

EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Local Board of Appeals and Equalization

April 22, 2024

The East Bethel City Council met on April 22, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. for the Local Board of Appeals and Equalization meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Levi Lewis Brian Mundle Bob DeRoche
 Tim Miller Jim Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Matt Look, City Administrator
 Ken Mr. Tolzmann, City Assessor
 Alex Guggenberger, County Assessor
 Aaron Berg, Community Development Director

1.0 – Call to Order

The April 22, 2024, City Council meeting, Local Board of Appeals and Equalization was called to order by Mayor Lewis at 5:30 p.m.

2.0 – Adopt Agenda

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to adopt tonight's agenda. DeRoche stated I'll second. Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

3.0 – Assessor's Report

Look stated Mr. Mr. Tolzmann was at the meeting to present the 2024 assessment. He noted the report provided information about the appeals and assessment process, as well as specific information regarding the 2024 assessment.

Look noted State Statute established specific requirements for the assessment of the property, and the law required that all real property be valued at market value, which was defined as the usual or more likely selling price as of January 2024. He indicated the 2023 assessment was based on qualified sales of the City properties, as well as Countywide sales that took place from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023.

City Assessor Ken Tolzmann welcomed the Board Members and residents to the 2024 Board of Appeals and Equalization Meeting. He stated the purpose of the meeting is to finalize the 2024 property values and once complete, the City, County, and schools would begin working on their new budget levy for real estate taxes due and payable in 2025. He stated once that process was complete, the Truth and Taxation Notices would be sent out in November, 2024.

Mr. Tolzmann explained how the 2024 assessments were determined. He indicated he had received many calls from City residents after the valuation statements went out last month and all calls except for one were answered to the resident's satisfaction.

Mr. Tolzmann noted there was one unresolved appeal and he had instructed that person to come to this meeting, but he did not see him at this meeting yet. He stated if the Board was not able to finalize all appeals during this meeting, the Board must be reconvened and finalized not more than 20 days.

4.0 – Board of Equalization Hearing

Lewis opened the Board of Equalization Hearing.

Lewis invited audience members who wanted to speak to their assessment to approach the podium.

An audience member stated he had come to the meeting to find out about his three parcels and the taxation on those parcels. He noted he had spoken with Berg. He stated the majority of his three parcels were swamp land and were not buildable. He noted one parcel was buildable, and he believed the other two parcels were not buildable. He wanted to ensure he was being taxed properly on this property.

Berg pointed out this property was zoned rural residential.

Mundle requested the PIN number(s). An audience member responded that the buildable parcel was: 23-23-44-006.

Berg noted that the City Ordinance stated that in order for a lot to be buildable, it had to have 23,000 square feet of buildable space – half an acre or quarter of an acre somewhere. He pointed out on the map where a small parcel might meet that requirement. He noted that any other areas were not contiguous enough to be able to do much with.

Lewis asked if he believed the valuation was too high. An audience member responded he did think it was too high.

Mr. Tolzmann stated it came down to whether the site was buildable or not. He showed a site that was about 27 acres. An audience member responded that was the north piece. He indicated this was 100 percent swamp and all underwater.

Mr. Tolzmann responded he had this area down as meadow which was wet at times and probably dried up a little during the summer. An audience member responded it did not really dry up.

Mr. Tolzmann pointed out that the question was whether it was buildable. He noted this was a premium site because of the privacy, but if it were not buildable that would be “another story.” An audience member responded he did not see it as being buildable.

DeRoche noted if he wanted to build on it, it would require a lot of fill. Mundle noted if he would also have be three feet above the high-water mark for the footing foundation.

Lewis asked if there was road access to the area. An audience member responded he did and pointed out the screen where there was an access.

DeRoche pointed out if he wanted to build sometime down the road, he would need to put in a driveway and he would need to get something from the County to get that access. Berg noted the access was already there and it would potentially be a shared access with an easement of necessity involved.

DeRoche stated his point was that the land would be more valuable if it were buildable, but if it were wetlands nothing could be done with it. Berg responded he didn't want to say whether it could or could not happen and the audience member talked with the Soil Conservation District who could

make a determination on whether remediation would be done and then pay for the wetland credits to fill it in. However, he noted, that was not a one to two ratio, which would then require him to raise the elevation to three feet higher than the lowest elevation, which was financially expensive to do.

DeRoche asked how he was being taxed on it now. Mr. Tolzmann responded it was being taxed as unimproved residential land and has been rated as meadow/nettle land with all but one acre.

Lewis asked what they talking about in terms of tax revenue if this were treated as wetland.

Alex Guggenberg, Anoka County Assessor, responded they have not had the opportunity to speak with the audience member about this, and there are certain pieces of this property that could qualify for an exemption. He noted outside of the Board, the audience member could file that application for an exemption to start the process. He noted though, even with the buildable site, there was a cost to cure and there would be a lot of costs associated with it. He stated the value needed to be adjusted, which he believed could be done for all of the parcels. He stated the Board could recess to give them a chance to review everything and then come back, or they could adjourn this meeting and they could work with the audience member who could then to go the County Board of Appeals in June. He indicated this did not need to be resolved at this meeting, but he did believe in looking at this, there would be reductions on all three of the lots.

DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to recess the Board of Appeals and Equalization Hearing until 6:30 p.m. Mundle stated I'll second. Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Lewis reconvened the Board of Appeals and Equalization Hearing at 6:26 p.m.

Mr. Tolzmann stated they had agreed with an adjusted value on the three parcels based on the wetlands. He itemized the information on the parcels for the Board.

Mr. Guggenberger stated their determination was not whether the parcel was buildable or not and they were just accounting for the fact that there would be soil correction needed in order to make it available. He indicated there was substantial amount of soil correction needed.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to coincide with Mr. Mr. Tolzman's recommendation for parcel PIN 23-30-32-03-40-4006 to have a new valuation of \$31,000, for parcel PIN 26-30-32-03-11-0001 to have a new valuation of \$45,400, and for parcel PIN 25-30-32-03-22-0001 to have a new valuation of \$39,400 and to uphold the other valuations based on materials that are there as presented by the assessor. DeRoche stated I'll second. Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Mr. Tolzmann stated the would be retiring upon the completion of his contract on December 31, 2024.

Mundle wished Mr. Tolzmann well on his retirement.

Lewis closed the Board of Equalization hearing.

5.0 – Adjourn

DeRoche stated I'll make a motion to adjourn the Board of Appeals and Equalization Hearing. Miller stated I'll second. Lewis asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Lewis asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Submitted by:

Kathy Altman

TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.