

Jamaica Board of Civil Authority

July 18th, 2017 6:00pm

Jamaica Town Office

Minutes

BCA Members Present: Paul Fraser, Greg Joly, Rob Willis, Karen Ameden, Chris Clark, Clara Robinson, Lexa Clark, Judith Flower, Pam Tweedy

Listers Present: Lou Bruso, Barbara Ferguson, Micah Eberhardt

Appellants Present: Roy and Pam Coburn

Pam Tweedy opened the meeting at 6:00pm. After a brief description of the intended format of the hearings, she requested nominations for BCA Chair. Karen Ameden nominated Paul Fraser, he declined. Karen Ameden nominated Lexa Clark, she declined. Rob Willis nominated Greg Joly. Paul Fraser seconded. All in favor.

Appeal #1: Roy and Pamela Coburn

The Chair opened the first hearing. Roy and Pam Coburn, the appellants, were introduced and witness oaths were signed by the appellants and the Listers.

The Listers introduced their assessment of the Coburn's property. Lou Bruso explained the reasons why the Listers added value to the appellant's home this year: an addition that had previously been unfinished was presumed to have been completed and two additional outbuildings that were not listed on the property card were discovered and added. At grievance, the Coburns informed the Listers that the addition was not yet complete, and the home's value was adjusted to reflect 82% completion. Exhibit 1 was distributed by the Listers, consisting of 3 property cards – one from 2008 following the town-wide reappraisal showing a total value of \$270,000; one 2016 with former Lister Ralph Coleman's addition of the incomplete addition showing a total value of \$323,600; and the current card from after grievance showing the adjusted completion rate of the addition but also the 2 additional outbuildings with a total value of \$366,200. The BCA asked the Listers to clarify how the value of the outbuildings was determined, and they explained it is based on square footage, quality of construction, materials. Lister Barbara Ferguson submitted Exhibit 2, which contained Lister cards/sales info on the comparable properties provided by the Appellants during grievance, and explained why some of the comparable properties were not actually that comparable. This led to further discussion about how the assessed value of a home is established. Again, it was explained that square footage, materials, and quality are the key components.

Greg Joly gave the Coburns their chance to speak. Pam Coburn explained that in 2007 their property and 28x40 cape home were assessed at \$146,300. After the town-wide reappraisal was completed in 2008 their value went up to 270,000. The large 'Equipment building' (as it is now called on the property card) was built in 2006, so the Coburns assumed their home's value increased to include this additional building. Then in 2013 they began the addition on the house, which Ralph Coleman, Lister at the time, came to see and added (unfinished) to the property card. Roy Coburn noted that many details on their property card are incorrect: the year built states 2004, but it was 1999; number of bedrooms is listed as 3 but is actually only 1; finished square footage is listed as 2604, but is actually 1680. The Coburns submitted Exhibit 3, which contained copies of their tax bills from 2007 and 2008, showing the increase in value following the reappraisal, as well as the property card for the property of Ronald and Josie Betit, which they feel is comparable to theirs. They pointed out that the Betit's home is newer, with more finished square footage, a full foundation, a fire place, and more acreage, and their value is listed as \$313,900. The Coburns concluded that they feel the value of their home is unfairly high at \$363,200.

In their rebuttal, the Listers again emphasized that quality and square footage play the largest part in a home's assessment. They also stated that everyone's assessment went up after the 2008 reappraisal.

Chris Clark, Rob Willis and Karen Ameden were chosen for the inspection committee.

Greg Joly adjourned the hearing.

Appeal #2: Richard Groff

Greg Joly opened the hearing and, as Richard Groff was not present, read Mr. Groff 's letter of appeal aloud.

The Listers explained that at Grievance Mr. Groff provided the appraisal of another property that they deemed dissimilar; therefore, the comparable properties used in that appraisal were invalid. The Listers stated that he also failed to provide any details about his own property.

In the appellant's stead, he sent a letter explaining that he believes his assessment should be reduced to \$148,000 based on a professional appraisal he had completed on July 5th. Mr. Groff provided a copy of the appraisal for the BCA.

In the Lister's rebuttal, Micah Eberhardt stated that they would have changed the value to \$148,000 at Grievance had he submitted the appraisal at that time. Lou Bruso added that the State will always go with the value stated on a professional appraisal.

Rob Willis, Greg Joly and Clara Robinson were chosen for the inspection committee.

Greg Joly adjourned the hearing.

Karen Ameden moved to adjourn. Lexa Clark seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:28pm.