



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY

Board of Assessment Appeals

March 15, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Members present:

Brendan M. Browne
Stephen R. Ferrucci, III
Robert J. Flanagan, Jr.

1. Chairman Stephen R. Ferrucci, III called the Board of Assessment Appeals meeting to order at **6:15 p.m.**
2. The following assessment appeals were heard by the board. Each appellant was delivered the statutory oath by Chairman Ferrucci.

Appeal of: 331 South Street

Present: Kirk Rundhaug (authorized representative)

Reason for appeal: Realtor Kirk Rundhaug is the authorized representative for property owner Lawrence Brownstein. His client thinks the town's assessed value is too high and estimates the property to be worth \$745,000. Mr. Rundhaug presented sales from February, April and August 2011. The highest sale during that period was \$895,000. The property has been on the market for several years and the price was dropped to \$895,000. Four offers on the house have fallen through. There is no public water or public sewer plus there are issues with the pool. They will be dropping the price again to \$699,000.

Decision: The board is waiting to make a decision at this time.

Appeal of: 65 North Benson Road

Present: No show

Decision: VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by R. Flanagan and seconded by B. Browne that that the board deny the appeal for failure to appear.

Appeal of: 450 Regan Road

Present: Joseph Bernardi

Reason for appeal: Mr. Bernardi estimates the value of his property to be \$150,000. He feels the town's value is elevated due to the flood plain change and high flood insurance costs. **For the record:** "I'm sure you realize that the elevated flood insurance, I brought some proof of it, that all of our properties in that area the values are going down. So I just wanted to go on the record as that and see if I can appeal the current numbers." He pays \$1,941 a year for flood insurance. Mr. Bernardi thinks the town might have some input in the future to remedy the insurance rates.

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For the record:

S. Ferrucci: “Commissioner Browne and I will abstain from voting.”

Decision: Motion by B. Browne and seconded by R. Flanagan that the board reduce the assessment from \$148,300 by ten percent to \$133,470 to account for the change in flood status and the requirement of flood insurance.

B. Browne and S. Ferrucci abstained.

Appeal of: 358 Regan Road

Present: Andrea Jean Brady and Russell Hotchkiss

Reason for appeal: Ms. Brady feels the flood insurance is unreasonable due to the flood zone. The town’s gross assessment on the property is \$135,100; she thinks it should be \$100,000. Ms. Brady has lived in the house for eighteen years. She submitted a letter dated July 24, 2008 from her flood insurance company regarding an incorrect zone change for her property. The insurance company changed her property from Flood Zone B to Flood Zone A5. Her current flood insurance premium is \$1,272.

Decision: VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by B. Browne and seconded by R. Flanagan that the board reduce the assessment from \$135,100 to \$121,590 to account for the change in flood plain zoning.

Appeal of: 319 White Avenue

Present: Stephen E. Eversole

Reason for appeal: Mr. Eversole said the appraisals and assessments on his property are too high relative to his neighbors. He has three lots, 1.19 acres combined, he bought in 2014. He bought the house that sits on 319 White Avenue for \$355,000 and \$1.00 for the two abutted lots that are on George Street. He gave the board a chart of comparable houses and lots in the neighborhood. Lot 386 pays \$5,000 less in taxes than his property yet it has a house and 2.8 acres. He said 35 George Street has a house on 1.08 acres and pays \$6,000 less than his property.

Decision: The board is waiting to make a decision at this time.

Appeal of: 420 Regan Road

Present: Thomas F. Murray, Sr.

Reason for appeal: Mr. Murray said the resale value of his property will be hurt by high flood insurance. He owns the property and doesn’t pay for flood insurance. The quote he got for flood insurance is \$4,108. A new owner would have to pay for high flood insurance.

Decision: VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by B. Browne and seconded by R. Flanagan that the board reduce the assessment from \$171,200 to \$154,080 to compensate for the change in flood zone.

Appeal of: 73 Glenwood Avenue

Present: Fran Varanelli and Nicholas Varanelli

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Reason for appeal: Mr. and Mrs. Varanelli purchased the property for \$45,000. The only size house that can be on the lot is the size the house is now because of the topography. The lot is too difficult to build if the house were to be torn down. A recluse lived there and the condition of the house is deplorable. It was infested with mice. There was a pipe that went from the kitchen sink to the outside. There is no water to the house. They are paying the assessment for public sewer. Mr. Varanelli started gutting the house to the beams. He had to paint the house and replace the roof or he wouldn't have been able to get insurance. He submitted four recently sold comparables with lots and houses in better condition.

Decision: VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by R. Flanagan and seconded by B. Browne that the board lower the fair market value to \$45,000.

Appeal of: Double V General Contractors

Present: Fran Varanelli and Nicholas Varanelli

Reason for appeal: Mr. and Mrs. Varanelli said the LLC name was to be saved for future use. Mrs. Varanelli filled out the personal property declaration by putting in zeros. She should have written for “future use only”. A permit was taken out with the name but a letter submitted from their accountant states the LLC has no assets to date.

Decision: VOTED: Unanimously on a motion by R. Flanagan and seconded by B. Browne that the board grant the appeal to reduce the assessment from \$5,000 to zero dollars.

3. **VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by R. Flanagan and seconded by B. Browne that the Board of Assessment Appeals approve all routine expenses are to be paid.

4. **VOTED:** Unanimously on a motion by B. Browne and seconded by R. Flanagan that the meeting be adjourned at **8:35 p.m.**

A digital recording of this meeting is available in the office of the Assessor for further review.

Attest:

Nancy K. DiMeo
Recording Secretary