



February 17, 2010

Dear Neighbor,

The Niskayuna Fire District No. 1 Board of Fire Commissioner's have set two important dates regarding the proposal to bond \$4.78 million for renovation/addition of the 1079 Balltown Road Fire Station.

Public Hearing: Niskayuna Town Hall, 1 Niskayuna Circle
Tuesday March 9, 2010, 7:30pm

Bond Vote: Niskayuna Town Hall, 1 Niskayuna Circle
Tuesday March 23, 2010, 9:00am-9:00pm

Tour dates and times:

Due to the popularity of the fire station tours we have conducted, additional dates have been made available for you to visit your fire station. When you arrive, we will gladly show you around so you can see first hand, the challenges of our current facility, ask any questions you may have, and review our renovation/addition proposal for the needed improvements.

Sunday, February 28, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Thursday, March 4, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday, March 6, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Sunday, March 7, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Enclosed you will find some of the frequently asked questions (FAQ's) regarding the proposal.

Visit us at www.niskayunafire1.org for more information including additional answers to (FAQ's) that we have received.

If you have any questions or do not have internet access, additional information is available by contacting Fire Chief, Dale Lingenfelter weekdays at **374-8386**, or any time via email at **nfd1chief@nycap.rr.com**.

Thank you,

Niskayuna Fire District No. 1 Building Committee

Frequently Asked Questions:

As we continue to reach out to the community with information and soliciting input on the proposal, there have been questions that are frequently asked of us. In the sections that follow we have highlighted just a few of them. A more comprehensive list is available on our website at www.niskayunafire1.org.

Why propose this project in a recessionary environment?

- Construction costs are favorable in the current economy and competition has driven down public works prices even as the associated prevailing wages have risen. By buying at the low point in the market and paying off in future (2011 to 2012+) dollars, great value is possible.
- Bond payments will not start until 2011-2012 allowing time for economic recovery to occur before bond payments are due.
- The need for the fire station renovation/addition is immediate and has existed for a number of years now.
- The longer the delay the higher the cost to the taxpayers due to increasing project costs and increasing interest rates.

1. Why don't you move everything to the River Road Station?

2. Why don't you just expand the fire station at River Road and close this one?

- The River Road site is not large enough to construct a building of sufficient size to house all of the fire district operations.
 - There are sewer and water easements on the eastern edge of the property that would prohibit expansion in that direction. The property to the west and south is privately owned
 - The site would not allow for necessary parking.
 - The property has severe changes in the topography.
- The River Road station is not centrally located for the population of our fire district which would increase response times to a majority of our incidents.
- Insurance Services Organization (ISO) standard requires an engine company within 1.5 miles of every structure. A single fire station at the River Road site would not meet this standard and result in higher cost for fire insurance policies in the community.
- In order to keep volunteer response time to a minimum, two stations are necessary so that firefighters living on either end of the fire district can reach a station within a reasonable amount of time.
- The property on which the station is located has limited access. If an accident were to occur at the driveway entrance on River Road, firefighters would not be able to get in or out of the site to respond.
- Visibility for responding apparatus is limited to the east of the driveway entrance and entering/exiting the property is difficult during peak traffic times.

- There are deed restrictions that conflict with current state fiscal requirements that would have to be addressed to gain clear title to the property before any construction could be funded by the fire district.

What is the cost of doing nothing?

If we do nothing, there is a substantial risk of confronting an un-useable building in the near future. The costs both human and financial will potentially be far greater. We do not want to end up with a situation similar to the Lake Champlain Bridge where our only option is to abandon the facility. The District and its Residents must be proactive.

- Building will eventually become untenable – either unsafe for occupancy or too costly to maintain
- Increased probability of firefighter injury and/or disability leading to substantial costs.
- Continued unacceptable health & safety risks to firefighters and the public
- Continued limitations to providing emergency response to the public with potential for loss of human life.
- Structural problems and space limitations will not go away and will be more costly to address in the future (higher construction and financing costs)
- Increased costs for custom apparatus
- Continued loss of / damage to vital equipment and supplies
- Higher insurance rates for fire district and residents
- Delay in volunteer response
- Potential loss of volunteer space and volunteers
- Increased out of district training costs for personnel (for example: NYS training is not allowed to be hosted in the current facility because of its issues)
- Potential loss of federal funding opportunities for not meeting federal standards
- Decreased coverage in the South end of the district

Why does Niskayuna have three fire departments? Shouldn't we consolidate?

- In the 1930's and 40's, Niskayuna had four fire departments. Two were consolidated in 1967 into what is currently Niskayuna Fire District No. 1. NFD 2 and Stanford Heights FD remain along with NFD 1.
- Consolidation has been discussed between the Board of Fire Commissioners for NFD 1 and NFD 2 however no official action has been taken to date. The status of consolidation discussion would be best addressed to the boards for each fire district.
- The three fire districts do work together, train together, and share resources on a regular basis in an effort to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of our services where possible.
- The Balltown Road facility renovation/addition would still be needed to meet national standards and regulations for response time and operational support and to maintain the current quality of emergency services to the fire district.