MINUTES

Board of Equalization and Review
May 15, 2014

Board Members Present: Jennifer Marsh, Chair
Bronwyn Merritt, Regular
Barbara Levine, Alternate

Staff Members Present: Roger Gunn, Chief Appraiser
Steve Hensley, Appraiser
Scherri McCray, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 2:32PM on May 15, 2014 by Jennifer Marsh.

Latta PIN# 9889937852

William Latta elected not to appear before the Board and requested that his documentation serve as his appeal. He is appealing the valuation of the property located at 1110 LEMIEUXS WAY, ROUGEMONT. The current tax value assigned to the property by Orange County is $ 426,468. The appellant is requesting that the value be adjusted to $ 375,000 based upon a recent appraisal and recent sales prices of comparable properties, as well as the fact that the housing crisis was at its peak in 2009. Mr. Latta feels that his property value is too high. Mr. Latta submitted an appraisal that was conducted on 04/03/2014 that suggested a lower valuation of the appellant's property.

Upon the County's review of the subject, it was determined that there is a discrepancy in the description of the exterior wall. The County's property record card states that the exterior wall material is masonry, but that is not correct. The County recommends that the construction modifier and the secondary wall finish be removed from the property record card. The suggested correction will result in a reduction in value to $ 417,100.

The Board reviewed all the information presented by the appellant and the County. After review and deliberation, Mrs. Marsh stated that the appraisal presented by the appellant contained comparables that were not relevant to the January 1, 2009 revaluation from which the current assessed value was determined. Mrs. Marsh made a motion to accept the County's recommendations and the adjusted property value of $ 417,100. Ms. Merritt seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ayes: 3
Noes: 0

Rosenberg PIN# 9779374817

Lewis Rosenberg elected not to appear before the Board and requested that his documentation serve as his appeal. He is appealing the valuation of his property located at 603 SOUTH CAMELLIA STREET, CHAPEL HILL. The current tax value assigned to the property by Orange County is $ 1,007,588.

In a letter to the Board, the appellant stated "$ 1,007,588 is far more that the $ 780,000 that we paid and, therefore, we feel we are paying more than our fair share of taxes." The appellant went on to note "as evidence that the tax valuation of our house was higher than its actual value in 2009, we have provided information on home sales prior to that date for comparable properties in the same area." The appellant continued to expound upon the evidence he provided.

Upon review by the County, a comparison was made between the subject's property record card and comparable sales information collected from MLS. It was determined that all of the properties in the subject's neighborhood had sales values that were similar to the subject and that the subject property sold for $ 1,320,000 in October 2008.

During deliberation, the Board reviewed all information presented by the appellant and the County. After deliberation, Mrs. Marsh made a motion that no change be made to the appellant's current assessed property value citing that the appellant did not provide any evidence to show that the County's assessed value was incorrect. The information that the appellant did provide contained information that was not applicable to the relevant January 1, 2009 revaluation time frame. Ms. Merritt seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ayes: 3
Noes: 0

Owen PIN# 9798775263

Susan Owen appeared before the Board to appeal the valuation of her property located at 509 MEADOWMONT LANE, CHAPEL HILL. The current tax value assigned to the property by Orange County is $ 1,318,200. The appellant is requesting that the current property value be reduced to $ 1,080,000 citing the reason for the reduction request is based on comparable sales prior to January 1, 2009 and after. Furthermore, she claims that her house not a custom built home unlike the other properties in the immediate area of her neighborhood.

Ms. Owen stated that she purchased this property in September 2013for $ 1,100,000. She states that there have been no improvements to the property except for $ 25,000 in landscaping. She informed the Board about the disparity in purchase price and value. When asked by the Board if the deck was already on the property, the appellant stated that it was added after the house was constructed and she changed the size of the deck from what was originally there.
Jennifer Patterson, a Realtor, was present to help substantiate the appellant's claims. The comparables that were submitted by the Realtor on behalf of the appellant were from 2002-2005. The Realtor informed the Board that the subject was built by Drees Home Builders. Ms.

Patterson asked if the appellant were to obtain comparables built by Drees from other areas in Chapel Hill, could the comparables be used as evidence to support the claim for an adjusted value. She also claimed that the value of the property was mainly in the lot as opposed to the house.

When the County reviewed the subject, it was determined that there was a discrepancy in square footage between what was recorded on the County's property record card and what was stated on the appraisal. The appraisal indicated the square footage is 6890 and the Tax Office County has the square footage recorded at 6757. Upon review it was determined that the County's estimated garage square footage was incorrect. The County recommended that there be an adjustment to the square footage to reflect what is stated on the appellant's appraisal. Furthermore, the grade should be adjusted to A+65 to bring the property into equity with similar homes in the neighborhood.

During deliberation, the Board reviewed all information presented by the appellant and the County. After deliberation, Mrs. Levine made a motion to accept the County's recommendation to adjust the grade of the property to A+65 and the living area from 6890 to 6757. These adjustments changed the value of the subject to $ 1,268,700. Ms. Merritt seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ayes: 3
Noes: 0

Goodman PIN# 9860650005

Carl Goodman appeared before the Board to appeal the valuation of his property located at 7401 TALBRYN WAY, CHAPEL HILL. The current tax value assigned to the property by Orange County is $ 700,800. The appellant stated that he had just purchased this property in January 2014 and is questioning why the property value was increased. The County explained that the assessed value was adjusted due to improvements made to the subject in 2012. The appellant stated that he reviewed material on the internet concerning the sales history of his property. He noted that it was listed in 2011 for $ 714,000, which he claims is close to the current assessed value. Then in September of that year, the asking price was reduced to $ 699,000. At that time the subject still did not sell. Improvements were done to the property in 2012 and the price of the house was lowered to below $ 600,000.

Mr. Goodman is questioning whether the improvements made the value more or less for selling purposes. The subject sold for $ 595,000 and this has created an issue for the appellant as he questions the accuracy of the increase in the assessment from improvements made in 2012. The appellant states that there was work done on the finished basement with the addition of a bathroom instead of a planned office. He was not aware if there was heating and cooling work done but added that half of the basement was roughed in, and in 2012, the basement was finished adding additional living space.

Upon review by the County, it was noted that a permit was taken out for the renovation. The County's records indicted that the basement appraised at one quarter to half completed. The County stated that during a field review to record the finished basement, the assessor noted that the attic was actually finished living quarters and the prior deck had been replaced with a larger deck. Based on staff findings, the County recommended that a correction be made to the heated square footage of the residence from 3622 square feet to 3271 square feet. This recommendation will result in an adjusted property value of $ 672,700.

The Board evaluated all the information that was provided by the appellant and the County. The Board further explained to the appellant the processes involved with assessment of property. After deliberation, Mrs. Marsh made a motion to accept the County's recommendation. Mrs. Levine seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ayes: 3
Noes: 0

Boyer PIN# 9798082591

Rob Boyer appeared before the Board to appeal the valuation of his property located at 312 GLENDALE DRIVE, CHAPEL HILL. The current tax value assigned to the property by Orange County is $ 366,318. The appellant is requesting that the Board reduce the value of the property to $ 237,000 citing that this property was abandoned when he purchased it. Furthermore, he claims that the property had been abandoned for approximately 6 years. The appellant submitted statements and photos to support this claim. Mr. Boyer stated that the County's tax value is close to $100,000 over the purchase price. The appellant drew the Board's attention to photographs of the property that were taken in May 2012 and pointed out that the property has no bathroom, kitchen, or dry wall. There is also a broken sewer line. He also stated that it would take a lot of money and over a year to make the property habitable.

The County reviewed the property and stated that the deconstruction of the property was in process and added that the property was not habitable in January 2014. The County made a recommendation to adjust the percentage completion of the residence to 15% as of January 1, 2014. The requested recommendations will adjust the value to $210,300, a value less than the amount requested by the appellant, but there will be follow-up reviews and adjustments of the property value by the County as work on the residence is completed.

The Board reviewed all information and documentation presented by the appellant and the County. After deliberation, Mrs. Marsh made a motion to accept the County's recommendation and the adjusted value of $ 210,300. Mrs. Levine seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ayes: 3
Noes: 0

JONES PIN# 9870552889

Neloa Jones elected not to appear before the Board and requested that her documentation serve as her appeal. She is appealing the valuation of her property located at 250 EDGAR STREET, CHAPEL HILL. The current tax value assigned to the property by Orange County is $ 214,346. She is requesting that her property value be increased to $ 245,000 claiming that property values should increase over time and appreciate. She states that her house is very well built and in the event that she wants to sell her property, it is imperative that her property be priced appropriately.

The County reviewed the subject and determined that a porch and a small rear patio were added to the residence but not recorded on the property record card. The County recommends that the information be adjusted accordingly and the revised property value set to $ 238,300.

The Board reviewed all information present by the appellant and the County. After deliberation, Mrs. Marsh made a motion to accept the County's recommendations and moved that the value be adjusted to $ 238,300. Ms. Merritt seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Ayes: 3
Noes: 0

Having heard all of the appeals scheduled on this date, Ms. Marsh made a motion to adjourn this meeting. Ms. Merritt seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Jennifer Marsh, Chair

Scherri McCray, Recording Secretary