

## **Manchester Revaluation to Begin**

**August 17, 2015-** In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, the Town of Manchester is conducting a real property revaluation as required for the Grand List of October 1, 2016. This revaluation will correspond to the tax bills that will be due beginning in July 2017.

The Town of Manchester undertook a Request for Proposal in order to solicit bids from revaluation firms. Three firms submitted proposals in this RFP and the bidder selected in this process was Vision Government Solutions Inc. ("Vision") of Northboro, Massachusetts. Vision also performed Manchester's revaluations in 2000, 2006 and 2011 under the name Vision Appraisal Technology. Vision is an industry leader, having been in business for over 30 years and performed hundreds of revaluations in Connecticut.

The 2016 revaluation will be an update revaluation (often referred to as a "statistical" revaluation) which does not require that every property be physically visited as was done in 2011. However, revaluation staff will be visiting Manchester properties that sell to a new owner between April 1, 2015 and October 1, 2016 as well as other properties where information needs to be updated. The information on these properties will be verified for accuracy as they are the benchmarks upon which the remaining values in town will be based at the completion of the project. When visiting properties, the data collector will request an interior inspection which will take only 5 to 10 minutes and include a quick tour including basement and attic space. Each building's exterior will be measured on the first visit. If no one over the age of 18 is available at the property, a second visit will occur at a later date and then Vision will send a letter to request appointments of owners whose properties they were unable to inspect as of the fall of 2016.

All Vision representatives' vehicles will be registered with the police department and be clearly marked. Each data collector will have written documentation from the town stating their affiliation with the project and they will be wearing an identification badge. Data collectors generally work between the hours of 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday. If a homeowner has a question as to the identity of a data collector, or has any security concerns, they may call the Manchester Police at 860-645-5500, or the Town of Manchester Office of Assessment & Collection at 860-647-3016 for further confirmation.

Homeowners are reminded that specific questions regarding their current assessment and taxes due should be directed to the Town of Manchester Office of Assessment & Collection. Data collectors are not prepared to answer questions concerning current values or town laws. The data collector's sole purpose at a property inspection is to gather information. Actual assessed values will be determined later, during the market analysis and valuation phases of this project.

As the effective date of this revaluation is not until October 1, 2016, the market analysis and valuation phases of this project will not occur for quite some time yet. The project is starting in mid-2015 to keep pace with the sales occurring between April 1, 2015 and October 1, 2016. Vision staff will be driving through the town and confirming the information from street to street throughout the project. Once the market analysis and valuation phases of this revaluation are completed, in mid to late November 2016, property owners will receive a notice of their new assessment.

After the initial notice of their new assessment, taxpayers will be invited to participate in an informal hearing if they wish to review their new assessment. The informal hearing, conducted by a Vision representative, is the first step in the process if the property owner feels their assessment is inaccurate. The informal hearings will take place in November and December 2016.

All owners that participate in the informal hearings will receive another assessment notice in early 2017 before the Board of Assessment Appeals process begins. This process, undertaken annually by statute, allows owners who wish to formally appeal their assessment the opportunity to do so.

Most revaluations typically result in a shift in the tax burden between commercial and residential real estate, and some shift within those categories as well. The main purpose of a revaluation is to correct inequalities in the tax burden that have developed due to the real estate market since the last revaluation. The total amount of taxes the Town needs to collect will be essentially the same regardless of whether or not a revaluation takes place. What changes after a revaluation is the amount of taxes individual taxpayers pay towards the total, not the total amount of taxes paid by everyone. Thus, other things being equal, for every dollar that one owners' tax bill goes up, someone else's tax bill goes down by a corresponding amount.

In July 2017, the first tax payments under this revaluation will be due. The next-scheduled revaluation after the 2016 revaluation will be in 2021 pursuant to current statutes.

The Town of Manchester asks for patience in this process. It is a statutory process that is required, and will take time to complete properly.