

G. Philip Rodgers

v.

Town of Northfield

Docket No.: 7228-89

DECISION

The "Taxpayer" appeals, pursuant to RSA 76:16-a, the "Town's" 1989 assessment of \$31,400 (land only) on a 1 acre lot (the Property). The Taxpayer failed to appear, but consistent with our Rule, TAX 102.03(g), the Taxpayer was not defaulted. This decision is based on the evidence presented to the board. For the reasons stated below, the appeal for abatement is denied.

The Taxpayer has the burden of showing the assessment was disproportionately high or unlawful, resulting in the Taxpayer paying an unfair and disproportionate share of taxes. See RSA 76:16-a; Tax 201.04(e); Appeal of Town of Sunapee, 126 N.H. 214, 217 (1985). We find the Taxpayer failed to carry this burden.

The Taxpayer argued the assessment was excessive because:

(1) \$633.71 is too much to pay for taxes for unused lot of one acre on dirt road; and

(2) a copy of a letter addressed to the Town of Northfield from Compton E. French, Assessor, indicated that it was his intention to use two comparables and photos at the hearing (Parker and Zimmerman) on August 26, 1992.

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The Town argued the assessment was proper because:

- (1) it is supported by the two properties (Parker and Zimmerman) referred to in the Taxpayer's letter;
- (2) the lot is buildable and has the same rights as the two comparables; and
- (3) a 5 percent condition adjustment was applied to account for the fact that the Property is on a dirt road (Town maintained).

The Taxpayer complained about the high amount of taxes he must pay. The amount of property taxes paid by the Taxpayer was determined by two factors: 1) the Property's assessment; and 2) the municipality's budget. See gen., International Association of Assessing Officers, Property Assessment Valuation 4-6 (1977). The board's jurisdiction is limited to the first factor i.e., the board will decide if the Property was overassessed, resulting in the Taxpayer paying a disproportionate share of taxes. Appeal of Town of Sunapee, 120 N.H. at 217. The board, however, has no jurisdiction over the second factor, i.e., the municipality's budget. See Appeal of Gillin, 132 N.H. 311, 313 (1989) (board's jurisdiction limited to those stated in statute). The Taxpayer did not present any credible evidence of the Property's fair market value. To carry this burden, the Taxpayer should have made a showing of the Property's fair market value. This value would then have been compared to the Property's assessment and the level of assessments generally in the Town. See, e.g., Appeal of NET Realty Holding Trust, 128 N.H. 795, 796 (1986); Appeal of Great

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Lakes Container Corporation, 126 N.H. 167, 169 (1985); Appeal of Town of Sunapee, 126 N.H. at 217-18. Further, we find the comparables mentioned in the Taxpayer's letter support the Town's assessment.

We find the Taxpayer failed to prove the Property's assessment was disproportional. We also find the Town supported the Property's assessment.

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SO ORDERED.

BOARD OF TAX AND LAND APPEALS

George Twigg, III, Chairman

Michele E. LeBrun, Member

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify a copy of the foregoing decision has been mailed this date, postage prepaid, to G. Philip Rodgers, Taxpayer; Scott Bartlett, MMC; and Chairman, Selectmen of Northfield.

Dated: September 9, 1992

Melanie J. Ekstrom, Deputy Clerk

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