

### **PROPERTY ASSESSMENT SURVEY – QUESTION 3**

**From Email**

**Please provide other ideas and concerns you have regarding the property appeal process.**

“If you haven't already guessed I am a Fairview resident that has been reassessed and was given a raw deal! In the last month I have discovered that the dwelling on my property is crap! The previous owner hid a lot of structural damage that no one saw, but him. And now I am paying for it. Kinda hard to feel like I achieved the ""American Dream"" by buying a house when it's been nothing short of a nightmare!”

“The current system has created a situation that can be fraught with manipulation and fraud. Sellers and buyers make under the table deals so the official sale price doesn't cause taxes to go up. That cheats everyone in the community.”

“All or no one, how much simpler does it get?”

“This survey is flawed in that the general public who has no intention of moving or buying another house in Fairview will not be for neighborhood valuations. I'm not sure what the purpose of this survey is or how these results will be used.”

“This survey has a tone of being elementary and uneducated; the same as the creators of the present policy . Why would anybody that has not already been caught in this web ever want to change the present format. If a homeowner is not presently affected they will not want to change a damn thing. AGAIN, NO WAY WILL ANYONE THAT IS NOT PRESENTLY AFFECTED WANT ALL PROPERTIES LOOKED AT.... I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE PRESENT BOARD IS MUCH MORE EDUCATED AND ABLE TO MAKE FAIR AND EQUITABLE DECISIONS...”

“Since majority of the Fairview properties are not included in the present reassessment process, I don't see why should be only the selected few held responsible to pay for the budget gap. After all they were not even at Fairview when the monetary problems appeared in the school budget. The only fair solution would be to raise everyone's taxes MILDLY instead of raising a selected few's DRAMATICALLY. This policy will hurt Fairview by keeping people and infrastructure away, and it will even hurt the present property owners by keeping their real estate less desirable by keeping the prices low. The school's monetary problems must be distributed evenly among the property owners of Fairview, taking of course into consideration the current value of their property. If everyone participates, this tax increase would be minor.

Set a time-line or a phase-in period. Allow discounts expressed as a percentage @ time of purchase to stimulate sales or expressed as a discount on future taxes to anyone who self-assesses or prepays prior to completion of the phase-in period on currently owned properties. Income and numbers of property owned should also be factored. Not all multiple property owners are wealthy! Perhaps this can be structured to allow a tax reduction in owning multiple properties. Kind of like multiple property insurance.”

“We pay enough for taxes but if it has be do a county wide assessment for all to pay accordingly to their own assessed amount of their own home.”

"I have always supported the Fairview School District and own two properties in Fairview Township. I have no problem paying taxes based on a fair and all-inclusive assessment. There needs to be multiple indicators of value and perhaps a formula to guide reassessment. All properties need to be included and provisions for periodic all-inclusive reassessment (every 5 years?) may be reasonable. I sincerely hope that you consider rescinding the previous reassessments and moving forward toward a more fair and equitable process."

"The goal should be to maintain ""fairness"" where comparable properties pay equal taxes. Unique properties may require special attention, if there are NO comparable properties. This should be a very short list. It certainly appears that the District is trying to hide tax increases by targeting individual property owners. Explain the need and raise the rates."

"All properties should have their assessment adjusted every 5 years to stay in line with true market values."

"First of All, our tax base should be more than sufficient where FAIRVIEW shouldn't need to be hunting for Tax dollars here there and everywhere. That being said,if you do need to find cash-- look for BIG FISH first, commercial or agricultural properties that are massively under assessed based upon their FAIR MARKET BEST USE VALUE."

"I do not intend to sell my home, but it seems unfair to first time home buyers and others, to pay additional taxes, they didn't plan on or budget."

"The only solution, but I know the district won't consider, is to cut costs."

"If it would be a hardship to some, maybe making increases on a percentage basis. Maybe taking any owed increases of the future sale of the home. Especially for fixed income families on social security. There should be some sort of guidelines to follow???"

"The appeal process is only a stepping stone to fair and equitable taxation. The assessment process must be evaluated and revised to provide more accuracy. For example, two homes of the same or similar age, neighborhood, square footage, floor plan, amenities and lot size should not necessarily be assessed at the same value. Quality, workmanship and replacement cost need to be considered in the value of a home. Logically, a hollow, luan door is not as valuable as a solid oak, paneled door and costs much more to replace. Therefore, the Assessment Board is the core of the problem and with the present inequities in the assessment values, the appeals process will be need to be a continuing course of action for years to come."

"What ideas has the board generated to reduce taxes generally?"

"By simply using selling prices for the value determination, there would be much less chance of an appeal being filed. This would ultimately be less costly for the Township."

"The assessment I got on my property seems a bit high, but not enough to concern me. I would rather it be a bit high to help lower property taxes."

“The actions of the Fairview school board to aggressively pursue reassessments is extremely undemocratic and very disappointing. There are fatal flaws in the school board’s arbitrary, shortsighted policy to increase its tax revenue without with out prior voter consent:

- Reassessing a house every time it is sold will influence the selling price in a negative fashion. Prices do tend to rise, but not much in this region. When a buyer knows that his tax base will be determined by the selling price, there will be a natural tendency to bid down as low as possible; market forces will not necessarily compensate in this area, especially for older homes. This school board policy will hurt older homeowners trying to downsize. This policy will hurt property values. It is extremely disappointing that competitive free market principles are being usurped by a school board seeking to increase tax revenues.
- Buyers of homes do not have to buy in Fairview!!!
- The county went through a very painful assessment process. The Fairview School Board has now arbitrarily decided that the results are wrong and must be corrected. I doubt that the Fairview School Board has the expertise to decide assessment. But it seems to think it has and has devised a legal, but underhanded way to reassess all properties. Question 2 is absolutely unbelievable. The very idea that the District can challenge the assessment on every single property is reminiscent of the time before the Boston Tea Party!
- The Fairview School Board has created an absolute mess of this situation that will not be easy to rectify.
- Question 2 essentially says that Fairview will clog the system by reassessing every single property through an even more painful process. And it will not be legal for some reassessments to take effect before all can be done and will probably be challenged in court.
- I will not vote for any current School Board Member or currently elected official in the next election, no matter what their individual record of accomplishment might be. We need a clean sweep since the total political establishment in Fairview does not understand that Fairview is now striking at the very heart of American principles.
- I hope that \$50 gas card is not being paid for by Fairview or school funds!!”

“If all properties are not going to be included in appeals, then none should be, wait until county wide reassessment happens again--someday.”

“I heard several discrimination cases (such as doctors) being targeted with extraordinarily, unreasonably high assessments. This type of situation should not happen. This process must be done by independent appraisers that have guidelines to make their determinations fairly.”

“To ease the burden of spot reassessment, there must be consideration given to home owners who purchase property based on current assessment, only to find that the spot reassessment will significantly increase their tax liability. When they are looking to purchase a home, they look at what taxes are and base some of their financial decision on the basis of the current tax. There should be a graduated scale in place that says if assessed value increases by less than say 5% they are liable for all. If it increases by more than 5% and less than 15% increase is phased over two years, more than 15% less than 25% increase phases in over 4 years, etc. to ease the burden. There are some who may be, an asset to the Fairview community who might not move here due the possibility of excessive tax burden modification.”

“Just try to make it fair and accurate for all concerned.”

“The school district needs to live within its means. I don't feel school taxes need to be increased every year. I don't get a pay raise every year. Property in this area continues to increase this should produce enough of a budget increase some years. If not, teacher benefits need to be addressed- pension plans, healthcare costs etc.”

“I believe it was a BIG mistake in the first place. I feel the board is doing a good job in general, but I think maybe this was a bad move.”

“While I understand the intent of this survey (I also understand the difficulty in framing unbiased questions that will yield a true reflection of consensus opinion on this topic), I don't think a survey is an appropriate tool for any decision making on this subject. The responses to this survey will be divided, with opposite responses from those who feel they are (or will be) paying more taxes than they should versus those who fear that a reassessment will increase their property value. I recently moved from Harborcreek and purchased a home in Fairview because I wanted my children to attend what I felt was the best school district in the county. Part of my purchasing decision, however, was realizing that I would most likely experience a significant tax increase as the result of purchasing an under-assessed property. I fear that there are some home buyers who may avoid Fairview because of the current practice of targeting recently purchased properties for reassessment.

Cut costs first. Taxes cannot continue to increase infinitely. Businesses cut costs, so should you. Yes, some programs will have to go. As stated above, reassessment should be automatic when the house buys/sells. It should reflect the price at that time. To do otherwise could force people to sell their homes because they can't afford the taxes to stay there. The elderly and the very young would be the most likely ones to be hurt the most.

As the tax basis is Countywide, the board should work with all taxing bodies to make the system fair throughout the county, instead of making sure Fairview properties are taxed at higher rates.

Also, the assessment process is not a fair procedure to all. Much of the procedure is very subjective and open to vast differences of opinion.”

“Erie County just went through a reassessment and the gap between fair market value and assessed value is widening, but the Board relies on statutory protections to avoid assessing the properties at less than fair market value as determined by sales.

The problem is that taxpayers do not see the increased collection of tax from some taxpayers reducing the burden of others or, in other words, fairness in collection. Clearly, this type of reassessment is only a way to avoid the harder choices of either raising taxes or controlling spending.”

“Fairview schools should learn to live within a reasonable budget.”

“Tax rate millage should be adjusted so people can afford to pay their taxes and not have to sell their soul.”

"I believe a fair approach would be to reassess every property when it sells, using the common level ratio to recalculate the assessment, and to review each property which did not sell within a 5 year period for readjustment and continue to do so into the future. This adjustment should be countywide. Laws should be changed to accomplish any countywide system adopted."

"Should the Fairview School Board choose to continue the reassessment of recently purchased properties, it may cause less concern if the ""new"" assessment is in line (within 5-10%) with the majority of the assessments in the neighborhood in which the property is located."

"Just make it Fair."

"I lived 40+ years where we voted on the school board members AND the budget. I find that a much better system of holding the board accountable rather than having them have a method of going after additional taxes in a method which lacks accountability."

"Prop Assessment Facts: 5th Para--although the school dist can challenge the assessments I believe the County should lead the way and then perhaps we will have a fair assessment for all properties. Para 7 & 8 It appears that the school board has already decided that it will raise taxes next fiscal year. Is this true or am I misreading these 2 para.?"

"The original reassessment was supposed to correct all the inadequacies and inequities that existed and update data and dollars to a contemporary level. Now that it has occurred, the insatiable district cannot see the way to competent management of finances. The property appeal process represents an endless array of schemes for funding the endless array of prodigal undertakings delaying, albeit temporarily, the inevitable day of reckoning of fiscal mismanagement."

"When you go to properties that are for sale or are going up for sale you should not go back (make it retroactive) Families who bought houses in the last 2 years and then had their taxes go up did not have the correct information and maybe can not afford to live in the house they bought due to the increase payment. It would be fair to take their assessment and taxes back to the value that Erie County assessed them at. Then when they sell Fairview can reassess for the new owners to make the judgment how much they can afford.

It just does not make sense to me how you can pick a date to start from that is already past and affect so many hard working people's(family's) lives."

"Recently sold properties may be more accurately valued but are taxed unfairly when other properties are excluded from re-assessments or appeals by the School District."

"The people of this township have no desire to go through the process of another property tax assessment.... If this continues there will be a political shake-up....."

"The District should develop an approach for identifying under assessed properties that is fair to all residents. The District should apply the approach consistently. A public notice and a period of comment by the residents for any proposed approach would be welcome."

“As you are well aware, finding a method of reassessment that would be both equitable AND legal, not to mention cost justifiable is no easy task. If it were, someone would already be doing it instead of simply ""cherry picking"" recently sold properties.

while I am very unhappy with this school board, the blame for this sorry state of affairs lies more with our state's judicial system, which allows these kinds of policies to flourish, our state's legislators, who can't seem to get any worthwhile property tax reform done and, closer to home, our very own Erie county council members, who permitted CLT to walk away with nearly \$5,000,000 of taxpayer dollars after performing the most recent countywide reassessment in a grossly negligent manner.

I submit that, if you can't establish a reassessment policy that is truly fair, (not perfect), to ALL, then you should get out of the reassessment business altogether.”

“We have lived many places before returning to the area and have NEVER experienced property assessment left go as long as it is here. Property should flow with the market every year. If you did that people wouldn't be so shocked at what happens in an assessment after 30 years has passed. And why should someone buy a home, live in it for 30 years paying taxes at the old value, but be allowed to sell it at current market prices. That's out of balance. It would also mean, however, that tax rates would have to be kept at a reasonable rate if property value regularly goes up on all homes.”

“As a community we must be careful not to discourage people from buying in our area or all real estate values will drop.”

“The SD must implement a process that is fair to all taxpayers regardless of their decision to buy and sell.”