

April 5, 2013

The April 4 editorial headlined "AVI . . . It's done its job pretty well" is belied by all analyses other than the administration's. The Crosstown Coalition of Taxpayers, a group of more than 20 civic associations, has compared the assessments issued with descriptions of the City's 579,000 properties and the history of sales in the City. Our preliminary calculations suggest a margin of error far in excess of the administration's claimed 13.9%. These findings are in line with the anecdotal reports of Axis Philly, the Inquirer, and the City Controller. Our final calculations will be done in ten days BUT If our preliminary calculations are correct then thousands of property owners will face unjust tax increases from overassessments, and millions of dollars will be left on the table from underassessments.

If the Daily News has any evidence beyond the administration's assertion that they did it right, we would very much like to see it. As for the assertion that the job was "pretty well done" because fewer than 10% of property owners requested first level reviews, the number of requests does not mean the assessments were done properly given the brief filing period and the City's "lame job of educating taxpayers." And who would request a review for an assessment that is too low?

Our goal is not, as you wrote, to "whip up a frenzy." Our goal is to mathematically verify the validity of the AVI process.

Our statisticians are available to meet yours at any time.

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Participating in the Coalition:

Bella Vista Town Watch • Center City Residents' Association • East Falls Community Council • East Kensington Neighbors Association • East Passyunk Crossing Civic Association • Fishtown Neighbors Association • Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation • Hawthorne Empowerment • Logan Square Neighborhood Association • Northern Liberties Neighbors Association • Old City Civic Association • Olde Richmond Community Association • Overbrook Farms • Packer Park Civic Association • Passyunk Square • Pennsport • Queen Village Neighbors Association • Society Hill Civic Association • South Broad Street Neighborhood Association • South of South Neighborhood Association • Washington Square West Civic Association • West Powelton Concerned Community Council • Woodland Terrace Homeowners Association