



**OWM NEWSLETTER  
JUNE 2017**

**ATTORNEY SPOTLIGHT  
MICHAEL B. MURRAY, JR.**



[Michael B. Murray, Jr., Esq.](#), has brought over fifteen years of diverse business law experience, including Real Estate, Municipal Law, Contracts and Project Management, with particular emphasis in Zoning and Land Use matters, to O'Donnell Weiss and Mattei to Co-Chair the firms growing Regional Zoning and Land Use Practice Group.

In his years of real estate and land use practice, Mike has represented developers, land owners, telecommunications companies and other applicants in every phase of obtaining project approvals from Municipal, County, State and Federal agencies. Mr.

**Tax Assessment Appeals – Are your Real Estate Taxes Too High Because of an Inaccurate Assessment of Your Property?**

Over the last decade there have been severe economic impacts to the value of real estate in Pennsylvania as well as the rest of the United States, causing inaccurate assessments of commercial and residential real estate. When an assessment of real estate is not accurate, it is not based on the true fair market value of the property and the result is quite often that you are paying significantly more in real estate taxes than you should be paying.

Many taxpayers do not pay much attention to their county and local Real Estate Tax bills because they are a fraction of the bill they receive each July for the Real Estate Taxes owed to the local School District. **WELL THAT BILL WILL ARRIVE IN THE NEXT MONTH AND YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED NOW.** Furthermore, many people confuse the Assessed Value of their property with the Fair Market Value of their property. Your tax bills provide you with the Assessed Value of your property which today is a fraction of the true Market Value of your property. When individuals see the Assessed Value, which is far less than what they believe the Fair Market Value of their property is, they often believe they should not appeal their tax assessment, because if they bring it to the attention of the County Board of Assessments, their taxes could actually increase. However, research of many of the neighborhoods in both Chester and Montgomery Counties indicates that many taxpayers are overpaying their real estate taxes by more than \$1,600 per year.

Counties limit the time when you can file an Annual Tax Assessment Appeal. The annual appeal period begins May 1 and runs until August 1 in Chester, Montgomery, Delaware, Bucks and Lancaster Counties and August 15 in Berks County. If you choose to appeal your tax assessment, the process is relatively simple. We use comparable property values and advise you to obtain an appraisal to argue for an adjustment to your property's value on your behalf. There are normally no intrusive county inspections of your property, and your tax rate could be significantly lowered for the 2018 tax year and every year thereafter.

Murray has also served as a solicitor for municipalities, municipal authorities and zoning hearing boards. This public sector expertise promotes development of strong relationships with elected and appointed officials and brings a practical approach to cut through "red tape" and think "outside the box" to solve complicated issues and obtain project approvals.

Mike currently resides in North Coventry Township with his wife and three sons. He is actively involved in local youth sports organizations, charitable organizations and State and local politics.

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Since our office handles all of the details with the County Board of Assessments, the process requires very little of your time and the entire cost of the appeal can be paid for with just a few months of the permanent annual tax savings that results from this process.

If you would care to discuss your particular real estate tax assessment in detail, please call me at 610-323-2800 or email me at [mmurray@owmlaw.com](mailto:mmurray@owmlaw.com). Also, please watch the encore presentation of OWM's May/June 2015 Legal Talk program regarding Real Estate Assessment Law Update on our website [here](#).

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### Firm News

OWM Law is very pleased to announce that Melissa A. Iacobucci, Esq., has joined OWM effective June 12, 2017. See press release [here](#).

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### Upcoming Events

[David A. Megay, Esq.](#), speaking at Chester County Night School Seminars at Owen J. Roberts Middle School, Pottstown, PA on 9/19/17 from 6:30p.m.-8:30 p.m. entitled "Ask the Lawyer: Buying and Selling Real Estate in Pennsylvania," and on 10/24/17 from 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. entitled "Ask the Lawyer: Starting and Operating Your Own Business" (contact Chester County Night School at 610-692-1964 or online at [www.chestercountynightschool.org](http://www.chestercountynightschool.org)).

Watch Legal Talk, brought to you by OWM, on PCTV, Tuesdays at 8:30 on Channel 28, and Thursdays at 9:30 p.m. on Channel 98, or on our website [here](#).

Read Legal Ease every first and third Sunday in the [Pottstown Mercury](#).

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