



**Town
Of
Highgate**

PO Box 189

2996 Vermont Route 78

Highgate, VT 05459

www.highgatevt.org

Phone: 802-868-4697

Fax: 802-868-3064

Heidi Britch-Valenta

Town Administrator
Planning & Zoning Admin.
Ext. 203

hbvalenta@highgatevt.org

Shelley Laroche

Town Treasurer &
Delinquent Tax Collector
Ext. 204

slaroche@highgatevt.org

Wendi Dusablon

Town Clerk

DRB, Planning & Selectboard Clerk
Ext. 201

wdusablon@highgatevt.org

Shirley, Peter & Aimee

Listers Office & 911 Coord.
Ext. 208

sfcteau@highgatevt.org
areynolds@highgatevt.org

Andy, Butch & Patrick

Public Works Dept.

aking@highgatevt.org
Ext. 207

Jeff Towle

Health Officer

Vonnie Lamotte

Animal Control Officer

Christopher Yates

Paulette Tatro

Randy Connelly

Joshua LaRocque

Sharon Bousquet

Highgate Selectboard

Minutes of Grievance Hearings 2016

June 2, 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 9:05 AM

Mark Lutterbein

Present: Mark Lutterbein— Property Owner

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. German, & Aimee Reynolds –Board of Listers

Mark Lutterbein owns a seasonal dwelling (camp) at 499 Shipyard Bay Road along with Janice Lutterbein and Todd & Carol Lutterbein under Parcel # 0030000165.

Appellant questioned the towns property value based on the poor quality of the lake. Appellant feels that the publicity that has been given around the algae that surfaces in the lake has had a serious impact on the sales in the area and properties are not worth the assessed value. Listers explained that the land grades for lake properties have been lowered to a 0.9 from 1.00 due to the quality. Sales of properties in the appellant's area were given as examples of current sales. Listers also explained that they have been working with the state to come up with the fairest way to compensate for the lake quality. This decision will take time. Sales of the properties in this area are a huge factor in this process. Appellant has a 1000 gallon tank with a leach field for his septic that was replaced around 1986 by Doug Rollo. Public hearing closed @ 9:20 am on June 2, 2016.

Deliberative Session:

No change to assessment due working with the state on acquiring a fair way to reassess the properties affected by the poor lake quality. Motion to accept decision by Aimee Reynolds, seconded by Shirley Fecteau. Approved.

June 2, 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 9:42AM

Richard H. Wilkens Jr.

Present: Richard H. Wilkens Jr. – Property Owner & Lisa Wells

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Richard H. Wilkens Jr. owns a dwelling and 5.70 acres of land at 464 Highgate Road under Parcel # 0020207149.

Appellant questioned the value of his property compared to his purchase price in 2012. Appellant feels that there is a lot of repair needed; fireplaces do not work due to chimneys needing repair, landscape value is too high for a "weed pit", Porch #1 to ballroom is all rotting, Porch #6 needs to be moved on sketch, and quality & depreciation need to be lowered. Listers reviewed pictures that appellant had on his phone showing some of these issues. Listers felt a site visit was needed to give a fair assessment and scheduled this for Thursday, June 9, 2016 at 9:00 am. Site visit was completed with only Listers present and hearing closed @ 10:00 am on June 9, 2016.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. A site visit was done on the outside of the property. Appellant was unable to be at the site visit but gave permission to the Listers to evaluate property without his presence. The value of the fireplaces was adjusted down to \$1000.00 each due to the poor quality of the chimneys. Combined Garage #1, #2, & Porch #1 together as an attached garage (renamed on sketch to Ballroom, Old Kitchen, & Entryway) to reduce sq. footage value. Percentage for heat was adjusted from 74% to 80% for main living space and third floor was adjusted to 0%. Outbuilding #3 was remeasured and the sq. footage was corrected to 200 sq. ft. (10x20). The Physical Depreciation was increased by 5% due to age of home. The value of the landscape was lowered from \$7000.00 to \$4000.00 due to stone driveway. Appellant questioned being charged for an outbuilding which stored his wood furnace but this was never listed on the property card. Motion to accept decision by Peter St. Germain, seconded by Shirley Fecteau. Approved.

June 2,2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 10:25 AM

Douglas F. & Robin M. McFarren

Present: Douglas & Robin McFarren –Property Owners

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Douglas and Robin McFarren own a home and 12.00 acres of land at 4268 Rollo Road under Parcel # 0003012220.

Appellants are grieving their property value which they feel is much higher than the price they purchased the property for and the bank appraisal they acquired. It was stated that the land is valued much too high for the ledge and boulders that are on the property. The appellants also feel that the landscape is valued too high and stated that only 30% of the driveway is concrete and the remaining is cracked asphalt. The Listers explained that the town values are based on a cost approach (new build minus depreciation). Listers haven't been to the property since reappraisal in 2008 and recommended a site visit. A site visit was scheduled for Thursday, June 9, 2016 at 11:00 am. Site visit was completed with Listers and Douglas & Robin McFarren being present. Hearing closed @ 12:00 pm on June 9, 2016.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. A site visit was done on the outside of the property. The Listers viewed the property and observed that the property does consist of ledge and steep upgrades. Landscape was reduced from excellent (\$11,000) to good (\$7,000) due to concrete only being a portion of the driveway and the remaining being cracked asphalt. The finished area in the office was removed due to not being finished and consisting of the same interior structure as the garage. All outbuildings were remeasured and matched to the current sketch information. The carport and outbuilding porch were combined together and reduced from good to average due to the condition. The item listed as the Mat. Shelter was renamed to Pole Shed (1st outbuilding as you come up driveway) and given a flat value of \$800.00. Motion to accept decision by Shirley Fecteau, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

June 2, 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 10:50 AM

Robert Brown

Present: Robert Brown - Owner

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Robert Brown owns a home and 1.00 acre of land at 17 Cross Street under Parcel # 0020078370.

Appellant questioned the increase in his property value due to the new porch and the reduction of his depreciation. Listers explained that the depreciation was adjusted due to the new windows and siding. Appellant asked, if the values remain the same after our determination, what would his taxes be after the increase. The Listers gave an approximate figure based on the current tax rate of a \$200.00 increase. Public hearing closed @ 11:02 am on June 2, 2016.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. Listers felt that the current values were fair and accurate. No changes were given to the property value. Motion to accept decision by Peter St. Germain, seconded by Aimee Reynolds. Approved.

June 3, 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 8:45 AM

Matthew Peltier (Conference Call)

Present: Matthew Peltier - Owner

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Matthew Peltier owns a camp and 0.88 acre of land at 102 Sunset Drive under Parcel # 0002039120.

Appellant was not present but conducted grievance over a conference call. Appellant questioned the property value and feels the property is not worth what the town has it assessed at based on sales and other properties in the surrounding areas. Appellant states that the camp has no heating, cooling, or flooring. Listers explained that the camp is listed without having heating, cooling, or flooring. Listers also explained that the value is based on a cost approach (new build minus depreciation). After reviewing the property card and noticing that the property hasn't been viewed since reappraisal a site visit was requested. A site visit was scheduled for June 9, 2016 anytime due to the appellant not being able to be present. Appellant gave permission for the Listers to conduct a site visit without his presence. Site visit was completed and hearing closed @ 10:45 am on June 9, 2016.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. Listers evaluated the outside of the camp during the site visit. The sketch was corrected to show that the overhang on the back of the camp is not part of the living space. The energy was adjusted from good to fair due to the quality of the windows and sliding glass door. Fixtures were reduced from 5 to 3 and roughins from 2 to 1. Motion to accept decision by Aimee Reynolds, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

June 3,2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 9:05 AM

Jody A. Chaffee

Present: Jody Chaffee - Property Owner

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Jody Chaffee owns a home and 5.73 acres at 2943 Carter Hill Road under Parcel # 0016001261.

Appellant is grieving the property value compared to a recent bank appraisal. The Listers explained that the bank appraisal does not have a cost approach and cannot be compared to the property values because the town appraises properties on a cost approach (new build minus depreciation). Appellant was asked to look over his property card to see if there were any discrepancies and he felt that the landscape may be valued to high due to not having a driveway. Public hearing closed @ 9:20 am.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. Landscape was reduced to low cost due to the lack of a driveway. Motion to accept the decision by Aimee Reynolds, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

June 3 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 11:00 AM

Patrick & Kathleen Curran

Present: Peggy Curran & Colleen Curran – Daughters of Property Owners

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Patrick & Kathleen Curran own a camp and 0.24 acres of land at 91 Platt Road under Parcel # 0005055021.

Appellant questioned what the listers have determined for their property value based on the poor quality of the lake. Listers explained that they are still working with the state on getting the fairest value for all tax payers and owners on the lake. The current septic on the property is believed to be fairly new, a cement tank that has been registered with the town. Public hearing closed @ 11:15 am.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. No change were given to the property value at this time. Listers have been working with the state for months on acquiring a fair way to reassess those properties affected by the poor quality of the lake. The state is asking that we review all valid sales in the area and use this information as a large part of any determination. The process will take time and we have not forgotten any of the concerns. We have asked all property owners surrounding the lake to please bear with us and when a determination is made the Listers will inform everyone of the decision. Motion to accept the decision by Shirley Fecteau, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

June 3, 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 1:20 PM

Whitney Hanson

Present: Theresa Hanson - Wife of Property Owner

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Whitney Hanson owns a home and 0.85 acres of land at 151 Gore Road under Parcel # 0020207325.

Appellant questioned the value of the property compared to a recent bank appraisal. The bank appraisal was forgotten at home and could not be compared with our information. Listers looked over the property card with the appellant and some discrepancies were found. Since the home had not been visited since reappraisal in 2008 the Listers requested a site visit be done on the property. A site visit was scheduled for June 9, 2016 @ 1:00 am. Appellant called on June 9, 2016 and could not make the appointment. A new appointment was scheduled for June 10, 2016 @ 10:00 am. Hearing closed @ 11:00 am on June 10, 2016.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. A site visit was done on the property. The bank appraisal is not comparable because it is based on a duplex and the property is valued with the town as a single family home. The whirlpool tub has been removed from the home due to leaking onto the first floor. Fireplaces were removed from value because they are gas inserts and the inserts have been removed, a mantle is the only thing remaining. The Physical Depreciation was increased by 10% due to the age. Radiant heat was reduced from 100% to 90% due to the 3rd floor not having any heat. Motion to accept decision by Shirley Fecteau, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

June 3, 2016

Public Hearing Opened @ 1:50 PM

Gerald J. & Rita A. Sparacino

Present: Gerald & Rita Sparacino - Property Owners

Shirley Fecteau, Peter St. Germain, & Aimee Reynolds – Board of Listers

Gerald & Rita Sparacino own a camp and 0.21 acres of land at 373 Shipyard Road under Parcel # 0005017099.

Appellants questioned what the Listers have done to compensate those affected by the Blue Green Algae in Lake Champlain. They have put a lot of money into their camp and feel the lake frontage is worthless. Appellants gave a numerous amount of documents such as; State and Federal reports on the impact of the phosphorus, Lake Champlain Basin Reports, and Lake Champlain Committee article on the links between Blue Green Algae and Neurological Diseases to name a few. Listers explained that they are working with the state for come up with a compensation that is fair for everyone. Listers asked if appellants could give them any information on properties that have been on the market and the length of time that they have been listed for sale. This will help with the research on the sales and the impact the lake has on those sales. Public hearing closed @ 2:05 pm.

Deliberative Session:

Results of Hearing. No changes were given to the property value at this time. Listers have been working with the state for months on acquiring a fair way to reassess those properties affected by the poor quality of the lake. The state is asking that we review all valid sales in the area and use this information as a large part of any determination. The process will take time and we have not forgotten any of the concerns. We have asked all property owners surrounding the lake to please bear with us and when a determination is made the Listers will inform everyone of the decision. Motion to accept the decision by Shirley Fecteau, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

No Time Scheduled
Vernon & Janice Brosky

Present: A letter was written but a grievance meeting was not scheduled.

Vernon & Janice Brosky owns a home, camp, and 8.91 acres of land at 442 Duck Point Road under Parcel # 0002700301.

Appellants letter questioned his property value based on the poor quality of Lake Champlain. No public hearing was held.

Deliberative Session:

Listers reviewed the property card and noticed that the land grade was never reduced due to the lake quality. It was reduced from 1.0 to 0.9. Listers have been working with the state for months on acquiring a fair way to reassess those properties affected by the poor quality of the lake. The state is asking that we review all valid sales in the area and use this information as a large part of any determination. This is a struggle due to the fact that most properties are handed down through generations or are purchased by surrounding land owners, those are not considered valid sales. The state claims that if properties are being sold for fair market values then the lake quality is not affecting the sales. The process will take time and we have not forgotten any of the concerns. We have asked all property owners surrounding the lake to please bear with us and when a determination is made the Listers will inform everyone of the decision. Motion to accept the decision by Aimee Reynolds, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

No Time Scheduled
Estate of Hortense Vanslette

Present: A letter was written but a grievance meeting was not scheduled.

Estate of Hortense Vanslette owns a home and 4.00 acres of land at 312 Frontage Road under Parcel # 0016027209.

Appellants requested to grieve their property by letter. No public hearing was held.

Deliberative Session:

No changes were given to the property value. The letter received didn't give any information in regards to what the property owner was grieving. Motion to accept the decision by Peter St. Germain, seconded by Shirley Fecteau. Approved.

No Time Scheduled
David Vanslette

Present: A letter was written but a grievance meeting was not scheduled.

David Vanslette owns outbuildings at 312 Frontage Road under Parcel # 0030000239.

Appellants requested to grieve their property by letter. No public hearing was held.

Deliberative Session:

No changes were given to the property value. The letter received didn't give any information in regards to what the property owner was grieving. Motion to accept the decision by Peter St. Germain, seconded by Shirley Fecteau. Approved.

No Time Scheduled
Leroy W. Lacey & Pamela Y. Sagrado

Present: A letter was written but a grievance meeting was not scheduled.

Leroy W. Lacey & Pamela Y. Sagrado own a home and 1.00 acre of land at 2890 Rte. 78 under Parcel # 0020078300.

Appellants requested to grieve their property by letter. No public hearing was held.

Deliberative Session:

Listers reviewed the property card and the bank appraisal submitted. The bank appraisal was not based on a cost approach, which is what we use to assess properties. Listers increased the physical depreciation from 10% to 18% due to the age and general wear & tear of the home.

No Time Scheduled
Melissa J. Varin

Present: A letter was written but a grievance meeting was not scheduled.

Melissa J. Varin own a home and 10.14 acres of land at 1064 Carter Hill Road under Parcel # 0007001060.

Appellants requested to grieve their property by letter. No public hearing was held.

Deliberative Session:

No changes were given to the property value. The letter received didn't give any information in regards to what the property owner was grieving and a bank appraisal was mentioned but was never sent for a comparison to the appellants property card. Motion to accept the decision by Shirley Fecteau, seconded by Aimee Reynolds. Approved.

No Time Scheduled
Richard J. Trombley Revoc. Trust

Present: A letter was written but then withdrawn per phone call.

Richard Trombley owns a MH and 0.69 acres of land at 1785 Rte. 7 under Parcel # 0016700117.

No public hearing or deliberative session were held due to being withdrawn by property owner.

No Time Scheduled
Richard & Catherine Bertin
Arthur & Marion Bliss
Eleanor Bliss
Donna Boyce-Fuller
Abe Coisman
Donna Desrosiers –Zagurak
Linda Eldridge
Mark Erickson
Rosario & Denise Ferreri
Anne Fitzpatrick
Leigh & Emma Gove
Paul & Catherine Griffin
David & Lisa Jones
John Litwiller

Helga Marcus
James & Gisele McCann
Ed McCracken
Dan & Jane Menard
William & Susan Mills
Kimberlee Watts Nicksa
Eric Parker
Micheal & Mary Roach
The Randolph Company
Xenia & Theodore Samoluk
Kenneth Sullivan
Jane Tuscany
James West & Ben Noguerras

Present: A letter was written by all of the following but none of them scheduled a grievance meeting.

All are property owners on or near Lake Champlain.

Appellants all wrote letters concerning their property values due to the poor quality of Lake Champlain. No public hearing was held.

Deliberative Session:

Letters were all reviewed by Listers. No changes were given to the property value at this time. Listers have been working with the state for months on acquiring a fair way to reassess those properties affected by the poor quality of the lake. The state is asking that we review all valid sales in the area and use this information as a large part of any determination. This is a struggle due to the fact that most properties are handed down through generations or are purchased by surrounding land owners, those are not considered valid sales. The state claims that if properties are being sold for fair market values then the lake quality is not affecting the sales. The process will take time and we have not forgotten any of the concerns. We have asked all property owners surrounding the lake to please bear with us and when a determination is made the Listers will inform everyone of the decision. Motion to accept the decision by Shirley Fecteau, seconded by Peter St. Germain. Approved.

Minutes submitted and approved by,

Shirley Fecteau

Shirley Fecteau, Lister

Peter St. Germain

Peter St. Germain, Lister

Aimee Reynolds

Aimee Reynolds, Lister