

April 26, 2019

Chairman Heather Feldman
Bedford Village Fire District
P.O. Box 230
34 Village Green
Bedford, NY 10506

**Re: Proposed New Fire Department Headquarters Building
Existing Station & Site Assessment**

Chairman Feldman,

In response to questions raised by citizens within the Bedford Village Fire District and Bedford Village community regarding the potential restoration, renovation, enhancement, or rebuild of the existing fire station on its current site, H2M architects + engineers provide the following Assessment for consideration.

Outlined below, you will find the key factors as to why the existing building and site are NOT an option for the future of the Bedford Village Fire District.

Existing Site Constraints

1. **“Expand the existing station towards the Post Office”:**
 - The existing building location does not allow for an expansion towards the Post Office that would provide proper clearances between apparatus.
 - An expansion of this nature would not provide the proper amount of apparatus bays for adequate “front line response” whereas one piece of apparatus would not need to be relocated in order to utilize another piece of apparatus behind it. (This is one of the primary issues with the current station and causes a delay in response time during emergencies)
 - The access drive is not owned by the Fire District. It is currently owned by the Post Office and used for their deliveries. Expanding would require the Post Office to change their operations considerably.

2. **“Expansion of the existing Fire Station to the rear”:**
 - Expanding the existing fire station to the rear would be difficult, as existing Bulk Zoning Regulations would only allow a small addition, that would not serve the needs of the Fire District.
 - An addition in the rear of the existing station would only provide space for storage, administration, etc. No additional space for apparatus would be created, as access for the apparatus is not feasible.
 - The access driveway between the existing Fire Station and the Post Office is approximately 13'-0" wide which is not wide enough for apparatus to safely ingress

and egress the site. Entering and exiting a narrow driveway, with minimal visibility, heading into a busy public area (both vehicular and pedestrian) is extremely dangerous.

Environmental Note: Any addition to the existing Fire Station would require evaluation of the existing sanitary system, which is currently shared with the neighboring property. A new system would likely be required. Both the existing system and the potential new system are located within the Town of Bedford 100' Wetland Buffer established by Evans Associates, the Towns Wetlands Consultant. All Wetland restrictions and requirements would need to be followed. (The proposed new Fire Station has been designed to be outside the Buffer on the new site and will not encroach on the Wetlands Buffer)

3. **“Construct a new Fire Station in the rear of the existing station, Library and Post Office”:**

- This option has been investigated. As noted above, this would locate a new building entirely within a Town Wetland, as well as be subject to the same ingress and egress issues as above.
- This option would also require extensive development of access from Court Road, as well as parking areas in the rear of the Church and Jacobsen Building. (Again, all within the Wetlands as flagged by Evans Associates, April 25, 2001)

Parking Note: Any addition or modification of the existing building or new station on the existing site will diminish parking to nearly nothing. Parking will not meet Zoning Regulations and will cause issues with neighboring properties.

Existing Building Constraints

1. **Any significant renovation to the existing building will trigger requirements set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
 - The existing building would require such modifications as an elevator, wider hallways, wider doorways, changes to existing egress pathways, lighting, parking on the exterior and more.
2. **Any significant renovation or addition to the existing station will trigger Section 1600 of the NYS Building Code**
 - The Fire Station is defined by the NYS Building Code (2015 IBC) as an “Essential Facility”. Due to this fact, the building is held to a higher standard.
 - An Essential Facility is required to be designed to withstand harsher conditions than standard buildings. The existing facility predates any of these applicable codes.
 - Almost every structural building element would need to be enhanced. This would start with foundations and lead up through the walls and floors and finish with the roof.
 - Interior elements, such as ceilings, and partitions, would also require enhancements and bracing.

The costs associated with the enhancements to the existing building would greatly outweigh the benefits. As such, a knock down and rebuild would be recommended. In order to build new, proper space and access to and from the site are required, and as discussed above, are not available at the existing location.

It is imperative that the Bedford Village Fire District and Bedford Village community understands the facts about the project that has been proposed. All information provided in this Assessment has been derived from a compilation of the following Codes and Regulations:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- 2015 International Building Code (NYS Building Code)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

If any of the information provided is not clear, please do not hesitate to contact Dennis Ross at (631) 756-8000 extension 2030.

Very truly yours,

H2M architects + engineers



Dennis A. Ross, AIA
Vice President
Director of Emergency Services Market

cc:	Board of Fire Commissioners	BVFD
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