

PROPERTY OWNERS ALERT # 34

Date: December 20, 2003
To: Incline Village & Crystal Bay Property Owners
From: The Village League to Save Incline Assets
Subject: Requests for Assessors Appraisals

Dear Friends,

In our Alert # 33, (excerpt below), we recommended that, after you have filed your appeal form, you call the assessors office and request a copy of your appraisal file to obtain the factual information you need to appeal the “Taxable Value” of your property.

Alert #33: “Upon filing your appeal, be sure to call the assessor’s office and request a copy of your appraisal records in order to argue your appeal based on the facts in your record. You are entitled to a copy of your records so do not take NO for an answer when you call the assessor’s office. ”

Please click on the following link to read the full Alert #33:
<http://nevadapropertytaxrevolt.org/AlertArch/Alert33.pdf>

It has come to our attention, by way of several property owners, that when the copy of an appraisal was requested, the assessor’s office faxed two pages of useless information showing only a history of taxable values for past years. This is not a copy of the appraisal and not the information a property owner needs in order to intelligently appeal the valuation of their property.

The appraisal of your property will show your view classification and/or the comparable sales that were used as the basis for arriving at the “Taxable Value” of your property.

Based on last years appeals the assessors reviewed over 100 properties with view classifications and reduced the “View Class” on 70 properties. A 70% error rate is completely unacceptable by any appraisal practice. If your property has any view of the lake, it is of critical importance that you know the view class assigned to your property. The assessors office admits they make mistakes because they do what they call “mass appraisals”. This means they have not looked at the view from each property. They drive by your street and make a *guess* at the quality of your view. Furthermore we are told it is our responsibility to appeal if we believe the view class is wrong. Unfortunately, until we began to carefully examine the methods used to value property, very few property owners knew or understood how the assessor arrived at the value of their property and didn’t know how to challenge the appraisal.

Last year, when you received the post card notifying you of the increase in taxable value, you also received a letter listing the “comparable sales” that were used as the basis for the huge increase in values. This year this information was not provided further limiting any information that would help you understand how your property was valued. The appraisal should show the “comparable sales” that were used in valuing your property. One of the most egregious uses of “comparables” was the use of “teardowns” in assessing the value of your lot. In some cases the so called teardowns had not been torn down. The assessor simply chose to speculate that the house might be torn down. Sad to say some of these teardowns were sold more than three years

ago and are still standing. In spite of the fact that the structure had not been torn down the assessor applied the total sale price to land value and used this as a comparable “land sale” and then applied the total sale price as a comparable in valuing your lot.

Neither of these methods of valuing property are permitted by statute or regulation. For these reasons, every property owner who chooses to appeal their taxable value must have a copy of their appraisal.

As a result of the reluctance of the assessor to provide a copy of your appraisal records when requested, we have discussed this with our law firm, Woodburn & Wedge, who advises the “Taxpayers Bill of Rights” and NRS §361.227(8) requires your appraisal records be provided upon your request. Please click on the following link to read a copy of the letter to the Assessors office from our law firm pointing out in clear terms the rules Assessor must follow. www.NevadaPropertyTaxRevolt.org/McGowan-Ltr-031218.pdf

If you have requested your appraisal records and received only the two page summary we suggest you call the assessors office again and ask for your complete appraisal records.

In conclusion, we strongly suggest you file your appeal before the Jan. 15th deadline. If we don’t do this the Assessor and the District Attorney will be proven right... that the citizens of Incline/Crystal Bay are “sitting on their rights” and don’t care about the illegal valuations on their property.

Please do not hesitate to call if you need additional information.

Regards,

Ted

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