

Summary: New Haven property tax

by

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This document is intended to be a short summary that might help anyone who wants to reanalyze the data we used for the Case Studies course (Stat 625, fall 2007). For more details, see the other documents in the REPORT directory.

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§1. Introduction

As a project for the Statistics 625 class, we have been studying data related to the taxes on property (land and buildings) assessed by the City of New Haven. Our initial hope was to learn something about what affects property valuations and how those valuations vary across the City. Our aims expanded as we looked at the data and discovered some puzzling features. This report describes some of what we were able to learn.

We began with an undocumented set of spreadsheets (which we refer to as the TAX99 data) containing information on New Haven properties as of some time in 1999. Included in the data were what we believed to be assessments for 1998, information about the most recent sale of some of the properties, and various pieces of information related to ownership. We soon supplemented the TAX99 data with more recent information (which we refer to as the DVA data) downloaded from a web site maintained by Vision Appraisal Technology. The DVA data contain more detail about each property. By matching properties in the TAX99 and DVA data sets we were able to learn more about changes over time.

For some of our analysis we needed to be able to locate properties with some precision on a map. To this end we used mapping data from the US Bureau of the Census. These data came from the TIGER database, which give latitudes and longitudes for most street segments in the City. To fill in some of the gaps in coverage, we augmented TIGER by information obtained from Google. A comparison of these two sources of geographical information revealed some information about different geocoding strategies. We also discovered some surprising facts about the Google service.

Technical details

We used the R statistical programming language¹ for most of the analysis, with an occasional assist from Perl² for large or messy tasks. The Perl scripts are kept in individual files with a .pl extension; the R scripts in files with a .R extension. The main role of the R scripts was to create four large list objects: FNS (the components are functions that create or process various R objects), TAX99, DVA, and TIGER. For more details, see the comments at the end of each section.

¹ Available for free from <http://www.R-project.org/>

² Available for free from <http://cpan.perl.org/>

§2. The DVA data

The Vision Appraisal Technology company maintains a database of property appraisals for many towns and cities, including the City of New Haven. The data are publicly available from their website³. We adopted the acronym DVA because the data for the properties are kept in various subdirectories of <http://data.visionappraisal.com>; with hindsight, the acronym VAT might be more appropriate.

The main DVA search page presents a form that offers several ways of locating a property:

Property Assessment Search | New Haven, CT

Please use one of the Search options below to find the Property you are looking for

Query By Location:

Street Number: Street Name:

Hint: Use the street suffix abbreviation.
(e.g. enter "MAIN ST" and not "MAIN STREET")

Query By Owner Name:

Owner Name:

Hint: Enter Last Name (space) First Name (e.g. "SMITH JOHN")

Query By Map/Block/Lot/Unit :

Map: Block: Lot: Unit:

Query By Account Number:

Account Number:

Query By Vision Internal ID:

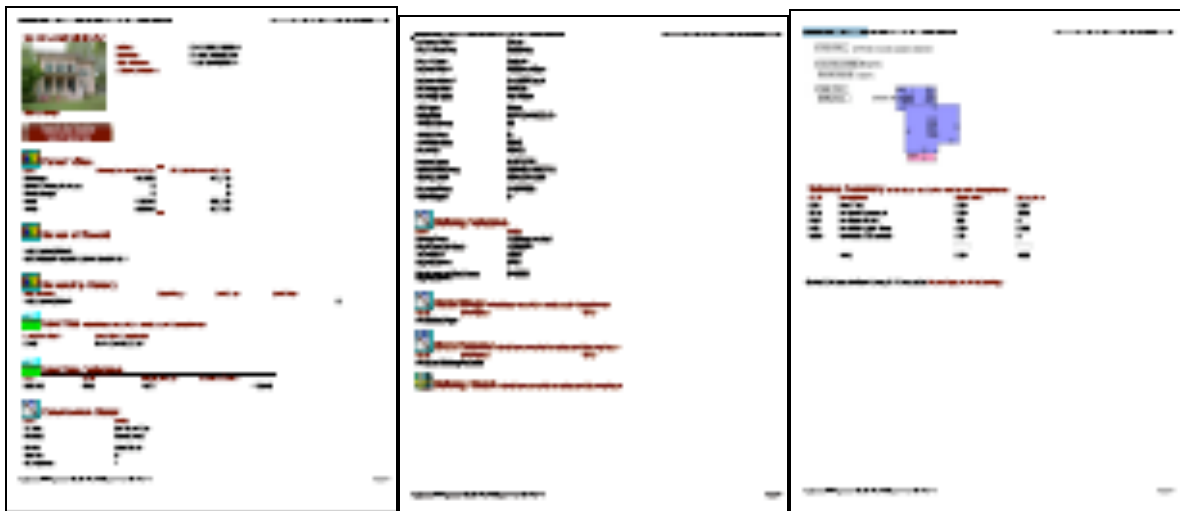
PID:

For example, the address “24 Hillhouse Avenue”, the PID 13879, and the Map/Block/Lot/Unit (MBLU) code 244/ 0332/ 00300/ // all returned the same HTML file. The PID is an internal code for properties, which has a meaning only on the DVA web site. The 244 of the MBLU code refers to the Tax Assessor’s Map number 244, which is available from the City’s map website.⁴ On that map, the block bounded by Hillhouse Avenue, Sachem Street, Prospect Street, and Grove Street is labeled 332. The parcel of land occupied by 24

³ <http://www.visionappraisal.com/>

⁴ <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Maps/>

Hillhouse is labeled with the single digit 3. There is nothing on the map or in the MBLU code to suggest a unit. In fact, we never seemed to need more than the MBL to uniquely identify a property in New Haven.



The HTML file for 24 Hillhouse Ave. See the file [24HH.pdf](#) for a more legible version of these three pages.

In early September 2007 we obtained what we hoped would be all the HTML files for New Haven by using a program that eventually checked for properties with PIDs from 1 up to 100000. By inspection of files recovered by our program we discovered that some PIDs correspond to multiple HTML pages. For example, 259 East Street (MBLU 179 0567 00100, PID 9875) has three HTML pages, one for each of three buildings, but the data that we needed were all on the first page. (The properties for which there are multiple HTML files can be identified by searching for the words "Next Building" on the first HTML page displayed by DVA.) Our program will download only the first page for any property with multiple buildings. We made no systematic attempt to obtain all the extra HTML files, hoping that the properties would follow the pattern seen for 259 East Street.

We ended up with HTML files corresponding to PIDs 1 through 27307. However, for 508 of these PIDs there are actually no corresponding properties in the database; for those cases the HTML file contains a message "Parcel Not Found". For one property (PID 8162), the HTML file contains the message "The information for this parcel has been suppressed at the owner's request." Thus we were left with 26798 HTML files containing useful data about properties.

We later discovered that there are properties with PID greater than 100000. For example, by good luck we stumbled on 30 more properties with PIDs 102062—102076 and 102078—102092: all of them are located on Frances Hunter Drive and were built in the year 2005. We also located some properties by searching for addresses in the TAX99 data that did not seem to correspond to DVA properties. It is most likely that there are properties in New Haven for which we have obtained no DVA data.

Each of the 26798 HTML files contains information for a property similar to that shown for 24 Hillhouse Ave. Most of the useful data were contained in eleven tables. We found the following items to be of most use:

Name	Description
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MBLU	12 digits to represent map, block, lot and unit numbers. It roughly corresponds to MBP in TAX99 data. (See Section 3)
Parcel Value	Assessment values for buildings, extra building features, outbuildings, land, and total values in year 2007 and 2005
Ownership History	Up to five sales for the property, giving name of purchaser, sales date, price and book/page for the legal documents kept in the New Haven Records Office. Many sales listed for \$0 (see Section 6). Some obvious errors, such as sales year 2025.
Land Use	Code and short description identifying either vacant land or the type of building on the property, such as 904C PVT UNIV MDL-94 for 24 Hillhouse.
Construction Detail	More information about buildings, including numbers of bedrooms and bathrooms.
Building Valuation	Data such as living area, depreciation on the building, and year.

The presence of a line “STYLE Vacant Land” in the HTML file for a property indicates that the land is vacant. We found that the 3106 properties for which the “year.built” field is missing are exactly those that are vacant land.

Technical details

The following programs are in the SCRIPTS directory.

GetRealEstateData.pl	Uses the WWW:Mechanize module. Download HTML files for a range of PID values, initially 1 through 27307. Output currently stored as NHRealEstateData.zip .
DVA_by_address.pl	Script to download properties with given addresses. Input and output files need to be reset. We did not save any output.
extractDV.pl	Extract information from the HTML files, collapsing into one file, allPID.txt, with one line for each of 27307 PIDs.
DVA.R	Functions that extract data from allPID.txt, creating objects in the DVA list within R. Most data from the HTML files is stored in DVA\$combined.

§3. The TAX99 data

The raw data came to us in the form of several Excel spreadsheets with no documentation. We believe the original source to have been somewhere in the City of New Haven administration. The spreadsheets overlapped in their coverage of the properties, with some records repeated. Each record consists of 23 fields that give information about a single property, with some missing data, as shown in the following table.

MBP	CLS	OWNER.NAME1	OWNER.NAME2
299 0144 06000	E	CITY OF NEW HAVEN	CITY OF NEW HAVEN
223 0382 00109	O	COLO GEORGE W & VERNITA J	& SURV
060 0949 00300	R	COPPOLA	THOMAS A

MAIL.ADDRESS	MAIL.CITY	MAIL.ST	MAIL.ZIP	ST.NO
176 CHURCH ST	NEW HAVEN	CT	06510	124
6727 S CREGIER AV	CHICAGO	IL	060649	95
183 VALLEY RD	NORTH BRANFORD	CT	06471	83

ST.NAME	UNIT.NO	ZIP	NO..OF.UNITS	GROSS98	LAND98
SYLVAN AV		06519	12	325,780	38,780
AUDUBON ST	9	06511	1	98,000	0
MAIN ST ANNEX		06512	3	86,737	16,247

BLDG98	MISC	VOL	PAGE	SLE.DATE	SLE.PRICE	INST	CODE
287,000	0	3044	152	3/11/83	0		
98,000	0	4120	118	7/26/89	200,000	WD	A
70,490	0	4984	183	4/15/96	0	CV	B

Three property records from the TAX99 spreadsheets.

We believe the MBP code (Map/Block/Parcel, the analog of the MBLU code for the DVA data) uniquely identifies properties in the TAX99 data: inspection of records sharing the same MBP revealed differences mostly of a trivial nature, such as inclusion of extra quotation marks in one record. Accordingly, we extracted a single record for each MBP code, leaving us with 27,323 records, one per property. We have saved these records in the file *NHTax99.txt*.

By matching properties using the MBP in TAX99 and the MBLU in DVA, we were able to deduce the probable meaning of the CLS field as a code for building type:

CLS code	Frequency	Meaning
A	1,175	Apartment
C	2,335	Commercial
E	1,846	Exempt
I	323	Industrial
O	3,333	Condo
R	18,270	Residential
U	41	Utilities

Interpretation of CLS codes.

We believe the field GROSS98 gives the total assessed value (in dollars) of a property at some time in 1998. It is always the sum of LAND98 (assessment for the land), BLDG98 (assessment for any buildings on the property) and MISC (miscellaneous), which is usually zero. When BLDG98 is zero, we believe the property was vacant land. (Comparison with DVA data for the same property, which explicitly identifies vacant land, reinforces our belief.) For some properties, such as some condominiums, there is a zero value for LAND98 paired with a nonzero value for MISC. That combination would make sense of the land were held in common by a condominium association but taxes on it were assigned to individual owners.

Variable	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	Mean	3rd Qu.	Max.
GROSS98	0	57,080	80,520	196,600	109,100	86,190,000
LAND98	0	12,730	21,490	45,900	32,560	15,790,000
BLDG98	0	38,500	56,910	142,100	77,980	83,180,000
MISC	0	0	0	8,578	2,450	35,360,000

Summary for assessment fields

GROSS98	Frequency
0	1
1 to 100	3
100 to 1,000	199
1,000 to 10,000	952
10,000 to 100,000	17,653
10^5 to 10^6	7,994
10^6 to 10^7	461
10^7 to 10^8	60
Total	27,323

GROSS98, the total assessment for property taxation

The single property with a zero total assessment appears to have been vacant land on Townsend Avenue.

We have no idea what the INST and CODE fields represent. They are mostly empty.

The name of the owner is spread across two fields. Mailing information for the owner is in the four fields labeled MAIL.xxx. The four fields ST.NAME, ST.NO, UNIT.NO, and ZIP give the street address of the property. There are 1437 missing street numbers, 1376 of which seem to be for vacant land. The NO..OF.UNITS field, which appears to refer to apartment buildings or condominiums, can be misleading. For example, the Audubon property (second row of the first table in this section) is a condo unit, a single unit in a building at 95 Audubon Street that contains other units. Apparently the 1 means that MBP 223 0382 00109 identifies just one unit. The Sylvan property apparently consists of 9 units in the building with the single MBLU 299 0144 0600.

The SLE.DATE and SALE.PRICE seem to record information related to the most recent sale before 1999. All properties have a sale price but a price of \$0 seems to have a special meaning. We interpret the 2118 cases that have a zero sale price but no sale date as

being properties for which no real sales data are available. The 14943 properties with a zero price and a sales date are a different story (see Section 6).

SLE.PRICE	SLE.DATE missing	SLE.DATE present	total
0	2,118	14,943	17061
1 to 100	0	7	7
100 to 1,000	0	34	34
1,000 to 10,000	0	323	323
10,000 to 100,000	0	5,910	5,910
10^5 to 10^6	0	3,874	3,874
10^6 to 10^7	0	103	103
10^7 to 10^8	0	7	7
10^8 to 10^9	0	4	4
Total	2,118	25,205	27,323

Sales prices and dates listed in TAX99.

There are some clearly erroneous values among the sales prices:

MBP	CLS	ST.NO	ST.NAME	GROSS98	SLE.DATE	SLE.PRICE
121 1036 00100	C	115	FOXON BLVD	7,120,640	9/15/97	892,500,000
371 1163 01500	R	7	STONE ST	68,698	9/11/95	799,000,000
166 0714 00600	R	73	CHAPEL ST	46,564	12/13/94	464,000,000
302 0063 00400	A	10	WEST ST	84,259	10/20/94	250,000,000

DVA lists the Lowe's store at 115 Foxon Blvd as a purchase for \$8.9 million and the property at 73 Chapel Street as a \$464 million sale in 1994, but with a \$60,000 sale in 1989. The \$68,698 GROSS98 for 7 Stone Street suggests a sale price of \$79,900, not \$799 million. The sales history from DVA for 10 West Street suggests a true sales price of \$250,000 not \$250 million:

Owner Name	Book/Page	Sale Date	Sale Price
WALTON MARY W	6635/ 70	12/4/2003	120,000
MOYE KELLY B & KELLY M JR	4793/ 781	10/20/1994	250,000,000
HOUSEHOLD BANK FSB	4793/ 78	10/20/1994	2,500
UNKNOWN	4509/ 140	7/30/1992	0
UNKNOWN	4131/ 145	8/17/1989	230,000

We made no systematic effort to locate and correct erroneous sales data.

As an illustration, reconsider one of the records from the first table in this section. The property was a condominium at 95 Audubon Street owned by "George and Vernita J. Colo". We believe "& SURV" to mean that the property would pass to the survivor in the case one of the owners died. Their mailing address was 6727 South Cregier Avenue in Chicago, IL, 060649. The property is identified as unit 9 at 95 Audubon. The total assessed value in 1998 was \$98,000, all of which is identified as an assessment on the condo itself. The Colos bought the property on 26 July 1989 for a price of \$200,000. A copy of the legal

documents related to the sale may be found on page 118 of volume 4120 at the New Haven Hall of Records.

MBP	CLS	OWNER.NAME1	OWNER.NAME2
223 0382 00109	O	COLO GEORGE W & VERNITA J	& SURV

MAIL.ADDRESS	MAIL.CITY	MAIL.ST	MAIL.ZIP	ST.NO
6727 S CREGIER AV	CHICAGO	IL	060649	95

ST.NAME	UNIT.NO	ZIP	NO..OF.UNITS	GROSS98	LAND98
AUDUBON ST	9	06511	1	98,000	0

BLDG98	MISC	VOL	PAGE	SLE.DATE	SLE.PRICE	INST	CODE
98,000	0	4120	118	7/26/89	200,000	WD	A

Technical details

The following programs are in the SCRIPTS directory.

TAX99.R	Read raw data from NHtax99.txt. Cosmetic changes to variable names and sales data, geocoding of properties.
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§4. TIGER and geocoding

To obtain geographical information for each property we used data from the 2006 Second Edition TIGER/Line® Files⁵, which are extracts from the TIGER® (Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing) database of the U.S. Census Bureau. Each file for each county contains one of 19 possible record types, which present different types of geographic information.

We used data from TGR09009.RT1, the file containing records of type 1 for New Haven County, Connecticut. Each record contains information about a single line segment that could represent part of a road, railroad, shoreline, river, or non-visible feature such as a jurisdictional boundary⁶. We eventually worked with the following subset of variables. The notation (R/L)* indicates the presence of two fields, one for the left side of the segment, the other for the right side. For example, FRADDR and FRADDL give the starting address for the two sides of the segment.

Field	Description	Notes
TLID	TIGER/Line® ID, Unique segment identifier	10 Digit Identifier
FEDIRP	Feature Direction, Prefix	Levels: N, S, E, W
FENAME	Feature Name	Road Name
FETYPE	Feature Type	E.g. Ave, Pky, St, Aly
FEDIRS	Feature Direction, Suffix	Levels: N, S
FRADD (R/L)*	Start Address	
TOADD (R/L)*	End Address	
COUSUB (R/L)*	FIPS ⁷ code for town next to segment	52070 for town of New Haven
FRLONG (R/L)*	Beginning of Segment Longitude	
FRLAT (R/L)*	Beginning of Segment Latitude	
TOLONG (R/L)*	End of Segment Longitude	
TOLAT (R/L)*	End of Segment Latitude	

We discarded all but the segments for which either the FIPS code on the left or on the right was 52070, the code for the town of New Haven. That subset of records gave us beginning and ending street numbers for the right and left sides of the road for over 70% of the road segments for the town. Exceptions include parkways, connectors, and other roads without street numbers. TIGER also provides beginning and ending latitude and longitude information for both the left and right side of the segment.

We matched street addresses from both the TAX99 and DVA data to segments in the TIGER file, then linearly interpolated using the TIGER address ranges to estimate a latitude

⁵ <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/tiger/> . For full technical documentation see <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/tiger/tiger2006se/TGR06SE.pdf> .

⁶ Tiger provides segment type codes for the various types of line segments in the CFCC (Census Feature Class Code) field. A's are roads, B's are railroad tracks, Fs are non-visual boundaries, and H's are shorelines, rivers and creeks.

⁷ Federal Information Processing Standards

and longitude for each property. For those properties that could not be matched to a TIGER segment we used the Google geocoding service. See the Geocoding Report for details.

Technical details

The following programs are in the SCRIPTS directory.

getRT1.pl	Extract records from RT1 file for New Haven County with either the COUSUBL or COSUBR field equal to 52070.
TIGER.R	Creates a list object TIGER within R containing the data from RT1 together with several more convenient rearrangements of the data. See the Geocoding Report for details.

§5. Comparison of TAX99 and DVA data

After some checking, we came to believe that each property in TAX99 is uniquely identified by its MBP and each property in DVA by its MBLU. We used these two identifying codes to match records from the two data sets.

	DVA vacant	DVA built pre98	DVA built post98	not in DVA	total
TAX99 vacant	438	2777	36	403	3654
TAX99 built	2655	20584	215	215	23669
not in TAX99	13	79	1	-	93
total	3106	23440	252	618	

For the purposes of the table, we took a missing “year.built” field in DVA as indicating vacant land and year.built >1998 as being built after 1998. For TAX99, we took BLDG98 = 0 to mean vacant land.

We were most concerned about the 215 properties that were not vacant land and appeared only in TAX99, that is, their MBPs were not matched with an MBLU in the DVA data. A small number of streets account for a 125 of those 215:

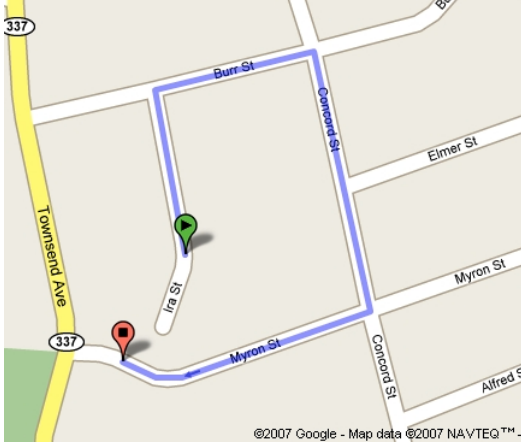
CHAPEL ST	49
BALDWIN ST	20
ASYLUM ST	16
JAMES ST	8
WHALLEY AV	7
WARD ST	7
PROSPECT ST	7
CONGRESS AV	6
MANSFIELD ST	5

We discovered that many of the unmatched properties on Asylum , Ward, Baldwin, and Congress were on the site now occupied by the John C. Daniels school; and many from James St were on the site now occupied by the John S. Martinez school.

In some cases, the numbers of properties listed at an address had changed, leading to new PIDs beyond our search range:

address	TAX99	DVA	comments
277 Chapel St	45	1	MBP 174 0710 00101 through 174 0710 00145; all at MBLU 174 0710 00100 and PID 101082
81 Church St	1	14	Condos/retail in DVA with PID starting at 104241; owned by CHURCH STREET COMMONS LLC in TAX99

Sometimes properties had been assigned a PID greater than 100000 because of new construction (eg. 1 Admiral St, PID 100182) or for reasons that we don't understand (eg. 603 Howard Ave, PID 101702; and vacant land at 20 Lombard St, PID 102486). Sometimes the MBP and MBLU for the same address were different (eg. 506 Winchester Ave, MBP 286 0433 01200 and MBLU 286 0433 01510). Sometimes addresses appear to have changed (eg. 154/174 Kimberly Ave).



In some cases, the address change was substantial, such as a change from 14 Myron St to 1A Ira St, a property (MBP: 029 0892 00900) that lies at the end of Ira St and backs onto Myron St. In all 14 cases⁸ of this kind, the properties were adjacent to two different streets.

⁸ MBPs 029 0892 00900, 066 0951 00200, 163 0725 00900, 167 0768 00400, 167 0769 00100, 209 0591 00200, 224 0578 00500, 246 0362 00100, 250 0493 00100, 257 0351 00100, 279 0177 00100, 290 0469 02201, 321 0323 00100, 339 0210 01200

§6. Sales price zero

For each of the 26798 DVA properties we have a list of up to five separate changes of ownership, making a total of 64794 transactions for which we have sales data.

#transactions	1	2	3	4	5
#Properties	9,475	6,556	4,460	2,708	3,599

Many of these transactions have a sale price of zero dollars: 54% of all the 64794 transactions and 49% of the most recent transactions.

We have made several assumptions, which might not be correct, about the Ownership History:

- (i) The Owner Name for each entry refers to the buyer.
- (ii) No sales occurred at times between the entries in the Ownership list, so that we may infer the seller from the most recent previous sale.
- (iii) There is no particular significance to the ordering of transactions with the same date.

For example, for 149 Fort Hale Rd, we infer that JOHN A PETRILLO bought the property a sale price of \$0 on 5 May 2006 from DENISE A PETRILLO, who had bought it from GERMAINE BOUFFARD on 18 January 1995, also for \$0. BOUFFARD had bought it from an unknown seller on 25 May 1993 for \$70000.

Owner Name	Sale Date	Price	Address
PETRILLO JOHN A	5/5/2006	0	149 FORT HALE RD
PETRILLO DENISE A	1/18/1995	0	149 FORT HALE RD
BOUFFARD GERMAINE	10/25/1994	70,000	149 FORT HALE RD
UNKNOWN	5/25/1993	0	149 FORT HALE RD

The similarity of last names suggests a transaction between persons who were related. Indeed, some properties do change ownership for \$0 by reason of a death or a divorce.

The story for 285 Lombard St seems similar, with perhaps the two earliest transactions having something to do with foreclosure and resale:

Owner Name	Sale Date	Price	Address
LANGLOIS MAURICE & DONNA L	11/3/2005	295,000	285 LOMBARD ST
CREVECOEUR DORDY & ADELINE J	6/22/2004	0	285 LOMBARD ST
CREVERCOEUR DORDY	7/30/2002	138,000	285 LOMBARD ST
CONNECTICUT HOUSING COMPANY	3/1/2002	66,500	285 LOMBARD ST
CITIFINANCIAL MORTGAGE COMPANY	1/25/2002	55,000	285 LOMBARD ST

In many cases, a \$0 sale with a bank or finance company as buyer suggests more foreclosure or other activities related to mortgages:

Owner Name	Sale Date	Price	Address
AMERICAN MORTGAGE NETWORK INC	5/25/2006	0	495 FORT HALE RD

DELUCIA FRANK A	8/29/2003	180,000	495 FORT HALE RD
FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE	6/14/2006	0	31 WILSON ST
ELGHARBAOUI BERTHA E & MOHAMED	9/16/2002	58,000	31 WILSON ST

The reason for zero prices for four properties on Burwell St is more puzzling. The first transactions were all on the same day in 1992 and the second transfers were all to the City near the end of 2003 or start of 2004. We believe the City does take over some properties for the purposes of new construction or to eliminate blighted housing. DVA lists all the land as vacant.

Owner Name	Sale Date	Price	Adress
CITY OF NEW HAVEN	12/30/2003	0	186 BURWELL ST
KOSKO VERONICA	1/8/1992	0	186 BURWELL ST
CITY OF NEW HAVEN	12/30/2003	0	182 BURWELL ST
KOSKO VERONICA	1/8/1992	0	182 BURWELL ST
CITY OF NEW HAVEN	12/30/2003	0	178 BURWELL ST
KOSKO VERONICA	1/8/1992	0	178 BURWELL ST
CITY OF NEW HAVEN	12/30/2003	0	174 BURWELL ST
KOSKO VERONICA	1/8/1992	0	174 BURWELL ST
CITY OF NEW HAVEN	2/9/2004	0	170 BURWELL ST
KOSKO VERONICA	1/8/1992	0	170 BURWELL ST

Table 4

There is another sort of transaction at zero price for which we can say something. The next table shows some (but not all) transactions for three properties.

Owner	Sale Date	Price	Address
PERROTTI ANTHONY	7/10/2003	0	571 QUINNIPIAC AV
CONNECTICUT HOUSING COMPANY	7/23/2002	85,000	571 QUINNIPIAC AV
CONNECTICUT HOUSING COMPANY	4/30/2001	0	21 ALTON ST
PERROTTI ANTHONY	4/30/2001	20,000	21 ALTON ST
PERROTTI ANTHONY	11/15/2004	0	155 CHATHAM ST
CONNECTICUT HOUSING COMPANY	9/3/2004	90,000	155 CHATHAM ST

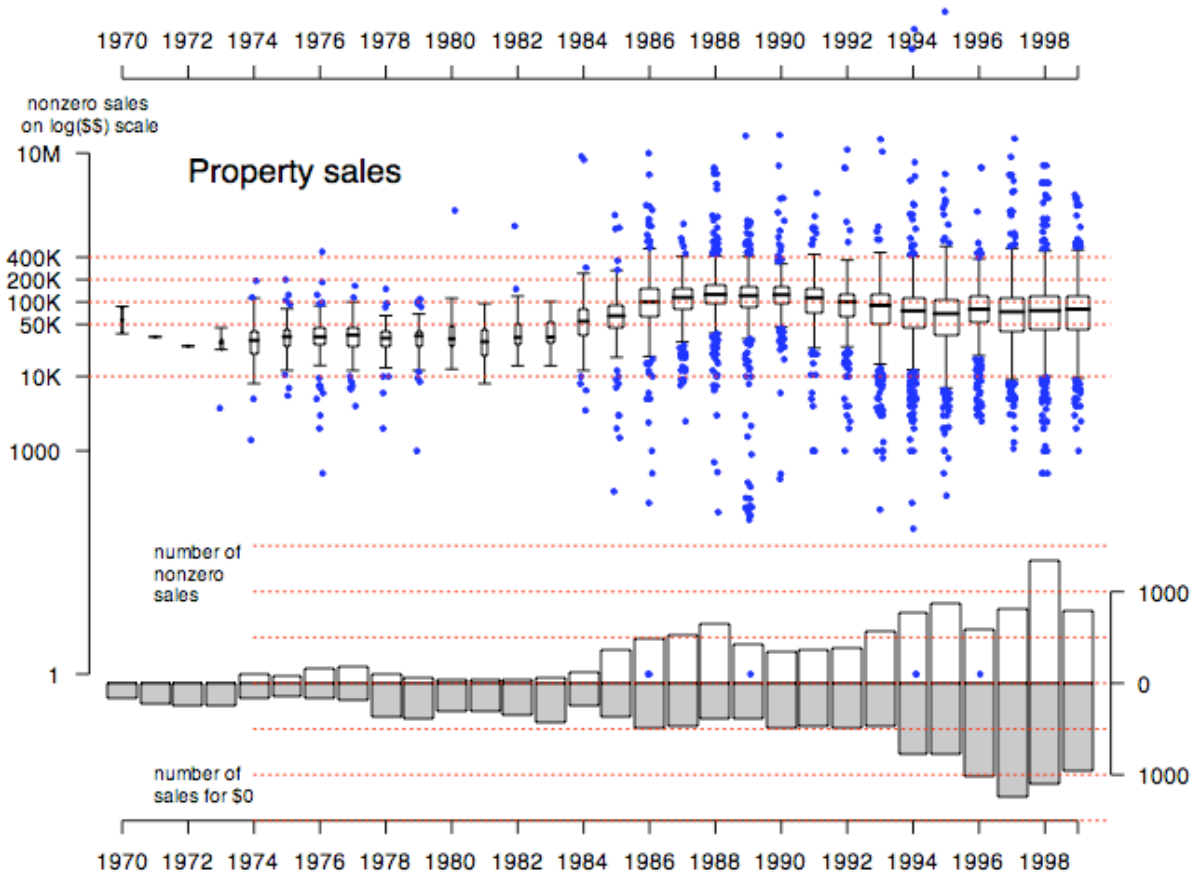
We have found that Anthony Perrotti, who owns many properties in New Haven, has been involved in a large number of transactions with either the Connecticut Housing Company LLC or Ottawa Enterprises. We believe he owns both companies.

We have checked some of these \$0 sales at the Hall of Records to make sure they are not just a code for missing data in DVA. The legal documents sometimes list a price of \$1 or “other valuable considerations worth no more than \$100”. Some documents have marginal annotations indicating “exempt” or “no tax”. Apparently these transactions are real.

It seems that there is much to be learned by looking at a list of persons or companies who are involved in property transfers for \$0. See the Zero_Sales_Report.

§7. A lull in sales around 1980

A preliminary look at the TAX99 data revealed some oddities in the number of sales per year— in particular a rather striking gap in non-zero sales between 1978 and 1983, as shown in the next picture.



The upper part of the picture shows boxplots on a log scale for the sales with price at least \$1. The dark bar across the middle of each box shows the median price; the box itself extends from the 25th to 75th percentiles; the dots show extreme values. The lower part of the picture shows separately the numbers of sales for \$0 (shaded bars) and the numbers of sales for \$1 or more.

We believe the drop in nonzero sales around 1980 is explained by a combination of high interest rates and a housing recession. See the report on the Lull in sales for details.

§8. Condominiums

The component condo.MBLU of the DVA list gives the MBLUs for all the condominiums. We were hoping to make some comparisons between different units of single condominium buildings to get some idea of how tax assessments differed across comparable properties. Unfortunately we made little progress with this idea.

§9. Growth in Housing

The year.built field in the DVA data seems to offer some hope of tracking the way New Haven changed over time. We became a little wary of this piece of information for several reasons.

- (i) There are large spikes in the numbers of properties built in years that end in a zero, particularly so for the year 1900 (about 28% of all properties). We take this rounding to the nearest decade to suggest uncertainty about the year a building was actually constructed, especially so for buildings older than twenty or thirty years.
- (ii) DVA gives no indication of the original purpose for a building. For example, the condominiums at 484-492 Whitney Avenue were originally apartment buildings, which DVA lists as being built in 1920. There is no indication of when the property was converted to a condominium (some time in the 1980s we believe). This example suggests that we might be misled by construction dates for properties whose use has changed over time.
- (iii) We have no information about buildings that were torn down or replaced. We are therefore likely to get a slightly distorted picture of how housing in New Haven changed over time.

Nevertheless, we were able to see some interesting features in the way different neighborhoods grew over time. See the report on growth in housing for details.

24 HILLHOUSE AV



[Click to enlarge](#)

MBLU : 244/ 0332/ 00300/ / /
Location: 24 HILLHOUSE AV
Owner Name: YALE UNIVERSITY
Account Number:

[Search for Similiar
Sale Properties](#)



Parcel Value

Item	Current Assessed Value	FY 2005 Assessed Value
Buildings	451,850	458,710
Extra Building Features	0	0
Outbuildings	0	0
Land	173,810	213,920
Total:	625,660	672,630



Owner of Record

YALE UNIVERSITY
 C/O ROBERT HERR CONTROLLER OFF



Ownership History

Owner Name	Book/Page	Sale Date	Sale Price
YALE UNIVERSITY			0



Land Use [\(click here for a list of codes and descriptions\)](#)

Land Use Code	Land Use Description
904C	PVT UNIV MDL-94



Land Line Valuation

Size	Zone	Neighborhood	Assessed Value
0.60 AC	RH2	1500	173,810



Construction Detail

Item	Value
STYLE	Off Conv Res
MODEL	Commercial
Grade	Very Good
Stories:	3
Occupancy	1

Exterior Wall 1	Stone
Roof Structure	Gable/Hip
Roof Cover	Asphalt
Interior Wall 1	Plastered/Dryw
Interior Floor 1	Fin WD/Carpet
Heating Fuel	Oil/Gas
Heating Type	Hot Water
AC Type	None
Bldg Use	PVT UNIV MDL-94
Total Bedrms	00
Total Baths	0
1st Floor Use:	904C
Heat/AC	NONE
Frame Type	MASONRY
Baths/Plumbing	ABOVE AVERAGE
Ceiling/Wall	CEIL & WALLS
Rooms/Prtns	AVERAGE
Wall Height	8



Building Valuation

Item	Value
Living Area	7,952 square feet
Replacement Cost	1,024,541
Year Built	1849
Depreciation	37%
Replacement Cost Less Depreciation	645,500



Outbuildings [\(click here for a list of codes and descriptions\)](#)

Code	Description	Units
No Outbuildings		



Extra Features [\(click here for a list of codes and descriptions\)](#)

Code	Description	Units
No Extra Building Features		



Building Sketch [\(click here for a list of codes and descriptions\)](#)

FUS[-438]

UPPER FLOOR ADJUSTMENT

FUS/FUS/FBM[16]

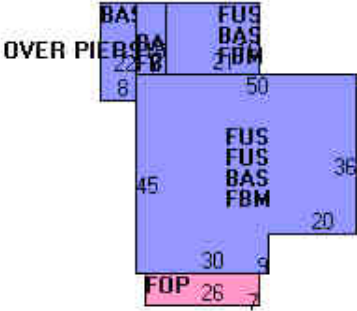
BAYS

FUS/FUS[12]

BAYS

FBM[-253]

UBM[253]



Subarea Summary (click here for a list of codes and descriptions)

Code	Description	Gross Area	Living Area
BAS	First Floor	2694	2694
FBM	Finished Basement	2281	1369
FOP	Fin Open Porch	182	0
FUS	Finished Upper Story	4094	3889
UBM	Unfinished Basement	253	0
Total		9504	7952