



**Calgary Assessment Review Board**

## **DECISION WITH REASONS**

In the matter of the complaint against the property assessment as provided by the *Municipal Government Act*, Chapter M-26, Section 460, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 (the *MGA*).

**between:**

***361671 Alberta Ltd.***

***(represented by Colliers International Realty Advisors Inc.), COMPLAINANT***

**and**

***The City Of Calgary, RESPONDENT***

**before:**

***Ms. V. Higham, PRESIDING OFFICER***

***Ms. A. Huskinson, BOARD MEMBER***

***Mr. E. Reuther, BOARD MEMBER***

This is a complaint to the Calgary Assessment Review Board (the Board) in respect of a property assessment prepared by the Assessor of The City of Calgary (the City) and entered in the 2014 Assessment Roll as follows:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>ROLL NUMBER:</b>      | <b>200616878</b>   |
| <b>LOCATION ADDRESS:</b> | <b>830, 602 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW<br/>Calgary, Alberta</b> |
| <b>FILE NUMBER:</b>      | <b>76789</b>   |
| <b>ASSESSMENT:</b>       | <b>\$513,000</b>   |

This complaint was heard on 16<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2014 at the office of the Calgary Assessment Review Board located at Floor Number 3, 1212 – 31 Avenue NE, Calgary, Alberta, Boardroom 11.

Appeared on behalf of the Complainant:

- **Mr. J. Phelan**                      **Agent, Colliers International Realty Advisors Inc.**
- **Mr. S. Kassam**                      **Agent, Colliers International Realty Advisors Inc.**

Appeared on behalf of the Respondent:

- **Mr. R. Natyshen**                      **Assessor, City of Calgary**

**Board's Decision in Respect of Procedural or Jurisdictional Matters:**

- [1] Neither party objected to the composition of the Board as introduced at the hearing.
- [2] All disclosure materials were received in a timely fashion, as legislated under the Act.
- [3] The Board notes an executed Agent Authorization Form present in the file.
- [4] No preliminary matters were raised by either party.
- [5] Upon request, the Board agreed to carry forward the disclosure packages, and Direct Sales Comparison evidence and arguments presented by both parties from "lead file" #76767, as these complaints were heard together by this panel on the same day.
- [6] Upon request, the Board also agreed to carry forward the "flood effects" arguments and evidence presented by both parties from "lead file" on that issue #76722, heard by the Board during the same day.

**Property Description:**

- [7] The subject is assessed as a "B" quality condo unit located in an office building constructed in 1968 at 830, 602 12 Avenue SW, in zone BL3 of the city's Beltline commercial district. Designated as Centre City Mixed Use District, the condo comprises 1,338 square feet (sf) of space on 0.58 acres of assessable land area. The subject is currently assessed at \$513,000 using the Direct Sales Comparison approach to value.

**Issues:**

- [8] The Complainant identified one matter on the Complaint Form as under complaint, being the assessment amount. During the hearing, the Complainant indicated he was requesting a different assessment amount (\$491,000) than originally noted on the Complaint Form (\$446,310). The Complainant then raised the following issues for the Board's consideration:
  - 1) What is the correct typical per square foot (psf) value to apply to the subject property: the assessed \$383 psf or the requested \$367 psf?
  - 2) Did the City err in failing to apply a quantified "flood effects" adjustment to the subject property?

**Complainant's Requested Value: \$491,000**

**Board's Decision:** For reasons outlined herein, the Board confirms the subject assessment.

**Authority, Requirements and Considerations:**

[9] A Composite Assessment Review Board (CARB) derives its authority from the *MGA*, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Section 460.1, which reads as follows:

- (2) Subject to section 460(11), a composite assessment review board has jurisdiction to hear complaints about any matter referred to in section 460(5) that is shown on an assessment notice for property other than property described in subsection (1)(a).

Section 293 of the *MGA* requires that:

- (1) In preparing an assessment, the assessor must, in a fair and equitable manner,
  - (a) apply the valuation and other standards set out in the regulations, and
  - (b) follow the procedures set out in the regulations.

Section 2 of the *Matters Relating to Assessment and Taxation Regulations* (the *MRAT*) states:

- (2) An assessment of property based on market value
  - (a) must be prepared using mass appraisal,
  - (b) must be an estimate of the value of the fee simple estate in the property, and
  - (c) must reflect typical market conditions for properties similar to that property.
- 4(1) The valuation standard for a parcel of land is
  - (a) market value, or
  - (b) if the parcel is used for farming operations, agricultural use value.

**Position of the Parties**

**Issue 1: What is the correct typical per square foot (psf) value to apply to the subject property: the assessed \$383 psf or the requested \$367 psf?**

**Complainant's Position on Issue #1:**

[10] The Complainant argued that the City's commercial sales study for Beltline "B" quality condo properties "consists of a pure generalization of condo sales" (Exhibit C1, p.1), and that "by no measure is an office located in the Beltline compared to one in the Downtown core" (Exhibit C1, p.1).

[11] The Complainant submitted a table of two comparable condo sales, both of which are common to the City's analysis (Exhibit C1, p.33) – showing a time adjusted mean value of \$367 per square feet (psf), and argued that these are the only two condo sales relevant to the subject assessment.

**Respondent's Position on Issue #1:**

[12] The City submitted its Beltline "B" Class Commercial Condo Sales analysis (Exhibit R1, p.38) comprising five properties, two of which are common to the Complainant's study. The City's analysis is time adjusted, and includes psf figures for each comparable *minus* the

respective titled parking stall value. The Respondent argued that since these stalls can be separately sold, their value must be removed from the original price. Reviewing the time adjusted data minus the parking, the City's mean/median values are \$400.63 psf and \$379.20 psf respectively. The Respondent noted that the subject is assessed at \$383 psf, which includes a \$25,000 deduction for titled parking.

[13] The Respondent objected to the Complainant's use of only two sales to derive the requested value, given the larger sample size available. Noting the City's mandate to calculate mass appraisal assessment valuation, the Respondent argued that it's more equitable and fair to use all the "B" quality Beltline sales, rather than just the two relied upon by the Complainant.

[14] The Respondent also noted that the Complainant's comparable data does not include an analysis for the exclusion of titled parking in the building, which renders the Complainant's figures and conclusions erroneous.

#### **Board's Findings and Reasons for Decision on Issue #1:**

[15] The Board confirms the assessed typical value of \$383 psf applied to the subject.

[16] The Board was not persuaded by the Complainant's argument relative to the two sales being the "only relevant" sales to compare to the subject, since the Complainant offered no evidence or arguments to support this assertion.

[17] Further, the Complainant offered no evidence or arguments to dispute the validity of the City's comparables, and offered no rationale for excluding all but two of these sales in his own study – except to reiterate that the two sales were the "only relevant" ones.

[18] The Board accepts the Respondent's evidence as reasonably representative, given the City's legislated mandate to conduct assessments on a mass appraisal basis, and finds this to be the best indicator of value for the subject property.

#### **Issue #2: Did the City err in failing to apply a quantified "flood effects" adjustment to the subject property?**

##### **Complainant's Position on Issue #2:**

[19] The Complainant argued that the "crippling repercussions" (Exhibit C1, p.1) of the 2013 flood in Calgary "rendered properties within the flood zone at essentially a \$0 value" (Exhibit C1, p.1), due to the devastating economic effects of the flood.

[20] The Complainant submitted that this "market freeze as at July 1, 2013" (Exhibit C1, p.1) justifies the requested 50% reduction, since the negative economic impact of the flood affected more than just flooded properties in Calgary. The Complainant argued that the City failed to "quantify" this impact in the subject assessment, since it was one of those properties not flooded, but surely *affected by* the event.

[21] The Complainant presented several third party reports and articles (Exhibit C1, pp.35-55) in support of this argument, noting that the subject was included in a series of Calgary postal code prefixes which the Scotiabank flagged as requiring "additional inspections or appraisals before any financing gets approved" (Exhibit C1, p.45), making it more onerous and costly to property owners within those prefixes.

**Respondent's Position on Issue #2:**

[22] The Respondent argued that the Complainant's requested flood effects reduction is unwarranted, since the subject was not actually flooded last summer, nor does it lie within in any flood zone identified by the City.

[23] The Respondent challenged the relevance and reliability of the third party reports and articles submitted by the Complainant, noting that all of them referred to *residential*, not commercial properties.

[24] The Respondent noted that sale prices for non-residential properties in the subject area have actually increased generally since the flood last summer, and that properties either flooded or in a City-identified flood zone, were appropriately adjusted in their respective assessments.

The Respondent also questioned the requested 50% reduction, noting that the Complainant submitted no data to support this or any other value, arguing that it was arbitrarily conceived in an evidentiary vacuum.

**Board's Findings and Reasons for Decision on Issue #2:**

[25] The Board finds that the City did not err in omitting to apply a quantified "flood effects" reduction to the subject property.

[26] The subject was neither flooded, nor in a flood zone, and the Complainant failed to proffer any evidence whatsoever of specific – even marginal – market value *impact* to the subject justifying a downward adjustment of any amount for flood effects.


[27] The Board finds that the third party reports and articles submitted by the Complainant are not relevant to the commercial subject property in any persuasive manner, since they all speak to residential properties.

[28] The Board concurs with the Respondent's submission that the requested 50% adjustment is arbitrary and wholly unsupported by the evidence submitted at the hearing, and further notes that the Complainant's requested assessment value (\$491,000) does *not* reflect a 50% reduction, for reasons not articulated during the hearing.

**Board's Decision:**

[29] For the reasons outlined herein, the Board confirms the subject assessment.

DATED AT THE CITY OF CALGARY THIS 10<sup>th</sup> DAY OF July 2014.

  
V. Higham, Presiding Officer

## APPENDIX "A"

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT THE HEARING  
AND CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:**

| <b>NO.</b> | <b>ITEM</b>                                      |
|------------|--|
| 1. C1      | Complainant's Disclosure (from lead file #76767) |
| 2. R1      | Respondent's Disclosure (from lead file #76767)  |

*An appeal may be made to the Court of Queen's Bench on a question of law or jurisdiction with respect to a decision of an assessment review board.*

*Any of the following may appeal the decision of an assessment review board:*

- (a) the complainant;*
- (b) an assessed person, other than the complainant, who is affected by the decision;*
- (c) the municipality, if the decision being appealed relates to property that is within the boundaries of that municipality;*
- (d) the assessor for a municipality referred to in clause (c).*

*An application for leave to appeal must be filed with the Court of Queen's Bench within 30 days after the persons notified of the hearing receive the decision, and notice of the application for leave to appeal must be given to*

- (a) the assessment review board, and*
- (b) any other persons as the judge directs.*

**For Administrative Use Only – Roll Number 200616878**

| <b>Municipal Government Board Use Only: Decision Identifier Codes</b> |                      |                           |                |                                |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Municipality/Appeal Type</b>                                       | <b>Property Type</b> | <b>Property Sub-Type</b>  | <b>Issue</b>   | <b>Sub-Issue</b>               |
| Calgary CARB  | Office               | Low Rise (Unit Ownership) | Sales Approach | Land & Improvement Comparables |