Town of Needham
Board of Assessors
MEETING MINUTES

Date: **November 18, 2024**	Time: **9:15 AM**	Location: **Town Hall Great Plain Room**
Board Members Attendance:		
Present:	John Bulian, Chair; Michael Niden, Vice Chair; Michael Diener, Secretary	
Absent:		
Other Attendees:	David Davison	Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance
	Cecilia Simchak	Assistant Director of Finance
	Nancy Martin	Assistant Director of Assessing
	Chip Davis	Consultant
	Peter O'Neil	Needham Observer
Notes prepared by:	David Davison	Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance

This meeting was posted on the Town web site as a hybrid meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85387462654

Chair John Bulian called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

Chair Bulian announced that in accordance with the Open Meeting Law at the beginning of the meeting, I must disclose to attendees whether the meeting is being recorded. This meeting is being broadcast via Zoom, and is being recorded for publication, later viewing, and administrative purposes. Also, after notifying the chair, any person may make a video or audio recording of the meeting or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Please let me know now so that I can make that announcement as well. Mr. Peter O'Neil of the Needham Observer indicated that he was recording the meeting.

Public Comment Period: There were no comments.

Approve Minutes of Prior Meeting: There were no minutes to approve.

New Business:

Recertification Process: Mr. Davison informed the Board that the preliminary data has been submitted to DOR for review and analysis. Mr. Davison reviewed the required public disclosure notice requirements. The notice will be posted on the Town's website and advertised in discussed with the Board the recertification process and the Department of Revenue requirements. Mr. Diener discussed with the Board his review of the commercial data which he requested from the department. It was noted that the changes in the land values were affecting the preliminary commercial assessment as they were impacting the residential property assessments.

Taxpayer Appointments: Gary Simon (Simon II Associates LLC), owner of 970 Great Plain Avenue met with the Board to discuss the FY2024 property assessment. He disclosed with the Board why he believes his property is disproportionately assessed. He presented his case using the assessment on a square foot basis compared to other commercial properties. However, rental income does come into consideration when determining the assessed value. Chair Bulian asked what the lease rate was. Mr. Simon responded that the prior rate was $52.24. Mr. Simon acknowledged that the CVS lease has been renewed. Mr. Diener asked what the renewal rate is. Mr. Simon said it was higher but didn't have the information with him. Mr. Niden asked if he could share the information. Mr. Simon said he can. He said he has several buildings and leases with CVS. Asked where the other stores are, Mr. Simon stated CVS leases the property on route 9 located on the Natick/Wellesley town line and the third is in Belmont on Trapelo Road. Mr. Niden asked about the leases and the sizes of the other businesses located at 970 Great Plain Ave. Mr. Simon noted that they are smaller. Board members asked Mr. Davis to explain the assessment process on commercial property. Mr. Diener asked for the benefit of the public what is stabilized rent. Mr. Davis explained how it works. The Chair noted that the Board needs to discuss the information in executive session assuming Mr. Simon did not have anything else to share with the Board. Mr. Simon said he did not.

Executive Session: The Chair asked for a **motion** to enter into executive session and to return to open session prior to adjournment to comply with the provisions of any general or special law [exception 7]; specifically, to discuss Real Estate and Personal Property exemption and/or abatement applications which are not open to public inspection (per M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 60); to comply with the provisions of any general or special law; specifically, to discuss Returns of Property Held for Charitable Purposes which are not open to public inspection (per M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 32); and to discuss strategy with respect to litigation [exception 3] if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's litigating position which was moved by Mr. Niden, seconded by Mr. Diener and passed unanimously (3-0) on a roll call vote.

Mr. Niden	Yes
Mr. Diener	Yes
Chair Bulian	Yes

The Board moved to executive session at 9:42 a.m.

The Board **returned to open session** at 11:15 a.m.

Results of votes that were decided during executive session. Chair asked Mr. Davis to announce the results. Mr. Davis announced that the Board approved the abatement settlement agreement on 540 Hillside Avenue for FY2024.

It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 25, 2024.

Mr. Niden requested that the Town ask for copies of the leases for 970 Great Plain Avenue including any addendums.

Mr. Diener moved that the Board adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Niden which was passed unanimously by 3-0 vote at 11:17 a.m.

Approved July 2, 2025