

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Fire Service Deployment Analysis Presentation,
Mr. Brian P. Duggan, Director of Fire/EMS & Emergency Management Services
Municipal Resources, Inc.
November 5, 2018 at 6:00pm

Councilors Pepin, Dumont, Vincent, Michaud, Witham, Sprague, Cameron and Levasseur were present. Mayor Hilliard opened the workshop at 6:00pm.

Brian P Duggan, Director of Fire Services for MRI and Project Manager for the analysis of the future location of the Fire Station handed out a presentation outline, which is included in the file.

He stated that there are 3 options:

- Construct a new station on an empty lot located at 17 Lilac Lane
- Construct a new station at the existing location of the fire headquarters with phased demolition and construction approach
- Construct a new station at the existing location of fire headquarters and sift fire operations to be collocated at the DPW and in trailers near the DPW

Councilor Witham said that the existing facility has a lack of seismic strength, lack of space, and the living space, office space, and dispatch are all in the same area. He stated that if they consider the same location, that there could be expansion on the existing, or a new building may have to be situated differently. He is unsure how operations continue on the site.

Councilor Witham continued by saying that they are close to a superfund landfill site, we may find ourselves into trouble. There will have to be site evaluations.

Mr. Duggan said there will be testing. As for size of the lot and location of the building, there is an option to build up, based on the footprint. The building site can be shifted.

Councilor Witham said there were cost comparisons, and if we can keep it to one story on the Lilac Lane site, there may be cost savings. In today's economy, the numbers are low.

Regarding response times, why did they choose these particular locations?

Mr. Duggan responded by saying, they chose these areas to get a relative response time from the delta to target hazard area based on incident clusters.

Chief Hoyle said they targeted hazard areas, schools, churches, industrial, and life safety areas, based on responses.

Councilor Levasseur stated that the Public Safety Committee reviewed the clusters and response timing from the station. It is the same recommendation that MRI brought forward.

Councilor Dumont said that the report was well done. He is impressed with the quality of service, and is happy to know that Somersworth is in the upper 20% of all fire departments in the country. He asked about the size of the potential new construction compared to the current building.

Mr. Duggan said the current building is 11,000 square feet, and new construction would be 20-25,200 square feet.

Councilor Dumont went on to say that the Somersworth Fire Department is providing a quality of service that many in the country cannot. We are lending 46% of time to the EMS as service support. Somersworth does not provide EMS service, but is contracted out. There is underutilized space at the CTC. That area could be used as administrative area.

Councilor Pepin asked about the deficiencies of the current station?

Mr. Duggan said that the fire service has evolved. The station is lacking in decontamination systems, administrative offices, training space, dorms, health and sickness spreads, small kitchens, separate facilities for male and female. In most newer facilities, everyone has their own dorm space.

Councilor Witham said that he supports a new station, but he does not agree that the current location is the correct location. Somersworth response time far surpasses other communities. Current station is geographically centered, but is it the center of the But is it to the hot spots. He is concerned that they will find 'gremlins' at the existing site, if they rebuild there.

Councilor Sprague has same concerns as Witham, and what about the fiscal analysis?

Mr. Duggan stated that a number was provided by DPW for construction of the cut through road from Lilac to Willand.

Councilor Sprague asked if the connector road was considered in response times that were indicated.

Mr. Duggan said that they simulated the distance with the road cut through.

Councilor Sprague said that he will not support this decision because he does not believe they chose the best option. If the Police Department and Department of Public Works is on Lilac Lane, it is conducive to have the Fire Station in the same place. The Connective road is a benefit to the community.

Councilor Vincent agrees that the fire station should be at the existing location. He worked with the Fire Department for 33 years. He is familiar with the location. The building is not the normal type of constructed building; it was built by the School Trades Department. Be careful taking it apart. It could be a domino effect when it comes apart. He is in favor of seeing a new fire station.

Councilor Witham said he is interested in hiring another firm to validate. He is not convinced that the current location is the best location for the fire station.

Mayor Hilliard referred this topic back to the Public Safety Committee for a Resolution by March 2019 for the Council to debate. The topic will then go on to the Finance Committee.

Workshop adjourned at 6:44pm

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Harris, City Clerk