TOWN OF WESTFIELD

ANNMARIE SWITZER, CTA
TAX ASSESSOR

December 8, 2017

Dear Westfield Property Owner:

As ordered by the Union County Board of Taxation and approved by the Director of the Division of Taxation for the State of New Jersey, the Town of Westfield will be conducting a complete revaluation of all properties effective for the tax year of 2019. The purpose of the revaluation is to align assessed value for property tax purposes with current market value. This is presently accomplished by applying the "Director's Ratio" to the assessed value. However, according to the New Jersey State Legislature Office of Legislative Services, "Periodic revaluations…ensure that improvements or changes to land or buildings are accurately reflected in the municipal tax records so that the owner is properly taxed, thereby assuming his or her fair share of the municipal tax burden."

As per the statutory process, the Town of Westfield has contracted with a private firm, Realty Appraisal Company, that is proficient in appraisal techniques and has more than sixty years of experience in municipal revaluations.

To properly assess your property, a complete inspection of the interior and exterior of each building is necessary, along with measuring and photographing the exterior. This process will begin within the next few weeks. If you own a rental property, please advise the occupants of the upcoming inspection. Owners of income-producing properties will be required to provide additional information at a later date.

For your protection, each representative of Realty Appraisal Company will be provided with a letter of identification with my signature, as well as photographic identification. **DO NOT** permit anyone who is unable to properly identify themselves to enter your property.

At the conclusion of the revaluation project, you will be notified of your new assessed value. At your request, a qualified representative will review this assessment with you.

Representatives from Realty Appraisal Company will hold an initial public information session at Town Hall on December 18th at 6:30 p.m. In addition to attending this presentation, residents are encouraged to visit the town's website (http://www.westfieldnj.gov/revaluation) for more in-depth information, as well as to review the enclosed pamphlet provided by the appraisal company.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Annmarie Switzer, CTA
Tax Assessor

Encl.

425 East Broad Street, Westfield, New Jersey 07090
www.westfieldnj.gov
Telephone: (908) 789-4055 Email: taxassessor@westfieldnj.gov Fax: (908) 232-0679

The County Board of Taxation has ordered a revaluation of all properties within your municipality to determine their "fair market value".

Property inspections are a required part of this revaluation process.

FAQs

1. Who will inspect my property?

Property inspections will be conducted by trained inspectors from Realty Appraisal Company, which has been contracted to perform your community's revaluation. Realty Appraisal Company is a professional property appraisal company with over 50 years of experience in performing property revaluations.

2. What about my safety and security?

Inspectors will be wearing photo I.D. Badges. Don't let anyone into your home unless they are wearing a badge. Inspectors will only enter a house if an adult is home. Inspectors will not enter houses where only children are home.

3. What will the inspectors do?

The inspectors will take measurements of the exterior of all houses and structures. Inside, inspectors will determine the amount of living space and the condition of kitchens, bathrooms and basements. Additionally, pictures will be taken of the exterior of all houses and structures at a separate time.

4. How long will an inspection last?

Inspections take only a few minutes. The inspectors' goal is to get the information they need with the least intrusion on residents and property owners.

5. When will inspections take place?

Inspectors will visit properties on weekdays and weekends during the day and early evening. The first attempt to inspect will be unannounced.

6. What if the inspectors come at an inconvenient time or when no one is home?

You do not have to answer the door if inspectors come at an inconvenient time. If no one answers the door, inspectors will leave a card on your door like the one shown here. The card tells you whom to call to schedule the inspection for a more convenient time.

7. What if I made improvements and upgrades to my home over the years?

Inspectors are only interested in getting the information needed to properly appraise your property. They do not get involved in local zoning or building codes. Inspectors report only to the Municipal Tax Assessor.

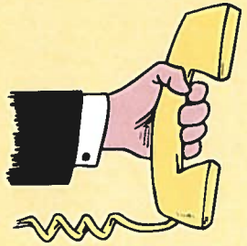
8. Do the inspectors appraise my property?

Inspectors do not appraise property. They simply gather information. Property appraisals are performed by certified appraisers licensed under the state of New Jersey.

9. Does a revaluation make my property taxes go up?

Not necessarily. Property revaluations do not automatically result in higher property taxes. This is because while property values go up, the tax rate used to calculate your tax bill will go down. For example:

	Property Value		Tax Rate		Tax Bill
Before	$200,000	X	2%		$4,000
After	$400,000		1%		$4,000
	Goes Up		Goes Down		Stays the Same

10. Who do I call if I have questions or concerns?

All residents and property owners are encouraged to contact the Municipal Tax Assessor's Office if you have any questions or concerns. You can also contact Realty Appraisal Company at 1-800-841-6740.