bathrooms and kitchen need updating. She said the property has been on the market for 8-9 years. She dropped the asking price to 475,000 this year but has had no offers. One of the reasons the property isn't selling, in her opinion, is that the home is zoned "Corporate Park". The main view is of a large manufacturing plant and, with Route 12 being in close proximity, there is a great deal of traffic noise. In Ms. Hamblet's opinion these are major detriments to the property's value.

10. Mills of Keene, LLC – 81-83 Ralston St. - #052-02-002

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

John Hayes, a tax representative for the owner, was present. Mr. Hayes said The Mills was built to accommodate Keene State College students. He explained there are 229 units, the facility was built at about the same time as similar facility on the corner of Ralston and Emerald Street, and that building has 120 units. Mr. Hayes stated that at the time of construction, enrollment at KSC was at approximately 5,000. Initially, the property was 100% occupied by KSC students. Unfortunately, due to concerns caused by the riots during the Pumpkin Festival, the following incoming freshman class numbers dropped and total enrollment was at approximately 4,000. Another detriment, in Mr. Hayes's opinion,

was KSC's decision to build additional on-campus student housing. Mr. Langille asked if there is a recent appraisal of the property. Mr. Hayes said there is no appraisal and it is not officially listed on the market. Mr. Greenwald asked if a management company is involved. Mr. Hayes said a management company was recently brought in to actively address what should be done. Mr. Newcombe asked if the rents have been lowered. Mr. Hayes said yes, they are in the process of decreasing rents.

11. Hill, Douglas E. & Jacquelyn D. Living Trust – 123 Elm St. - #004-03-007

APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 162,700 to 148,800. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 162,700 to 148,800, resulting in an abatement of \$505.82.

Mr. Hill was present. He said this home was built in in 1880 and is one of the few remaining single family homes in the neighborhood. He said the house has not seen improvements in years, there is water damage on the second floor and some walls are open to the studs. He also pointed out that the neighborhood has gone downhill, due to many drugs. He said there has been a strong police presence in an effort to cut down on the drug problems.

In general, the finished living area is only in fair condition and exhibits a great deal of deferred maintenance. The quality is considered to be average. Inspection revealed a 2' error in the measurement of the width of the property. Also, the unfinished areas were listed as finished. The Department recommends correcting the sketch and lowering the depreciation factor from "Average" to "Fair".

12. Carey, Matthew D. – 338 West Surry Rd. - #915-07-001

APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 126,200 to 100,600. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 126,200 to 100,600, resulting in an abatement of \$931.58.

Attorney Adam Kossayda, representing the owner and property owner Matthew Carey were present.

Mr. Kossayda explained this is a unique property as the town line runs through the breezeway of the home. He said the Town of Surry granted an abatement from 59,000 to 28,000 for the Surry portion of the property and is hopeful the City will also grant an abatement. Mr. Kossayda said he was in error when stating in the abatement application that the garage is in Keene. After additional research he agrees that the garage is actually in Surry. Mr. Kossayda explained that Mr. Carey inherited ½ of this property from his grandmother and his aunt inherited the other ½. Mr. Carey paid his aunt \$50,000 for her ½ of the property, which, in his opinion, indicates the total value of the Keene portion of the property is 100,000. Mr. Kossayda said a recent appraisal came in at 106,000 for the entire parcel. Mr. Carey is requesting the Keene assessment be reduced to 80,000.

Inspection revealed some errors in the sketch such as a 7' x 19' section listed as having an attic when it is only one story. The Department would recommend correcting the sketch and lowering the depreciation factor from "Fair" to "Poor". These changes result in a revised 2016 assessment of 100,600.

13. 29 Blake Street Real Estate Trust – 29 Blake St. - #048-01-029

APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 188,700 to 169,900. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 188,700 to 169,900, resulting in an abatement of \$684.13.

The subject is a two family conversion situated on a 0.22 acre lot on the west side of Blake Street. It was originally built circa 1890.

Both units are only fair in condition. The improvements currently carry a depreciation factor of “Average” and this should be adjusted to “Fair”. This change along with some minor sketch corrections results in a revised 2016 assessment of 169,900.

14. Big Deal Real Estate, LLC – 630-670 Park Ave. - #132-02-005

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

The subject is a commercial lot at the north end of Park Avenue. It is improved with three buildings housing multiple businesses one of which is a convenience store with gas pumps.

The property was purchased by the present owner in February of 2016 for \$2,000,000. The new owner is claiming that only \$1,500,000 was for real estate and the rest of the purchase price was for business value and FF&E. That is all the information supplied, just a statement, no other documentation. With a lack of information supplied to support the abatement request, the taxpayer has not met the required burden of proof for an abatement.

15. Brady Sullivan Properties, LLC – 7 Parcels

DENIED. Ms. Johnson moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

The taxpayer’s representative reason for requesting an abatement is: “This property is not viable as a commercial property and is in transition to be rehabbed into apartments. The property will need to be vacated, generating no revenue, but having substantial carrying costs”.

The Zoning Board did not approve the conversion of this property until December 5, 2016, which is after the assessment date of 4/1/16. The Assessing Department sent out a request for additional information to the taxpayer’s representative and we have not received any reply or any additional information to substantiate their request. Lastly, the owners have filed on only one of the properties owned by them and to determine if an abatement is warranted it must be shown that the combined tax burden of their entire estate is disproportionately assessed. The property’s representative has not met the required burden of proof required for an abatement

At this point, there were no attendees. The Board discussed the following:

16. Foley, Monica S. – 26 Skyline Dr. - #709-05-018

APPROVED. Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 194,300 to 176,800. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 194,300 to 176,800, resulting in an abatement of \$636.83.

This unit is part of a four-plex that is unique to this condo complex. There are four of these units and no others. In December of 2016 unit 30 sold for \$168,000.

17. Markem Corporation – 94 Congress St. - #037-03-001

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

18. Markem Corporation – 150 Congress St. - #906-22-016

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

19. POMAH, LLC – 100 Pearl St. - #050-03-004

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

It appears that the subject's assessment is equitable to other recently constructed multi-family units and, based on the close correlation between the pro-forma rent projection and the subject's actual rent, it would also appear that current assessment has grounds in today's market place.

20. Shapiro, Jane M. – 140 Peg Shop Rd. - #903-19-026

APPROVED. Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 486,450 to 414,650. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 486,450 to 414,650, resulting in an abatement of \$2,612.80.

Inventory corrections were revealed during inspection. Making necessary changes reduces the assessed value to 414,650.

21. Trombley, Lorraine L. – 22 Blake St. - #048-02-013

APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 181,000 to 149,700. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 181,000 to 149,700, resulting in an abatement of \$1,139.01.

At the time of inspection the dwelling was clean but dated. It will require updates to the electrical as well. Adjusting for these items results in the recommended assessment reduction.

22. VIDHI Hospitality, LLC – 401 Winchester St. - #166-01-002

DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value.

Other Business:

Wright, Judith M. – 6 Bates St. - #093-01-092

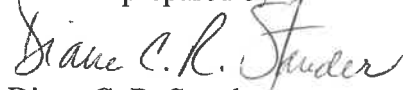
DENIED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the request for abatement was denied. The Board determined the information submitted did not support a reduction in the assessed value for 2016.

Mr. Langille reminded the Board that Ms. Wright attended the June 7th Board of Assessors meeting. She explained she was not clear an interior inspection was required when she applied for an abatement. The Board agreed to allow an interior inspection, giving Ms. Wright a deadline of June 9th to make an appointment with the Property Appraiser. As agreed, Ms. Wright made an appointment for June 9th. However, on the morning of the appointment, she called to cancel the appointment.


Mr. Langille stated since Ms. Wright initially refused an interior inspection, was given another opportunity by the Board to schedule an inspection which Ms. Wright cancelled, the Department could not make a determination on the value. Therefore, the recommendation to the Board is to deny the application.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m. This is the final regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Assessors for 2017.

Minutes prepared by


Diane C. R. Stauder
Assessment Technician

Reviewed and Approved by the Board of Assessors


Daniel J. Langille, CNHA
City Assessor/Chairman, Board of Assessors

