



TOWN OF PENFIELD

3100 Atlantic Avenue, Penfield, NY 14526-9798

March 24, 2022

Note from the Supervisor: 2022 Reassessment

As many of you know, the Town of Penfield Assessor's Office is conducting a Town-wide reassessment.

Over the past few months, residents have contacted Town Hall to question the timing of the reassessment and ask if it could be postponed due to rising real estate prices, the pandemic, and various other dynamics. I understand and appreciate your concerns.

Postponing reassessment by a year or two seems like a simple thing, but there are other factors to be considered. One item of note is that the Town Board postponed reassessment for two years specifically because of the pandemic. Reassessment was originally set to take place in 2020.

Is there ever a good time to have a reassessment?

In general, I do not believe in kicking the can down the road. I am a person who likes to confront issues, address them, and move forward in a fair manner.

While I don't like reassessment either, **fairness is the goal**. If a property is under-assessed, any benefit that owners are getting in lower taxes is made up by the other properties in the Town. **Is it fair to make those properties wait another year (or more) to pay a lower share of the levy?**

Many other towns in the area have recently conducted reassessments, including several within the last two years. In Penfield, we have not conducted a full Town-wide reassessment since 2014. **The goal of any reassessment process is to ensure fair and equal property valuations.** The longer we continue to wait, the further inequity grows.

Reassessment is a standard practice that takes place in communities throughout New York State. If reassessment is not done at the local level, then the value is established by NYS. One way or another, values will be assigned to properties, and it is our goal to keep this process local as opposed to one completed by Albany.

There is concern about the status of the real estate market and the current selling prices of homes. I also understand this concern. **However, the 2022 real estate market looks to be as active, if not more so, than previous years and shows no signs of slowing down.** Unless something drastic and unforeseen happens, postponing would only lead to another year of strong sales to be included in assessment calculations.

To smooth out short-term price spikes and incorporate a larger data set, the Assessor's Office is using three years of sales information.

What does reassessment mean for me?

Reassessment does not automatically mean you will pay more taxes. What matters more is the levy imposed by each taxing district: school, county, and town. And remember, the New York State Property Tax Cap establishes a limit on the annual growth of property taxes levied by towns.

The Town budget is approved on an annual basis and is not impacted by changing home assessments.

Based on the approved budget, a tax levy is then established to fund the budget.

Currently, the Town budget accounts for just 8% of your tax bill with the remaining amount allocated for school and County taxes.

A good analogy I like to use is to think of our Town budget as a pie. The size of the pie (budget) is not impacted by assessed values. The pie stays the same size however pieces of the pie (tax bills) may be distributed differently. This analogy is similar for other taxing entities as well (school, county).

How can I learn more?

Town staff has worked to be as transparent as possible throughout this process. Postcards were sent in February notifying Town property owners of the 2022 reassessment. The Town Assessor gave a presentation at a Town Board Work Session, and information continues to be available on our website at www.penfield.org/assessment.

To further assist property owners, we have created a resource allowing residents to view preliminary assessments and receive **an approximate estimate of what the tax impact will be under this year's Town budget conditions**. This is an estimate as the tax rate is based on 2021 tax bills. Your tax bill may vary due to 2022 tax rates for school (Webster CSD or Penfield CSD), Town and County tax bills.

I strongly encourage you to use the resources we have provided on our website. If you have additional questions, please reach out to our Assessor's Office at (585) 340-8610.

The Town Board cares deeply about being good stewards of taxpayer dollars and operating effectively and efficiently. To that point, our Town taxes are among the lowest in the County and our Town holds the highest credit rating possible, among the best in the State. Conducting regular reassessment of Town properties is another piece of the stewardship and fairness we strive for.

Thank you for your understanding as we navigate this process together.

Marie Cinti
Penfield Town Supervisor