MINUTES

Thursday, August 23, 2018 at 5:30 pm

Town of Springfield - Board of Tax Appeals

Selectmen's Hall - 96 Main Street - Third Floor

Board of Civil Authority Members Present:
Alice Emmons
Warren Cross
Scott Farr
Cynthia Martin
Elizabeth Gray
Ernest Lamphere
Kathleen Stankevich
Stephen Matush
Kristi Morris
Charles Gregory
Michael Martin
Barbara A. Courchesne, Town Clerk

Others:
Maxine Aldrich, Assistant Town Clerk
Nichole Knight, Assessor
Terry Perkins, Lister
Matt Krajeski, Town's Appraiser

1. **Call to Order**

The continuation of the August 9, 2018 meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Ernest Lamphere, Chairman.

2. **Swearing in of Board:**

The Board was reminded that they are still under oath.

Chairman Lamphere asked if there had been any ex parte communication. Kathleen Stankevich stated the team advised Mr. and Mrs. Miles the team could not listen to further information and advised them to talk to the town clerk. Kristi Morris stated that they advised Mr. Gates to pass additional information to the town clerk.

3. **Hearing Testimony; Voting**

Chairman Lamphere advised if a Board member was not present on August 2 to hear testimony, he/she could not ask questions or vote on the inspection reports/decisions presented tonight. Tom Hall made an appearance but did not stay as he had not attended the August 2 hearing. Michael Martin had not attended the August 2 hearing, but chose to stay and observe.

4. **Inspections/Decisions from August 2, 2018 hearing**

Appeal 18-01: John and Marion Murray, 988 Connecticut River Road, Parcel #011/2/02

The inspection committee report having been read and voted on at the August 9, 2018 meeting, Scott Farr read the Tax Appeal Decision. The inspection committee addressed each of the issues brought by the Appellants and found the Listers' determinations of garage, cathedral ceiling and attic to be correct and recommended no change to the assessed value of $244,500.

MOTION: Warren Cross moved to accept the decision; seconded by Charles Gregory. Kristi Morris commented that the inspection committee did address the issues of the Appellant even though there is no adjustment. No further discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-04: Farm on the River, LLC, 456 Old Connecticut River Road, Parcel #011/2/06

Charles Gregory read the inspection committee report of Charles Gregory, Stephen Matush and Alice Emmons. Inspection was made on August 7, 2018 at 9:30 am. The owner had authorized the maintenance staff to admit the inspection committee. The report described the house, outbuildings and house site in detail.

MOTION: Kathleen Stankevich moved to accept the inspection report as read; seconded by Scott Farr. No discussion. Motion passed.

Charles Gregory read the Tax Appeal Decision. The Listers appraised the property at $1,039,000 for the 2018 Grand List. Farm on the River LLC grieved within the proper time, and the Listers did not change the appraisal based on this grievance. The inspection committee found that, while there are 4 bedrooms upstairs in the main house and a room on the ground floor which could qualify as a bedroom, there are not 6 bedrooms. They found there is asphalt shingling on the main house and the back storage room and slate on the other structures. They found that there are fireplaces in all 4 upstairs bedrooms. They did not find evidence of structural damage to the foundation of the back storage room extension. They did find structural damage to the foundation of the cupola of the barn/garage. They found evidence of water damage to the ceiling of the storage room extension. They found an additional apartment. The Board finds the fair market value of the subject property is $1,039,000.

MOTION: Kristi Morris moved accept the decision; seconded by Warren Cross. Kristi Morris confirmed that the market analysis was not used in this case and Appellant did not provide information for the Christmas tree farm. Charles Gregory stated the comparable properties that they provided were inapplicable. Alice Emmons stated the committee only saw the house and yard items, not the whole property, as Appellant was not appealing the whole property value. No further discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-10: Ilse Vergi, 70 Stellafane Road, Parcel #005/4/15

Appellant Ilse Vergi was present and requested the inspection committee report and decision be presented earlier than scheduled. Board agreed to change the presentation order.

Charles Gregory read the inspection committee report from Kristi Morris, Alice Emmons and Charles Gregory. The inspection committee visited the property on August 9, 2018 at 9:00 am in the company of Ilse Vergi and Tom McLean. The inspection report described the property in detail. The committee determined the width of the house on the Listers' data card differed from the bank survey and determined 37 feet was the correct measurement.

MOTION: Scott Farr moved to accept the inspection report; seconded by Warren Cross. No discussion. Motion passed.

Charles Gregory read the Tax Appeal Decision. The inspection committee determined that the square footage on the data card presented by the Listers should be corrected from 1,161 to 999 each for the basement and ground floor and 845 for the ¾ story. Recalculation of the subject area correction yielded a total parcel value $196,545.

MOTION: Scott Farr moved to accept the decision; seconded by Stephen Matush. Charles Gregory revised the decision to include the comparable sales prices. No further discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-05: Stacey M. Gates and Janice E. Pelton, 236 Pleasant Valley Road, Parcel #009/3/20

Barbara Courchesne introduced additional evidence as presented by Mr. Gates. The inspection committee reviewed and discussed the new evidence amongst themselves. Kristi Morris read the inspection committee report from Beth Gray, Warren Cross and Kristi Morris. The inspection committee visited the property on August 15, 2018 at 6:00. Stacey Gates and Janice Pelton accompanied the inspection committee on a tour of the house, property and garage. The inspection report described the property in detail. The inspection committee confirmed the size calculations on the Listers' property card and confirmed the Listers changed the number of bedrooms from three to two.

MOTION: Charles Gregory moved to accept the report; seconded by Kathleen Stankevich. No discussion. Motion passed.

Kristi Morris read the Tax Appeal Decision. The inspection committee determined that the data, after changing three bedrooms to two, on the Listers' property card is correct. After review of the evidence, comparable properties provided by Appellants and the comparable sales provided by the Listers, the Board recommended no change to the assessed value of $169,700.

MOTION: Stephen Matush moved to accept the decision; seconded by Charles Gregory. Alice Emmons confirmed the total value. Kristi Morris corrected the error on the value. Scott Farr moved to accept the amended decision; seconded by Cynthia Martin. No discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-06: Carl W. and Shirley H. Goings, 1267 Skitchewaug Trail, Parcel #007/3/28

Scott Farr read the inspection committee report from Scott Farr, Kathleen Stankevich and Mark Greenvall. The inspection committee visited the property on August 13, 2018 at 10:00 am. The property owners guided them on their inspection. The report described the property in detail.

MOTION: Kristi Morris moved to accept the report; seconded by Charles Gregory. No discussion. Motion passed.

Scott Farr read the Tax Appeal Decision. The inspection committee determined that the Appellants' concern about accessibility was addressed by the Listers with an adjustment made at grievance. They confirmed the 2-car garage with loft area was built in 2007 not 2015, resulting in a change of value from $17,800 to $16,300, and the 3-bay garage was built in 2001 not 1983, resulting in a change of value from $11,300 to $13,600, resulting in a net increase of $800.

Based on the comparables presented and the change in value based on the change in construction dates, the Board found the assessed value to be $192,000.

MOTION: Charles Gregory moved to accept the decision; seconded by Warren Cross. No discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-07: Joseph Lake, 252 Elm Hill, Parcel #006/2/61

Charles Gregory read the inspection committee report from Alice Emmons, John Stettner and Charles Gregory. Inspection was made on August 10, 2018 and 9:00 am. Inspection committee was accompanied by Joseph Lake. The report described the property and outbuildings in detail.

MOTION: Stephen Matush moved to accept the report; seconded by Kathleen Stankevich. No discussion. Motion passed.

Charles Gregory read the Tax Appeal Decision. The committee found the barn/sugar house equipped with all the equipment necessary to the industry and provides some room for vehicle storage and vehicle maintenance, the former sugar house (pump house) has been converted for casual occupancy with some furniture, a tv and running water, the car port has a full second floor used for storage. The property was assessed at $432,300. After grievance the assessment was changed to $414,500. The committee determined the barn is now a multi-use sugar house, the former sugar hour is less a pump house than a recreational shelter, one lean-to is a cover for the sugar house sap tanks, the other covers reels of sap tubing stored alongside the pump house. The gazebo and implement shed had been resolved. The Board finds that $414,500 is an accurate valuation.

MOTION: Kathleen Stankevich moved to accept the decision; seconded by Scott Farr. No discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-08: Martin D. Taft, 35 Maple Street, Parcel #01B/1/23

Charles Gregory read the inspection committee report from Warren Cross and Charles Gregory. Inspection was made on August 8, 2018 at 9:00 am in the company of Martin Taft. The report described the property in detail.

MOTION: Kristi Morris moved to accept the report; seconded by Elizabeth Gray. No discussion. Motion passed.

Charles Gregory read the Tax Appeal Decision. The property was appraised at $337,900 in 2018. After grievance, the value was changed to $323,100. The Appellant's contracted appraiser provided a supplemental addendum offering alternative comparables, none of which had been sold within the past 3 years. The Board holds that they do not meet the standards for proof required. The Board finds the Listers' value to be valid and set the fair market value of $323,100.

MOTION: Scott Farr moved to accept the decision; seconded by Stephen Matush. Alice Emmons pointed out a correction of the initial appraised value and grieved value. The decision was corrected. Scott Farr moved to accept the decision with the change; seconded by Stephen Matush. No discussion. Motion passed.

Appeal 18-09: Diana and Jay Miles, 271 Craigue Hill Road, Parcel #010/1/06

Cynthia Martin read the inspection committee report from Elizabeth Gray, Cynthia Martin and Kathleen Stankevich. Inspection was made on August 16, 2018 at 5:30 pm. Diana and Jay Miles accompanied the inspection committee. The report described the property in detail.

MOTION: Kristi Morris moved to accept the report; seconded by Warren Cross. Discussion ensued. Motion passed.

Cynthia Martin read the Tax Appeal Decision. The inspection team found 2 discrepancies on the property card, the house has 3 bedrooms and 4 other rooms, not 2 bedrooms and 5 other rooms. The valuation, for tax purposes, did not change because the square footage is the same. The card stated the 10' x 24' lean-to was constructed 1960, but Appellants added it in 2010. A new valuation increased from $400 to $700. All other issues were addressed by Listers at grievance. The value was increased at grievance from $126,900 to $130,300. The Board finds the fair market value to be $130,600 based on the change in value of the 10' x 24' lean-to.

MOTION: Stephen Matush moved to accept decision; seconded by Warren Cross. No discussion. Motion passed.

Chairman Lamphere informed the Board of Steve Sysko's resignation. Barbara Courchesne reminded the Board of the next meeting scheduled for August 30 to hear four tax appeals and to present the inspection reports and decisions from the August 9 hearings.

5. <u>Public Comment:</u>

None.

Stephen Matush moved to recess; Charles Gregory seconded. At 7:40 pm, the meeting was recessed until August 30, 2018 at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maxine M. Aldrich
Assistant Town Clerk