

New Castle Fire District #1 Information Session
On the Proposed Expansion of the Bedford Road Firehouse
September 18, 2016, 3:00-5:30 p.m. at Bedford Road Firehouse

Presenting: Bob Mitchell, Mitchell Associates Architects
Chris Weddle, Chair, Board of Fire Commissioners, FD # 1

Prepared by Sheila Bernson and Jennifer Mebes Flagg
Co-Presidents of the League of Women Voters of New Castle

- October 25, 2016 vote on \$15.37 million Bond Referendum will be in two parts:
 1. Vote on animal hospital land purchase, demolition and remediation: \$2.67 million
 2. Vote on firehouse renovation and additions: \$12.70 million.
- Yearly tax increase for an average home will be \$215.56 (\$37.49 for land portion; \$178.07 for building portion). The average home assessed value was \$180,081.
- Existing firehouse (including Senter Street location) is 17,000 square feet; proposed firehouse will be 30,000 square feet
- Expect to complete renovation by summer 2018
- Reasons for renovation (from the FD brochure and mentioned at meeting):
 1. Inadequate bay space to move safely around trucks and put on gear, not enough space for maintenance.
 2. Work on trucks, adds to cost of apparatus, which must be specially sized to fit in bays
 3. Inadequate support space for decontamination, equipment maintenance, laundry to clean contaminated gear
 4. Equipment is not being stored safely and is hard to access (fire outfits, hoses, etc.)
 5. Inadequate administrative spaces for meetings, report writing, and secure records storage
 6. Inadequate training and public meeting space.
 7. Contaminants in firehouse and soil need remediation.
 8. Building not ADA compliant.
 9. Unsafe return from fire when fire trucks must back into bays, intruding onto Route 120 and creating dangerous road conditions for firefighters and cars traveling on Route 120. New firehouse will have 'drive through' bays for returning fire trucks.
 10. Clearance too tight with larger trucks.
 11. Truck equipment is bigger, requiring bigger bays; proposal has 6 double-deep drive-through bays to support 8 pieces of equipment. In addition, there are 2 bays for a museum (936 sf) to house an antique fire truck and hose carriage, currently stored at Senter Street location.

12. Bunkrooms will sleep 8 people altogether in singles/doubles; personnel spaces will be more comfortable and usable, so firefighters will want to be at firehouse. May encourage more volunteers.

- Senter Street firehouse location will be sold after bond referendum.

Issues raised by residents:

- Proposed firehouse size seems large. Alternative designs explored? (*Yes, the proposed version was the most efficient*)
- Is there a need for so much sleeping space?
- Do we need build a museum to house antique equipment?
- Possibility of bond referendum vote on just purchasing of Chappaqua Animal Hospital property now; deferring the vote on new firehouse until later on.
(*Issue: already spent \$300,000 on studies, plans, and permits in preparation for October vote. If defer vote on firehouse this information will be obsolete very soon and will need to go through whole process again which is time consuming & expensive.*)
- Architect says building is being designed to last 100 years so it is a good investment.
 - How do we know what firefighting will look like in 100 years?