

**ASSESSMENT REVIEW BOARD**  
**'DEMYSITFY THE PROCESS'**

The answer to a successful assessment appeal is '*Be Prepared*'! If you do not do thorough research, you will not know if you have a valid case. "It's outrageous and I cannot afford it", does not cut it with the Arbitrator.

**Steps that need to be done:**

1. Start a file and keep notes. Exchange information and informed advice.
2. First you must obtain the six comparables that MPAC has used. The request must be in writing using e-mail, fax or regular mail with the roll number or regular address included. Note: If you do appeal and a hearing is set, *before the hearing* ask MPAC if the comparables remain the same as were given to you. They have been known to arrive at the hearing with comparables you have not seen. It is hard to argue if new information is introduced. You want this advantage on your side.
3. Check the factual accuracy in the information supplied by MPAC on your property. In the past I have found mistakes. E.g. Two parking spaces where there has only been one and square footage wrong. MPAC will not reimburse taxes you have paid because of errors made in the past, but you do not want them to continue on into the future.
4. The fact that your neighbour's house is assessed in the same price range as yours does not mean you have been assessed fairly. You need to know the sale figures. If there have been no recent sales, the assessor may have used information from another area and may not, upon research, be similar. MPAC is short staffed and relies mainly on the computer and may not be familiar with actual terrain, etc. Location, location, location!! At my last appeal, the Assessor used three properties from Wasaga that all had municipal services, which were not at all relevant to my property. Relevant properties were available in Tiny upon research.
5. The computer readouts are limited in their format. The difference between a Realtor and an MPAC Assessor is that a Realtor knows the variables in a home and these are weighed before setting a listing price. A computer does not do this well. If your property is subjected to 'aggravations' such as rights of way, erosion, noise or a rundown neighbourhood, take pictures or do whatever to prove your point. Price (value) is based on what a willing purchaser will pay and what a willing vendor will accept. Use purchaser's eyes when you inspect comparables. The actual sales will tell the story.
6. Inspect comparables, especially the solds. This is the hard part. You need to actually walk the land, take pictures, etc. If you can see that the comparables are indeed fair, then you probably will not want to proceed.
7. However, if you are still unsure, submit a 'Request for Reconsideration' before March 31, 2009. Thoroughly state your objections. The Assessor tries to avoid a hearing and has, in the past, phoned for a one-on-one discussion. If he is willing to meet you with some concessions, you may agree and not need to go any further.

8. If you are going forward, ask MPAC for their data base on all **actual** sales in your neighbourhood for that period. Keep records of everything you do and make notes of all conversations with MPAC personnel and with the people at the Assessment Review Board.

9. If you are able to observe an MPAC Hearing prior to yours, you will be better prepared. You will find some Arbitrators are not from this area and your information will be new to them. You may not get the same Arbitrator. In the past, the Arbitration Hearings have been held in the Township of Tiny Council Chambers if there are enough appeals. They can also be held in Barrie. On checking with the Township, the Chamber shows no bookings by MPAC up to March. If you are from the GTA and wish to observe, you could locate a Hearing in your area.

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**Literature came with your assessment notice. It explains the process, read it thoroughly.**

**We would emphasize that:**

1. Your 2008 Property Assessment Notice shows the assessed value of your property based on a January 1, 2008 valuation date. The last province-wide assessment update took place three years prior to that and was based on a January 1, 2005 valuation date.

2. MPAC analyzes property sales in your community to determine value.

3. Major factors that account for value include site features.

4. Computer access for your property allows for detailed information on 24 other properties of your choice as well as the six selected by MPAC. The **literature** does **not** tell you that you have to put in a request for them in writing and for the **six MPAC** selections.

A 'Request for Reconsideration', free of charge, must be in before March 31, 2009. Note the reasons for which you feel that the request is justified. In the past, an Assessor would follow up your request with a phone call.

If you are not satisfied, file an appeal with the ARB (Assessment Review Board). This must be done by March 31, 2009. If you file before this date and settle before the Hearing your fee will be refunded. You can file after this date, but you will lose your fee.

There are firms that will do this work for you on a commission basis. The commission will reduce your savings, but may result in many more years of future savings with proper record keeping.

The more informed and confident you are the more concessions you will get. You deserve to be treated fairly!!

Visit AboutMyProperty at [www.mpac.ca](http://www.mpac.ca)

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