

**Minutes of the Norwich Board of Listers' Grievance Hearings
9, 10 & 12 June 2017, Tracy Hall**

Friday, 9 June 2017, 3 pm

Present: Cheryl A. Lindberg (Chair), Dennis Kaufman, Lee Michaelides (Listers); Matt Krajeski (Assessor); Jonathan Bynum (Scribe); grievants as put forth below.

Lindberg opened the hearings at 3 pm.

**05-095.300, 742 VT Rte 132, Norah Lake & Chris Polashenski
05-086.400, 34.2 acres on VT Rte 132, Edward & Jessica Polashenski**

The appellants were not present. Chris Polashenski had submitted a written grievance, along with permission given by Edward & Jessica Polashenski to grieve the assessment of their property as well. Lake & Polashenski had applied to the State to enroll in Current Use a parcel of land they had acquired from Anne Crewe, as well as additional enrollment of land from their preexisting holdings and partial enrollment of a recently constructed dwelling as farm-labor housing. Polashenski & Polashenski had applied to the State to enroll in Current Use a parcel of land acquired from Anne Crewe. Both of these applications are under review at the State level, so Lake & Polashenski and Polashenski & Polashenski were grieving in order to preserve their right of appeal.

11-169.000, 159 Hawk Pine Road, Robyn Mosher

The appellant was not present. Robyn Mosher had submitted a written grievance. Mosher argued that the fair market value of her property is lower than the assessed value because of the deteriorated condition of the decks. There is also a data error, since one of the decks has already been replaced with a smaller structure. She also challenged the 2016 increase, because no nearby Hawk homes have recently sold.

05-086.000, 655 Vt Rte 132, Anne Crewe

Anne Crewe was not present, but had given permission for Sherlock Terry and Lisa Brahms to grieve her assessment. Terry and Brahms had recently purchased a portion of the property, and were present. They argued that the assessed value of the portion of the property they purchased should be reduced based on the purchase price. The property shares a well and has serious condition issues.

11-048.000, 729 Union Village Road, Nancy Cressman Trust

The appellant was not present. Nancy Cressman submitted a written grievance requesting that the fact that her property is burdened by a septic easement from an adjoining property be factored in to her assessment.

20-257.000, 17 Beaver Meadow Road, David Macaulay & Ruth Murray

The appellants were not present. David Macaulay submitted a written grievance arguing that there is an error in the size of his basement in the assessment data.

15-037.200, 144 Hickory Ridge, Amy & Scott Neuman

The appellants were not present. Amy Neuman submitted a written grievance arguing that the property's assessment should be lower based on recent sales of comparable properties and a sales listing, an error in the listed square footage, and the equity of the property's land assessment when compared to those of neighboring properties.

Saturday, 10 June 2017, 9 am

Present: Cheryl A. Lindberg (Chair), Dennis Kaufman, Lee Michaelides (Listers); Matt Krajeski (Assessor); Jonathan Bynum (Scribe); grievants as put forth below.

Lindberg opened the hearings at 9 am.

11-073.000, 5 Town Farm Road, Jack & Elizabeth Weingarten

Jack Weingarten was present. Weingarten noted the difficulty of finding suitable comps due to the dwelling's great age. He showed many photos and argued that an irremediable structural issue with the property is causing the front of the house to rot, requiring extensive repair at the expense of desirable original features. The house also has a roof issue, and the vast majority of the land has been conserved. He feels a \$150,000-175,000 reduction in assessed value is warranted.

04-011.100, 2844 Chapel Hill Road, Lindsay Putnam & Brian Kunz

Lindsay Putnam was present. Putnam noted that a shed added to her assessment this year is in Sharon and is already being taxed by Sharon. She submitted a map in support of this.

09-035.300, 1415 Beaver Meadow Road, Kirk Williams & Kristine Williamson

Kristine Williamson & Kirk Williams were present. They argued that the assessment should be lowered based on the recent purchase price, a price which had in fact included various items of personal property. They also noted that the house has significant problems with water damage, needs a new roof, water heater and appliances, and has a very difficult driveway which itself needs major work.

05-119.000, 451 Bradley Hill, Alicia & Douglas Lindgren

The appellants were not present. Alicia Lindgren had submitted a written grievance. She noted that they had recently purchased the property in an arms-length transaction for \$1.25 million, significantly below the 2017 assessment. She also pointed out the weak

market for homes priced over \$1 million, some data errors on the property record card, and some issues with the home's construction that might suggest a lower quality grade.

20-243.000, 237 Main Street, Charles & Joan Mannix

Charles & Joan Mannix were not present, but had given permission for Ajay & Neetu Singh to grieve their assessment. The Singhs were present, and had recently purchased the property on the open market for \$990,000, less than the 2017 assessed value. They requested that the assessment be adjusted to the purchase price.

16-140.000, 476 Hawk Pine Road, Emily Asenath-Smith & Warren Smith

Emily Asenath-Smith & Warren Smith were present. They said that they had purchased the house in a foreclosure sale in 2016. The home was abandoned and in very poor condition when the Smiths took possession, and they had already done a lot of work to make it livable. They offered a sale and assessment equity comp of 44 Hawk Pine, a completely renovated home, saying that they feel the current assessment is a "target" that would be appropriate once their work is completed. They showed many photos of issues at their home awaiting remediation, and noted that a shed listed on the assessment card has actually been removed.

05-086.000, 655 Vt Rte 132, Anne Crewe

Anne Crewe was not present, but had given permission to Roger Arnold & Kristin Maffei to grieve her assessment. Arnold & Maffei had recently purchased a portion of the property, and were present. They argued that the assessed value of the portion of the property they purchased should be reduced based on the purchase price. They listed many serious issues with the dwelling and outbuildings in support of a lower assessment.

11-074.000, 65 Town Farm Road, Rosemary Connelly

Rosemary Connelly was present. She offered a sales comp of 217 Town Farm Road in support of a lower assessment, and noted the serious condition issues affecting both the partially constructed house and mobile home on her property. She said that while the land has potential, the buildings in their current condition add little value.

11-039.000, 229 Bradley Hill Road, Robert Godleski & Britta Reed

Robert Godleski & Britta Reed were not present, but had given permission for Aaron Somoza and Lisa MacCullough to grieve the assessment. Somoza and McCullough provided evidence that they have the property under contract for less than the assessed value. They also cited the land across the street as an assessment comp in support of a lower assessment.

Monday, 12 June 2017, 5:15 pm

Present: Cheryl A. Lindberg (Chair), Dennis Kaufman, (Listers); Matt Krajeski (Assessor); Jonathan Bynum (Scribe); grievants as put forth below.

Absent until noted in minutes: Lee Michaelides (Lister).

Lindberg opened the hearings at 5:15 pm.

05-111.000, 15 Powers Road, Deborah Hannam

Deborah Hannam was not present, but was represented by her attorney, Scott McGee. Attorney McGee said that his client feels the property is overassessed, in particular the building, and offered a sales comp of 451 Bradley Hill Road. He cited the long driveway and the fact that part of the house is not built to the same standard as the rest as negatives in support of a lower assessment.

At this point, Lee Michaelides (Lister) arrived.

11-023.000, 433 Union Village, Raina White & Eric Krivitzky

Raina White was present. She had recently purchased the property for less than assessed value, and cited this, deferred maintenance, a difficult driveway and issues with the basement finish in support of a lower assessment. She offered that the purchase price might not have been a true reflection of fair market value in this case, but suggested that after \$40,000-\$50,000 of needed repairs, the value of the house would be \$300,000-\$340,000.

Cheryl Lindberg recused herself from the following hearing.

20-223.000, 8 Carpenter Street, Lindell Associates

Cheryl Lindberg & Chip Odell were present, representing Lindell Associates. Lindberg & Odell questioned past and present errors on the property record card to do with heat type and flooring, and noted that some stairwell/utility room area was being coded as First Floor living space. The acreage had been reduced for 2017, but Lindberg & Odell questioned an increase in the adjustment factor that offset much of the potential reduction in assessed value. They also presented some information from a recent fee appraisal of the property, which found a property value lower than the current assessment.

11-128.000, 176 Blood Hill Road, Susan Jennings Trust

Sue Jennings & Harley Clark were present. They questioned the assessment of the cabin on card #3, citing severe condition and structural issues with the floors, roof and utilities, and pointed out that the structure has no basement.

20-308.000, 95 Elm Street, John Pepper

John Pepper was present. Pepper had purchased his property shortly before the 2016 townwide reappraisal, at which it had seen a very large increase, even when compared to most other properties on Elm Street. He said that the sales price was reached between friends over dinner, the property was never placed on the market, and that he may have overpaid. He offered a sales comp of 354 Dutton Hill and assessment equity comps of two other properties on Elm Street, and stated that if he put 95 Elm Street on the market now, it would be impossible to recoup what he had paid.

06-021.000, 397 Campbell Flats Road, David & Ann Sargent
06-033.300, 360 Campbell Flats Road, Jane Sargent

David & Ann Sargent were present, and brought permission from Jane Sargent to grieve on her behalf. They noted the difficulty of finding any sales comps for their property, due to the rarity of mid- to high-end homes in Norwich selling next to junkyards. The Sargents referenced a recent bank appraisal and showed various photographs of the junkyard next door in support of a lower assessed value. They cited the impact on their property of feral cats, mosquitoes and the ongoing spread of junk, and argued that the issues have worsened since last year.

Lindberg closed the grievance hearings at 8:02 pm.

Approved by the Board of Listers on 13 July 2017.

By Jonathan Bynum
Assessing Clerk

Cheryl A. Lindberg
Chair, Norwich Board of Listers