

- **What are the parameters of a timely response?**

The National Fire Protection Association and the Insurance Services Organization, both responsible for setting standards within the fire service, have judged that some of our response times into our southern territory have been less than desired. We must provide the same level of quality service throughout the entire fire district.

- **Does this really matter?**

Yes, it matters obviously in life safety and property protection. It also impacts residents in the insurance premiums they pay.

- **Is my home owner's or business insurance impacted?**

Yes, until recently the Elsmere Fire District had been rated as a Public Protection Classification (PPC) Class 3 fire department. Basically, the best rating a volunteer fire department can achieve. Numerically, this rating is in the top 9% of all of the US fire departments, and in fact, better than most paid fire departments, as well as the best rating within the town of Bethlehem. However, based on our increased growth and predicted population increases, as well as the increased number of calls, and response times, we were downgraded to a Class 4 fire department, similar to the other fire departments within the town. A rating of Class 4 however, is still in the top 23-percentile of US fire departments.

- **Will all of the residents and business located in the other parts of the Elsmere Fire District have this rating or just the southern area?**

Unfortunately, all, while the response times within the northern portion of the fire district (Delaware Ave.) show a history of

shorter response times, the rating (and the problem) covers the entire fire district.

- **Doesn't this create a problem with equality of service?**

It most certainly does. Our residents and businesses within the fire district deserve, and we are in fact obligated to provide equal and quality service and responses to the residents and businesses of the total fire district.

- **What about staffing?**

At this time, we have about 20% of our total firefighting strength domiciled in this southern area. We expect that once the location is operational that we will attract additional volunteers. Our current approved strength of 80 firefighters and support personnel is at our maximum allowable at this time. We expect to increase this number by approximately 20 new firefighters once we occupy this facility. It is our intention to put in place an aggressive recruitment drive once construction has begun.

- **When is this expected to be completed?**

We expect that ground breaking will be in the spring of 2018 and completion in the fall of that year.

- **What regulatory or required steps are needed?**

All construction of this type require appearance before the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board. In addition, a vote to authorize our funding is required which will be held in early December 2017.



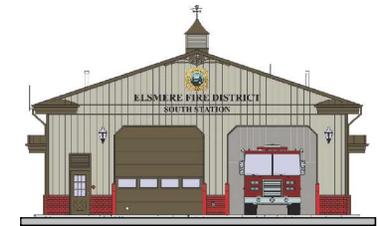
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

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PROPOSED NEW SOUTH FIRE STATION

WEMPLE &
FEURA BUSH
ROADS

FAQ'S

- **Is there a need for a new fire station?**

Yes, increased populations and residential development in the southern part of the fire district, along with continued development along the 9W corridor requires additional resources in emergency response coverage.

- **How do you know you need a new fire station?**

The Board of Fire Commissioners, now and in the past, has taken a very proactive position on this issue since the 1980's. A study which was completed during that time period pointed out a future need for increased fire protection as a result of potential growth into this area south of the Delmar Bypass. In fact, the land at Wemple and Feura Bush was purchased in 1982. Since that time the Fire District has been reviewing this issue and has initiated additional studies, which now require us to take action.

- **How will this affect our taxes?**

There will not be an increase in the tax levy for this project. The 2018 budget will reflect a slight operational increase over 2017, but still under the 2% Tax Levy Cap stipulated under New York State Law.

- **Will there be additional annual costs associated with this location?**

Yes, operating expenses will rise minimally, but our annual budget has been modified to include these anticipated costs now and for the foreseeable future.

- **What would be the result of not completing this project?**

We will continue to provide the best possible fire protection and emergency responses into this area that we can and we must not

allow the quality of service to become degraded.

- **How can you build a fire house without a major tax increase?**

Since we have been planning this expanded growth and these response improvements over a 35-year period, we have planned and prepared to make this effort a reality. There will be no increase in taxes as a result of this contemplated improvement. Our financial picture, including reserves and our operational budget, are excellent. Our annual tax levy will remain steady and has and is expected to remain under the 2% Tax Levy Cap for the foreseeable future.

- **What negative impact will this have on the neighborhood? Noise, traffic, lights etc.?**

The impact will be minimal, and probably much less than any possible alternative construction that could well occupy this land. The station will have no audible alarms, flashing lights, obtrusive signage or other trappings of a typical fire station or municipal building. There will not be any "social" areas, gathering spaces or meeting rooms. The intent is to solely house an emergency vehicle designed for response within this area. The apparatus, as planned, will be operated by a minimal crew. This will entail no more than 4 or 5 firefighters, a few times a week. This crew will not be permanently housed or be staying at this location and responding only when needed. This would entail only a limited number of personal vehicles during emergency calls. In comparison, and based on the final land use, one could predict added residential occupancy and road traffic for the homes and/or apartments that could be located here. We consider the fire district to be a

good neighbor, a great alternative and the best community oriented land use.

- **Would there be the availability for local residents to use the facility?**

Yes. There may be a possibility for some restricted uses for the public and for public gatherings. It must be remembered that this is a working fire station and fire/emergency calls can occur at any time. Unlike our main fire station there will be no permanent staff or activities on a daily basis, particularly daily training activities and administrative work that limits use of this our main facility.

- **Isn't there already a fire station in this vicinity?**

Yes, however the other fire protection facilities in this part of town are responsible for responding to emergency calls within the boundaries of their fire departments. Increased response activities and anticipated future growth within our neighboring departments are placing strains on their ability to respond outside of their boundaries.

- **Can't other fire departments in the town assist Elsmere FD in this area?**

Yes, and they currently do. Both of our neighboring fire departments render assistance to Elsmere FD on a daily basis, and we to them, through a town and county wide "Mutual Aid Agreement" that is currently in place.

- **Are these current assistance programs adequate, with the expected growth in the town of Bethlehem?**

Our neighboring departments are also seeing increased call volume that is straining their resources, making timely responses more critical.