

9th January, 2014

Editor. The Hamilton Spectator

There is something seriously wrong with the way property values are assessed and updated across the City of Hamilton. Since property taxes are based on the assessed value, low assessment values result in those property owners not paying their fair share of taxes. For the last year I have been recording the listing prices of homes for sale, and the taxes paid, from the Spechomes section of the Saturday Spectator. I live in a condo in downtown Dundas, and my annual taxes are 1.22% of the assessed value as reported by Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, mpac. I add that my assessed value is very close to what similar condos have sold for recently, therefore the assessment is realistic. Unfortunately realistic or accurate assessments do not appear to be the case with many Hamilton properties.

The range in property taxes as a percentage of the selling price on properties featured in the Spechomes is outrageous. Taxes are based on the assessed value and the taxes listed in the Spectator when the properties are for sale, are the taxes as listed on the City of Hamilton web site. Annual property taxes should be about 1.2% of the assessed value. Unfortunately, many residents, particularly of older homes, are not paying anywhere near this 1.2%. For example just a few weeks ago, the taxes for a property on Turner Avenue were stated as \$18,548 or 0.72% of the listed selling price of \$1,195,000. At the 1.2% rate, the taxes in 2013 should have been close to \$14,430. According to the City of Hamilton web site, the assessed value of this property is \$606,250. In September 2013, another property on Turner Avenue was at 0.79%. The assessed value on the city web site is \$770,750. The selling price was listed as \$1,374,000, therefore a more accurate tax bill should be \$16,488, not the \$10,867 paid in 2013. These are not anomalies. The average percentage for listed properties in the L8P postal code in 2013 was 0.78%.

The residents of southwest Hamilton are not the only ones appearing not to pay their fair share of property taxes. Two properties in Ancaster and one in Dundas had an even better deal. In November, a house on Jerseyville Road was listed at \$1,499,000, yet the taxes were only \$5,009 or 0.33%. The lowest tax ratio was on a property on Lovers Lane. Listed for sale at \$2,700,000 in October, the taxes were stated as \$5,140 or 0.19%. The average for Ancaster homes was 0.62%. Yet another expensive home, this one in Dundas on Gravel Pit road, listed at \$1,999,000 with taxes of \$9,015 or 0.45%.

What is wrong with the property assessment system, and thereby the resulting taxes collected by the city? Why are assessed values not more accurate? If all property owners were paying the 1.22% that I am paying, then the city could probably avoid a tax increase for several years. I'd like an explanation from the city and mpac. Is a department not doing it's job?

J. W. Boyd

Address	Area	2013 Assessed Value	Listed Selling Price	Difference	Taxes Now	Percent	Taxes at 1.2% of Listed Price	Postal Code	Year Built*	Spec Date
42 Mansfield, Ancaster	Ancaster	408,000	798,997	390,997	5,323	0.67	9,588	L9G		22/06/2013
204 Mohawk Rd., Ancaster	Ancaster	398,500	639,900	241,400	5,106	0.80	7,679	L9G		20/07/2013
44 Peer Court, Ancaster	Ancaster	321,000	407,500	86,500	4,065	1.00	4,890	L9G		27/07/2013
19 Maple Court, Ancaster	Ancaster	-	799,000		7,203	0.90	9,588	L9G		27/07/2013
38 Lovers Lane Ancaster	Ancaster	391,500	2,700,000	2,308,500	5,140	0.19	32,400	L9G		12/10/2013
1537 Jerseyville Rd, Ancaster	Ancaster	720,000	1,499,000	779,000	5,009	0.33	17,988	L9G		26/10/2013
228 Lovers Lane, Ancaster	Ancaster	561,750	849,900	288,150	7,294	0.86	10,199	L9G		10/11/2013
95 Orkney Rd., Ancaster	Ancaster	NA	1,480,000		5,448	0.37	17,760	L9G		23/11/2013
42 Halson Rd., Ancaster	Ancaster	NA	799,900		8,280	1.04	9,599	L9G		18/01/2014
71 Sulphur Springs Unit 23	Ancaster	NA	649,900	#VALUE!	6,944	1.07	7,799	L9G	2003	25/01/2014
55 April Court, Ancaster	Ancaster	NA	899,900		8,047	0.89	10,799	L9G	2004	25/01/2014
120 Sulphur Springs Road, Ancaster	Ancaster	NA	899,900		6,508	0.72	10,799	L9G		08/02/2014
251 Foxridge Drive, Ancaster	Ancaster	614,750	839,900		7,982	0.95	10,079	L9G	2001	08/02/2014
			13,263,797		82,349	0.62	159,166	76,817		
2000 Creekside Drive	Dundas	353,000	353,000	-	4,317	1.22	4,236	L9H	2004	
11 Helen St., Dundas	Dundas	376,250	494,900	118,650	4,892	0.99	5,939	L9H		13/06/2013
16 Sweetman Drive, Dundas	Dundas	517,000	649,900	132,900	6,722	1.03	7,799	L9H		17/08/2013
140 Gravel Pit Rd, Dundas	Dundas	NA	1,999,000	-	9,015	0.45	23,988	L9H		26/10/2013
21 Brock St. North, Dundas	Dundas	188,000	289,900	101,900	2,444	0.84	3,479	L9H		11/01/2014
67 Alma Stret, Dundas	Dundas	516,000	949,000	433,000	6,420	0.68	11,388	L9H	2012	25/01/2014
1 Creekwood Place, Dundas	Dundas	431,000	593,900	162,900	5,441	0.92	7,127	L9H	1998	01/02/2014
			5,329,600		39,251	0.74	63,955	24,704		
1646 Gore Rd, Flamborough	Flamborough	660,500	1,125,000		8,000	0.71	13,500			22/06/2013
511 Old Brock Road, Flamborough	Flamborough	NA	549,900		4,976	0.90	6,599			11/01/2014
6 Bulls Lane	Hamilton	847,000	1,550,000	703,000	11,943	0.77	18,600	L9A 3B7		21/09/2013
1 Bulls Lane, Hamilton	Hamilton	689,750	879,000	189,250	9,725	1.11	10,548	L9A 3B7		30/11/2013
77 Warren Ave., Hamilton	Hamilton	226,500	359,900	133,400	3,193	0.89	4,319	L9A 3C7		18/01/2014
221 Donnici Court	Hamilton	376,250	469,900	93,650	5,300	1.13	5,639	L9B 2W4		21/09/2013
674 Garth, Hamilton	Hamilton	490,750	699,997	209,247	7,069	1.01	8,400	L9C 4K2		22/06/2013
11 Braemar Place, Hamilton	Hamilton	445,500	599,000	153,500	6,281	1.05	7,188	L9C 1C9		24/08/2013
			4,557,797		43,511	0.95	54,694	11,183		
61 Melbourne Stree, Hamilton	Hamilton	241,000	449,000	208,000	3,398	0.76	5,388	L8P 2A5		30/11/2013
76 Stanley, Hamilton	Hamilton	325,250	649,900	324,650	4,290	0.66	7,799	L8P 2L3		22/06/2013
13 Inglewood Dr., Hamilton	Hamilton	444,000	679,900	235,900	7,255	1.07	8,159	L8P 2T2		20/07/2013
9 Turner Avenue	Hamilton	770,750	1,374,900	604,150	10,867	0.79	16,499	L8P 3K4		28/09/2013
7 Turner Ave. Hamilton	Hamilton	606,250	1,195,000	588,750	8,548	0.72	14,340	L8P 3K4		18/01/2014
34 Beulah, Hamilton	Hamilton	357,250	699,900	342,650	5,037	0.72	8,399	L8P 4H1		05/10/2013
			5,048,600		39,395	0.78	60,583	21,188		
25 Viewpoint Ave., Hamilton	Hamilton	284,000	679,000	395,000	4,004	0.59	8,148	L8V 2S4		06/07/2013
107 Leggett Court	Hamilton	265,000	319,500	54,500	3,702	1.16	3,834	L8W 2A5		27/07/2013
			16,952,494		7,706	0.05	11,982	4,276		
315 Regional Rd., Bloomburg	Bloomburg		749,900		3,516	0.47	8,999			13/06/2013
6075 Rainham Rd	Dunnville		334,900		3,738	1.12	4,019			21/09/2013
7 Baptist Church Road	Brant County		774,900		5,581	0.72	9,299			30/11/2013
192 Montreal Circle,	Stoney Creek		474,900		4,558	0.96	5,699			05/10/2013
5991 Chippewa Road, Mount Hope	Mount Hope		1,195,000		7,600	0.64	14,340			30/11/2013

* Year built - Only noted recently.

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