AD HOC TAXATION/ASSESSMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 19, 2013, 10:30AM, Council Chamber, Town Hall

1. Call to order

Meeting called to order at 10:38 A.M. by Bob Manchester.

Present were Committee Members Robert Manchester (chairman), Joel Hellmann, Don Nessing and Joop Nagtegaal (secretary). Also present was Michael Minardi, tax assessor.

2. Approve Minutes of May 7, 2012 Meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of May 21, 2012 were approved as submitted upon a motion duly made and seconded.

3. RFP for December 31, 2014 Revaluation

Michael Minardi stated that a draft RFP has been ready for a couple of weeks and is available online on the web page of the town clerk (although it apparently is no longer there). He explained that, in order to save costs, the State wanted to create a group RFP for three communities (Barrington, Cranston and East Greenwich) that have to do a revaluation per December 31, 2014. However, the State never created a RFP. In the meantime, Cranston and East Greenwich have opted out of the arrangement, so Barrington will go it alone as well. Michael said that he had hoped to get the RFP out by March 1, but he expects that it will be delayed by about a month. He didn't think that would be a problem, since it would still allow enough time to do the work properly. He said the aim is to use just two property inspectors in order to obtain assessments that are as consistent as possible. He noted that the RFP specifies five criteria on basis of which the proposals will be evaluated, and that price is the least important of these.

He indicated that six companies are certified in the State, but that only three are actively bidding: N.E.Reval, Vision Appraisal, and CLT Appraisal Services. The others are Clipboard, Allan Booth, and a company out of Connecticut.

It was agreed that the committee members will review the draft RFP before the next meeting.

4. Standards for Revaluation

The discussion started with the observation that any Barrington specific standards should conform with State law, and, for practical reasons, cannot require approaches that are fundamentally different from common CAMA methodology. Some discussion followed, and it was generally agreed that the best approach would be to define Barrington specific process standards. Don Nessing made the observation that Barrington is not so unique that a completely different set of standards must be used as compared to other communities. Others noted that Barrington, with its variety of small neighborhoods and abundance of waterfront makes application of standard CAMA approaches more difficult than in more homogeneous communities, such as East Providence. Joel Hellmann noted that, no matter how hard we try, we cannot obtain perfect standards; some people in town apparently have a hard time accepting this.

Bob Manchester mentioned the CAMA standards suggestions document (created by Joop), that he had attached to the meeting invitation. Since not everybody had the opportunity to read this, it was agreed to discuss this further during the next meeting.

Bob Manchester said he had talked with Bruce Sauter (a mass appraisal expert from Massachusetts), and he would be willing to meet with the committee to forward some ideas. It was agreed that Bob would invite him for the next meeting.

Bob made an argument for an approach where the ratios of assessments in the various areas of town would remain the same in successive revaluations, unless there is clear evidence that ratios have changed. Michael showed an example where such a change occurred. Whereas real estate values in Barrington overall are down about 5½% since the last revaluations, two (almost identical) homes on Woodmont Court sold for considerably increased prices. Hence, he feels the assessment of the homes on Woodmont Court should be increased relative to others during the next revaluation. He noted some other changes, such as the Bay Spring area being down more than the rest of town. Hence, he feels one cannot use the same ratios from one revaluation to another.

Michael gave the committee a preview of the neighborhoods document he is working on, which includes separate areas for waterfront/view properties. So far, he did identify 57 different areas. He also noted that in the RFP he required that an independent individual

appraisal needs to be carried out for each property currently assessed for $2M or more. If there is a difference between the two, the appraiser and the CAMA firm then have to work together to obtain a valuation they can both agree to before the assessment is presented to the assessor.

5. Next meeting

The committee will meet again on Monday March 4, 2013 at 1PM.

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joop Nagtegaal, Secretary