

**ATTENTION LANCASTER COUNTY
PROPERTY OWNERS:
PROPERTY VALUATION PROTESTS
DUE JUNE 30**

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On or before June 1, 2010, the Lancaster County Assessor/Register of Deeds mailed notices to all Lancaster County property owners who experienced a property valuation change. If you did not receive a notice then it is almost certain your property valuation did not change.

If you received a notice stating that your property was subject to a valuation change, you are eligible to protest the valuation assessed. However, all property owners must submit their property valuation protest forms by Wednesday, June 30, 2010. Any protests received after June 30 will be returned to the applicant.

If you choose to file by paper, you may contact the Clerk's Office at (402) 441-8724 and obtain a protest form. Property owners also have the option to file on-line at www.lancaster.ne.gov (keyword: protest). The property protest form must include the following information: 1) Reason(s) for protesting; 2) Description of property; 3) Signature; and 4) Date. Regardless of which option you select, protests must be received or postmarked no later than June 30, 2010.

Referee hearings will be held beginning late June and continue through July. The purpose of the referee hearing is to allow protest filers to provide additional information relevant to the requested property value. The referees are independent appraisers hired by the Lancaster County Board of Equalization. Protest filers have the option of waiving the hearing whereby the referee will consider the protest form in absentia. If you file your protest on-line, you may select a convenient date and time for your referee hearing. However, if you choose not to file electronically, the date and time of your hearing will be mailed to you.

The protest form should be supported with any of the following evidence: a) a recent appraisal; b) comparable property values; c) market sales of similar properties in a similar area; d) costs of recent construction of the property that affects the value; e) physical characteristics of the property; f) income, vacancy and expense data relating to commercial property; g) soil data showing different land uses or soil types (farmland); h) discounted cash flow data for development land; and/or i) any other evidence or data that reflects the market value of the

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property. The referee will also take into consideration any photographs submitted. Property owners must be aware that if the protest is based on physical characteristics that are inside the property, the referee must be allowed to make an inspection, if he or she chooses. Moreover, if the property is being leased, the owner must provide current lease data and operating expense data for the prior two years.

The referee's recommended value should be available prior to final action which is tentatively scheduled for August 10, 2010. Final valuation notices will be mailed on or before August 18, 2010. If you are not satisfied with the final valuation, you may appeal to the State Tax Equalization and Review Commission.

If you have any questions or need assistance in preparing your protest form and/or advocating for your position at the referee hearing, please do not hesitate to contact our real estate practice group of experienced attorneys.

Sarah Pillen is an associate with the Lincoln-based law firm of Rembolt Ludtke LLP and may be reached at (402) 475-5100 or spillen@remboltludtke.com. This article is provided for general information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. Those requiring legal advice are encouraged to consult with their attorney.

