

City of Keene  
New Hampshire

BOARD OF ASSESSORS MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

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.

Mr. Greenwald moved and Mr. Newcombe seconded to accept the minutes of May 16, 2018. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the May 16, 2018 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 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/representatives were present for the meeting:

**1. Davis Oil Co. – 0 off Main St. - #120008**

**APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 257,400 to 239,900.**

**Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 257,400 to 239,900, resulting in an abatement of \$649.60.**

Mr. Steve Walsh was present. He said he was in attendance to answer any questions the Board might have. He explained he was hoping for relief relating to the flooding issue on the property and he has been working on it with the Public Works Department. Mr. Langille explained that during inspection, several items were corrected which resulted in the recommended assessment reduction.

**2. Johnson, Ronald L. – 340 West Surry Rd. - #206033**

**APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 130,400 to 114,500.**

**Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 2-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 130,400 to 114,500, resulting in an abatement of \$590.21.**

*Mr. Newcombe recused himself from this discussion due to a possible conflict of interest.*

Attorney Jeremy Hockensmith and Mr. Johnson were present. Mr. Hockensmith stated that, after a review of similar properties in the neighborhood, their opinion of value should be lowered to 100,000.

**3. Fowler, Randy – 81 Baker St. - #594061**

**APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 279,100 to 262,900.**

**Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 279,100 to 262,900, resulting in an abatement of \$601.34.**

Mr. Fowler was present. He pointed out the property is in a flood zone and recently a buffer was changed. As a result, he said in his opinion, the parcel changed from two lots to only one buildable lot.

**4. 85 Winchester Street LLC – 85 Winchester St. - #591012**

**APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 343,600 to 246,200.**

**Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 343,600 to 246,200, resulting in an abatement of \$3,615.49.**

Attorney Gary Kinyon and Trevor Grauer, representing the owners, were present. Mr. Kinyon explained the history of the property: had been a fraternity, lost that status in the early 2000's, became a single family dwelling in 2015 and then, in 2017, the new owner successfully changed the use to a "Lodging House", for up to eight people. Because the building has only a bath and a half and only five bedrooms, the owners reduced the rents. Mr. Kinyon explained a shared room would not rent for the typical \$650/month. Mr. Greenwald asked if the property is currently rented. Mr. Grauer said yes, there are currently six tenants. Mr. Grauer said he would email more details on the property to Mr. Langille following today's meeting.

**5. Findings Realty Inc. – 160-200 Water St. - #586001**

**APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 679,500 to 456,000.**

**Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 679,500 to 456,000, resulting in an abatement of \$8,296.32.**

Attorney Gary Kinyon, representing the owner, was present. Mr. Kinyon stated the property is vacant and has been on the market since 2013. He said a recent appraisal came in at \$450,000. While there have been many potential buyers, Mr. Kinyon added, the property has limitations. Being in the flood zone means it requires flood insurance which is a concern for some buyers. Mr. Kinyon noted the commercial market has been somewhat soft for a few years. Mr. Langille asked if the property is still on the market for \$599,000. Mr. Kinyon yes, but it's not likely to be much longer.

**6. Whitney Bros. Co. – 93 Railroad St. - #574037**

**APPROVED. Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 1,181,000 to 1,148,800.**

**Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 1,181,000 to 1,148,800, resulting in an abatement of \$1,195.26.**

Mr. Michael Jablonski was present. He said Whitney Bros. has been here since 1904 and in his opinion, its best use is the current use. He said there is no road frontage; the only access is via a right-of-way over Railroad Street and Water Street. Mr. Jablonski said the safety of his employees is a concern too, as there have been occasions when vehicles are illegally parked. He explained the R.O.W. could potentially be blocked if/when emergency vehicles need access to the building. Mr. Jablonski said there have been flooding issues since 2012. Mr. Jablonski described the property as a unicorn and, with flooding and access issues, he feels the assessment should be reduced. Mr. Langille noted the appraisal lists the square footage as 76,224, yet in March 2019, the Property Appraiser confirmed the square footage is 87,500 square feet. The difference in the square footage, Mr. Langille explained, would affect the assessed value.

**7. Syed, Tarannum & Sheikh, Hafizurrehman – 29 Mountain View Dr. - #501018**

**APPROVED. Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 308,300 to 292,500.**

**Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 308,300 to 292,500, resulting in an abatement of \$586.50.**

Mr. Sheikh was present. He explained, in his opinion, values of other properties in this Planned Unit Development have dropped 15%. He said the association fee is \$225/month (for many amenities, including trash pickup, landscaping, snowplowing, etc.) which he feels should be taken into consideration. Mr. Langille explained there are two different qualities of homes because there were two development phases.

**8. Batty, Jill I. & Stutes, Daryl L. – 649 Main St. - #120059**

**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.

Mr. Stutes was present. In 2016, he said they began a restoration project which he considers 50 years' worth of deferred maintenance. Mr. Stutes said the building permit stated a value of 156,000 which appeared to be the amount of the assessment increase. He said their intention was to restore the home (a Craftsman style home), so many excruciating details were included to retain its authenticity/uniqueness. Mr. Stutes said they feel the property has been over assessed since 2016 (prior to restoration). He added that, although only 10 years old, they replaced the boiler and installed an all-electric system, explaining they didn't want to pay for fuel oil anymore.

**9. Carr, Jacqueline B. & Carr, Joan A. – 103 School St. - #568031**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 261,000 to 222,700. Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 261,000 to 222,700, resulting in an abatement of \$1,421.70.

Ms. Carr and Mrs. Carr were present. Jacqueline Carr explained they purchased the property for \$215,000 in June, 2018 and, prior to their purchase, it sat empty for a long time. Ms. Carr said they feel the property is not comparable to others on School Street.

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

**10. 120 Emerald Street LLC – 120 Emerald St. - #584070**

**APPROVED.** Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 5,785,200 to 4,423,000. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 5,785,200 to 4,423,000, resulting in an abatement of \$50,564.86.

Mr. Langille said the decline in Keene State College enrollment has had an impact on private student housing.

**11. Brown, Sarah G. – 5 Red Fox Run - #107007**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 596,310 to 502,910. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 596,310 to 502,910, resulting in an abatement of \$3,467.01.

**12. Bussiere, Michael B. & Marjorie S. – 314 Court St. - #548045**

**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 of accrued interest was denied.

Mr. Langille explained due the applicant's misunderstanding, interest had accrued on the property tax bill.

**13. Collins, Richard C. & Debra A. – 8 Armory St. - #549008**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 182,200 to 144,900. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 182,200 to 144,900, resulting in an abatement of \$1,384.58.

**14. Eversource Energy – (17 parcels)**

**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.

**15. Goncalves, Tony S. – 36 Damon Ct. - #553040**

**APPROVED.** Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 170,700 to 145,100. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 170,700 to 145,100, resulting in an abatement of \$950.27.

**16. Johnson, Craig N. & Tiffany D. – 23 Pleasant St. -#554079**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 218,600 to 118,600. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 2-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 218,600 to 118,600, resulting in an abatement of \$3,712.00.

*Ms. Johnson recused herself from this discussion due to a possible conflict of interest.*

**17. Keiser, Alan A. – 81 Dale Dr. - #511041**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 145,700 to 135,000. Mr. Newcombe seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 145,700 to 135,000, resulting in an abatement of \$397.18.

**18. Mountainscapes Capital Investment Trust – (5 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.

**19. Northamptonboys3, LLC – 101 Key Rd. - #111019**

**DENIED.** Ms. Johnson moved that the Board deny the request for abatement. Mr. Newcombe 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.

**20. Northamptonboys3, LLC – 109-147 Key Rd. - #110022**

**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.

**21. Noyes, Spencer J. & Ashley L. – 134 Arch St. - #237036**

**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. Langille explained the property owner denied the Property Appraiser an interior inspection.

**22. Rogers, John L. & Judith A. – 50 Castle St. - #567056**

**APPROVED.** Ms. Johnson moved that the assessment be adjusted from 146,500 to 127,100. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 3-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 146,500 to 127,100, resulting in an abatement of \$720.13.

Mr. Langille noted the lot is very small and electricity has not been upgraded since the early 1950's.

**23. Spencer, Ian H. & Stacey E. – 2 Walker St. - #120085**

**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.

**24. Target Corporation – 46 Ash Brook Rd. #5 - #109027000001005**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Newcombe moved that the assessment be adjusted from 14,329,300 to 13,800,000. Mr. Greenwald seconded. On a vote of 2-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 14,329,300 to 13,800,000, resulting in an abatement of \$19,647.62.

**25. MGJ Realty LLC – 51 Greenbriar Rd. - #581007**

**APPROVED.** Mr. Greenwald moved that the assessment be adjusted from 366,000 to 315,600. Ms. Johnson seconded. On a vote of 2-0, the Board approved the assessment reduction from 366,000 to 315,600, resulting in an abatement of \$1,870.85.

*Mr. Newcombe recused himself from this discussion due to a possible conflict of interest.*

**Other Business:**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. Mr. Langille advised the Board another meeting will be scheduled in late June with the date yet to be determined.

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