



## Office of Councilman Patrick Dowd — January

### NEWS AND UPDATES

#### 2012 County Property Reassessments

Pittsburgh residents have started receiving their 2012 property values from Allegheny County's Office of Property Assessment. Allegheny County is the governing body responsible for determining the values of every property and structure located within the City.

#### *Meetings in District 7 to address appeals*

If you believe that your new assessment is inaccurate, there will be a window of time for you to file an appeal with Allegheny County. It is our goal to make the County's appeal process as easy as possible for you. In an effort to do so, District 7 along with the City's Finance Department will host two meetings on January 3, 2012 to explain the appeal process and to answer residents' questions. The first will be held in Lawrenceville at the Stephen Foster Center, 286 Main Street, at 12noon, and the second in Morningside at the VFW, 1820 Morningside Avenue, at 6pm.

The notice being sent out by the County offered the following information on the appeal process:

"Property owners in the City of Pittsburgh and Mt. Oliver have until January 13, 2012, to request an informal review by calling 412-350-4600 or going to <http://apps.alleghenycounty.us/InformalReviews>. Property owners, along with the school and municipality, also have the right to file a 2012 formal appeal with the Board of Property Assessment Appeals & Review until February 10, 2012. Appeal forms may be obtained by calling 412-350-4600 or by visiting [www.alleghenycounty.us/opa/aforms.aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/opa/aforms.aspx).

#### *Additional resources*

City of Pittsburgh: Frequently Asked Questions – <http://www.pittsburghpa.gov/mayor/appealassist/faqs>

City of Pittsburgh 311 Non-Emergency Response line: 311 or 412-255-2621

#### Holiday Tree Composting

Christmas trees may be dropped off for composting from Jan. 3 to Jan. 31, Monday through Saturday from 8am until 2pm, at these locations:

2nd Division Public Works (East End) -North Dallas Avenue at Hamilton Avenue

3rd Division Public Works (Hazelwood) -Melanchton Avenue, off the 5200 block of 2nd Ave

5th Division Public Works (West End) -1330 Hassler Street, off of Hershel & Steuben (next to Herschel Park)

Environmental Services Lot (Strip District) -3001 Railroad Street (next to the former CityTow Pound Location

The trees cannot have ornaments, lights, or stands and cannot be in plastic bags.

Please be aware that trees left at the curb will be collected but not composted. For more information contact the Pittsburgh's Recycling Division at (412)-255-2631.

### **AGAIN, PLEASE NOTE: Help District 7 Go Green!**

We are currently preparing the **2011 Annual Report** for distribution early in the new year. If you would like to receive only an electronic copy (not a mailed hard copy), please email Jennifer at [jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov) and provide your address so we can remove you from our "snail mail" list.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS**

#### **Council to Go**

Join **Councilman Patrick Dowd at Council to Go**, his mobile district office, to voice your concerns, ideas, and questions about local government and services.

**Polish Hill — Wednesday, January 11, 7pm-8pm** – Polish Hill Civic Association Office, 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

**Bloomfield — Tuesday, January 24, 7pm-8pm** – Location TBD – details will be posted on the event calendar at [http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/district7/html/council\\_to\\_go.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/district7/html/council_to_go.html)

**Highland Park — Thursday, January 26, 7pm-8pm** – Enrico's Tazza D'Oro, 1125 N. Highland Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

#### **Holiday Hours**

**Monday, January 2, New Year's Holiday observed – District 7 Office Closed**

#### **Community Events**

**Tuesday, January 3 – Allegheny County Assessment Appeal Process Overview** – Lawrenceville, Stephen Foster Center, 286 Main Street at 12pm and in Morningside at the Morningside VFW, 1820 Morningside Avenue at 6pm. Free.

**Monday, January 9 – Adult Book Discussion Group** – Lawrenceville, Carnegie Library, 279 Fisk Street at 6pm. Free. Group will be discussing *Caleb's Crossing* by Geraldine brooks.

**Monday, January 16 – Honoring MLK, Jr.** – East Liberty/Highland Park, Kelly-Strayhorn Theatre (5941 Penn Avenue) and Union Project (801 North Negley Avenue) from 12pm-7pm. Free.

**Thursday, January 19 – 2012 Lawrenceville Historical Society Lecture Series – Dr. Stanley States**, Director of Water Quality and Production at the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority talks about the history of Pittsburgh's water supply system. Lawrenceville, McVey Auditorium of Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk Street.

*If you know of any community-oriented events in your District 7 neighborhood that we should publicize through our monthly newsletter and [District 7 website](#), please email [jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov) by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Allegheny County offers several exemptions that may reduce your county tax bill. You may qualify to save on your Allegheny County Taxes through what is known as the **Homestead Tax Exemption (Act 50)**. The initial \$15,000 in assessed value of each owner occupied residential property, and certain farmstead properties, within Allegheny County can be exempted from *county* property taxes.

This exclusion is not automatic however; you have to apply. Applications must be submitted by March 1 for the exclusion to be in effect for the current and for future tax years. Residents who have already filed for the Act 50 exclusion do not need to file again.

Also, Allegheny County offers a **Senior Tax Relief Program (Act 77)**. Seniors age 60 or older who have lived in and owned their current Allegheny County residence for at least 10 years may be eligible for a flat 30% discount on their county real estate tax. To be eligible, the gross household income, including 50% of Social Security and Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits, must be \$30,000 or less.

Information on other Allegheny County tax abatement and exemption programs, including new construction (Act 202), clean and green (Act 156-PA), and homeowner improvements (Act 42), can be obtained through the [Allegheny County Property Assessment Website](#).

The City of Pittsburgh also offers these types of programs but with slightly different guidelines. Please go to [http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/finance/html/forms-real\\_estate.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/finance/html/forms-real_estate.html).

*Tip: If you aren't sure whether you've already applied for the Act 50 and Act 77 tax exemptions, check under the "General Information" tab for your property on the [Allegheny County real estate website](#). There will be a "YES" in the Homestead line on the left side of the Web page if you already have an application on file.*

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To unsubscribe from Council District 7 updates, please notify Jennifer Thoma at [jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov) and you or your organization will be removed from our contact list.

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JENNIFER THOMA | Administrative and Communications Director  
Office of Councilman Patrick Dowd | Pittsburgh City Council District 7  
City-County Building, Rm. 510 | 414 Grant Street | Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Tel 412.255.2140 | Fax 412.255.2419  
[jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:jennifer.thoma@pittsburghpa.gov)

[District 7 Schedule of Events Google Calendar](#) | [2010 Annual Report](#) [pdf]