

Overview of April 19, 2016 Start up Meeting with Town and DRA

- We are starting the update process and will be out verifying sales starting in May. Given the limited number of sales in Town we will be going back 2 years to gather sales data. We will look at recent sales in neighboring communities if need be, but it is preferential to stay in the Town for that data. After sales verification we perform sales analysis, development of the preliminary values and calibration of the CAMA model. The sales information should be available for the DRA review at some point in June. We will forward that info to DRA when requested.
- Adam Denoncour is doing the field work, he is a DRA Certified Assessor Assistant
- I (Loren Martin) am the Supervisor on the job and Adam will be working with me on the update process
- The goal is to bring all properties to 100% of market value. This is difficult with limited sales data.
- Avitar will also be valuing all of your utility properties, pursuant to the terms of our contract. We also will be doing all data processing and after first tax bills are issued we will split the database and take a portion of it to work on the update. The Town will still be able to enter sales, ownership changes and maintain exemptions, credits and permits. Avitar will merely have the physical data and the tables that need to be updated.
- Once the CAMA model is calibrated we will do a full parcel by parcel field review confirming the data on the card is accurate and we grade the properties throughout Town to be consistent with the sales properties. We drive up driveways to review home features. This is often referred to by the taxpayers as a drive by assessment, however, that is not truly the case, as all data has been collected over the previous 4 year period and we are just doing a final review for accuracy and consistency.
- Once that is complete we will mail preliminary notices to all taxpayers in Town. It will provide them with instructions to call and arrange for a meeting with the Assessor to discuss the new value. These notices should be mailed in August and a copy of the letter and lists of the values will be provided to the Town should anyone wish to come in and review them. The letter contains instructions for access to the online database so taxpayers can logon to review theirs or any property in Town. There is a comparable sales feature within the database. This allows homeowners the opportunity to do some research to ensure they feel they are being fairly assessed. Hearings are preliminarily scheduled for August.
- Once the informal hearing process is complete, we will finalize the job. Send final notices of value to all taxpayers affected by the hearing process, whether they attended or not. This will occur in late August/early September. This notice will contain information regarding the abatement and appeal process should they be aggrieved with the final assessment on their property.

- With a contractual due date of October 1st and the fact that job will likely be turned over in mid-September, I would suggest the Town file an extension request with the DRA for their MS-1. I would request the extension until the contract due date (10/1) but we will plan on having the data back in September as early as feasible.
- When the job is turned over, we will provide the full set of record cards, the USPAP compliant report, complete with data collection manual and sales/neighborhood map, and the updated copy of the Towns data so you will be all set to do the MS-1 and send bills at that point.
- The State, DRA will be out performing their monitoring duties as required by law. They send a postcard to all selected properties and sale properties, allowing the taxpayers the opportunity to opt out of the process if they so choose. Once they complete their work, should they find errors or have questions, they submit their findings to us first allowing us the opportunity to review and respond before they notify the Town of their findings. Issues can arise when DRA has copies of the cards from the Town and re have the updated cards/records at our office. When DRA requests data from the update I would prefer they request the info directly from me to ensure they have the most up to date information and so as to not further compound work for Town staff.
- The assessment review process happens once every five years and was set up to coincide with your update year. Several of the areas of focus will be addressed with the update of values and falls on me to ensure you are compliant. Those areas ***are Level and Uniformity of Assessments*** (simply put I need to be sure your sales statistics indicate a ratio that is between .90 and 1.10 and that your coefficient of dispersion is less than 20), ***Data Accuracy*** indicates that 80% of properties are free from material errors, ***Proportionality*** indicate that your Price Related Differential is between .98 and 1.03 and what this means is that we are treating the low end properties similar to the high end properties and not undervaluing the high end while overvaluing the low end properties and the inverse. The DRA will also be in to check the other elements such as current use records, exemption and credit records, BTLA A9 and A12 filing for your religious, charitable and educational property. The Town only has 4 elderly exemption properties. These have not been updated yet, but will be this year. Once that is complete the DRA can coordinate with the Town to arrange for a mutually convenient date and time to meet for them to do this review. There are not many properties getting exemptions and credits so this part should be relatively easy, there are however, more properties enrolled in current use that will take a little more time to comb through those records.