

QUESTIONS REGARDING KING COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 45 EAST STATION

Updated August 2018

Note, this is a work in progress. As new questions arise, we will work to share the questions and answers to our website.

For More Information

If you have additional questions, you can contact either:

- Chief David Burke, 425-788-1625, dburke@duvallfire45.com
- or
- Battalion Chief Greg Bawden, 425-788-1625, gbawden@duvallfire45.com

Project Update

Here is an update on the fire station proposed to be built in the eastern portion of the fire district.

- In April 2018, KCFD 45 asked the voters to decide whether or not to fund the construction of new fire station to be located at 318th Ave NE and NE Cherry Valley Road. If approved, the fire district would have sold \$7.5 million in bonds to fund the construction, purchase emergency vehicles, and make improvements to the headquarters fire station. The bonds would be paid back over a maximum of 20 years with a property tax increase of approximately \$0.17 cents per \$1,000 assessed value, or approximately \$7 a month (\$85/year) for the owner of a \$500,000 home.
- The majority of voters approved the bond, but the measure was approximately 12 votes short of the required 60% needed to pass. (1,384/59.45% yes vs. 944/40.55% no.)
- In August 2018 the KCFD 45 Board of Commissioners voted to place the measure on the November 6th ballot. If approved, the new bond measure will allow the district to sell \$7.65 million in bonds to be repaid in a maximum of 20 years. The increase in cost (compared with the April 2018 bond measure) is due to rising costs for the building and emergency vehicles. The tax rate increase will be approximately \$0.17 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, or approximately \$7 a month (\$85/year) for the owner of a \$500,000 home.

Who is King County Fire District 45?

- King County Fire District 45 (KCFD 45) is also known as Duvall Fire.
- KCFD 45 serves both the City of Duvall and the surrounding unincorporated areas of King County, including Lake Marcel, Kelly Road, Stossel Creek, Mountain View, and Lake Margaret.

- KCFD 45 currently staffs one fire station located in the City of Duvall. Crews from this one station provide coverage for Mountain View, Lake Marcel, the north part of Kelly Road, Stossel Creek, and Lake Margaret neighborhoods.
- KCFD 45 relies primarily on career firefighter/EMTs supplemented by volunteer responders to staff the headquarters station 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- KCFD 45 owns two other buildings. These formerly housed fire engines and aid cars used by volunteer firefighters and EMTs responding from home.
 - o The building located at 29229 NE Big Road was built in the 1970s and is now used to house a reserve fire engine. The building also serves as the district's training center. The building was enlarged in 2003 and is occasionally used to house daytime crews. It does not meet state standards for a fire station.
 - o The building at 18005 Mountain View Road was also built in the 1970s and is used for storage. It does not meet state standards for a fire station.

Is a Second Fire Station Needed?

We believe a second fire station is needed in the eastern half of the fire district. Here's why:

- Building a second station in the vicinity of the Mountain View/Kelly Road/Cherry Valley Road intersection will significantly reduce response times in the eastern portion of the district, especially in the Mountain View and Lake Margaret areas. See the response time table posted separately.
- A second staffed fire station will provide faster "second in" response to most areas in the City of Duvall. Currently if an emergency scene requires additional staffing or resources, or if two emergencies occur simultaneously, the next closest aid car or fire engine comes from either Carnation, Redmond Ridge, Cottage Lake, or Monroe. A fire engine or aid car responding from 318th Ave NE and NE Cherry Valley Road will be on scene sooner than units from these neighboring fire departments.
- Reduced response times will help to save lives.
- Reduced response times can reduce homeowner's insurance premiums.
- The Board of Fire Commissioners has been working on establishing a staffed fire station in the eastern portion of the fire district since 2000.
- Voters approved a bond to build a station in this area in November 2000.
- The Board of Fire Commissioners confirmed this goal in the 2014 Strategic Plan.

Why not expand the station on Mountain View Road?

- KCFD 45 evaluated using or expanding the current unmanned station on Mountain View Road.
- We rejected this option because the current building is too small. For example, modern fire engines do not fit in the apparatus bay, and we would need to build crew quarters, office space, and storage.
- The site is too small for a larger building and the required environmental and other site mitigation requirements.

How many emergency calls are in this area?

- In the past five years, there have been an average of 198 calls for service per year in the response area served by the proposed fire station.

Selection and Sale of Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Property

Why did KCFD 45 buy the DNR property located at Kelly Road/Mountain View/Cherry Valley Road intersection in 2007?

- The DNR property is well situated for reducing response times in the eastern portion of the district.
- The property has direct access to a main arterial (Kelly Road), reducing impacts on neighborhoods.
- Purchase and development of this site would not displace a current residence or business.
- DNR was willing to sell the property.
- Pre-purchase studies indicated that wetland, slope, and other critical area issues could be addressed.

Did KCFD 45 assess critical area requirements before buying the DNR site?

- We did considerable due diligence before the purchase of the DNR property, including critical areas studies, traffic studies, and soil assessments.
- These studies identified wetlands, steep slopes, a potential seismic zone, and a 60 ft. wide DNR road easement.
- At the time, the department's architects felt that the critical areas could be addressed leaving a sufficient area for the proposed fire station.

How much did KCFD 45 spend to buy the DNR site?

- KCFD 45 purchased property from DNR in 2007 for \$188,000.

Why did KCFD 45 sell the DNR property?

- When the fire district's financial situation improved (post-recession) and staffing became possible, the department re-visited the cost estimates for the DNR site.
- At this point, mitigation costs had increased significantly due to the costs of road relocation, surface water drainage, and the increased size of wetland buffers, leaving us a very small station site for a very high price.
- DNR was willing to buy it back.

How much did DNR pay to buy the property back?

- DNR paid KCFD 45 the same amount that KCFD 45 paid in 2007: \$188,000.

What will happen to the DNR property?

- DNR has tentative plans to develop a trailhead and parking area on the former fire district property.
- The trailhead will serve the Cherry Falls trail.
- According to DNR, any improvements on this property are contingent on funding from the Washington State Legislature.

Selection of the 318th Property

Why did the Board of Fire Commissioners choose the property at 318th and NE Cherry Valley Road?

KCFD 45 hired a real estate consultant to find a property that would meet our needs. This property met all the fire district's criteria:

- The location reduces response times in the eastern portion of the fire district.
- The property has direct access to an arterial (NE Cherry Valley Road).
- Purchase of the property does not require condemning an existing business or residence.
- The property is buildable, i.e., not significantly impacted by critical areas and buffers
- The property can be served by the water district.

Did the Golde family want to sell their property at 318th and Cherry Valley Road?

- The Golde family did not have the property listed for sale and were not planning to sell.

- When KCFD 45 contacted the Golde family, they expressed that they were willing to sell us a portion of their property for the second station.

Can the public appeal the decision to build a station on the 318th and Cherry Valley site?

- As part of the project, KCFD 45 submitted an application to King County for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) in September 2017.
- Under the CUP process there was a public comment period which ended in early 2018.
- King County received some comments from the public on the proposed project and required KCFD 45 to address these comments as part of the permit process.
- The voters will also be asked to approve a construction bond to finance the station in the November of 2018.

Station Design and Impacts

What fire vehicles and staffing will be housed at the new station?

- The new station will house firefighter/EMTs.
- An aid car.
- A fire engine.
- Possibly other vehicles as appropriate such as brush truck or ATV for trail rescue.

How big is the proposed station?

- One story.
- Approximately 6300 square feet.

How will the new station site get water service?

- The Board of Fire Commissioners is working with Water District 119 to extend the water main west along Cherry Valley Road to the station site.
- KCFD 45 will pay the cost for installation of the water main.

Will property owners on 318th have to connect to the water main?

- KCFD 45 has no plans to extend the water main down 318th.

How much exterior lighting will be installed at the new fire station?

- There will be the minimum amount of exterior lighting required to ensure the safety of fire district personnel and visitors to the site.
- The architects have been instructed to select fixtures that focus lighting downward and minimize impacts on adjacent properties.

Won't there be a lot of noise from sirens when fire vehicles leave the station?

- There will be some noise from emergency vehicles traveling away from the fire station when responding to emergency calls.
- Most of the emergency vehicles traveling to emergencies in this area are already driving east from Duvall on Cherry Valley Road, which involves longer drive times and longer periods when the sirens are sounding in this area compared with vehicles leaving the new station. There may be less siren noise than there is currently.

Local residents have expressed concern about the dangers of pulling out from 318th onto Cherry Valley Road. Will the fire department install a traffic signal?

- KCFD 45 has already completed a traffic and sight line study for the site.
- As part of the station construction and site development, it is anticipated that sightlines looking east along NE Cherry Valley Road from 318th will be improved for drivers pulling out from 318th.

How will KCFD 45 protect groundwater from chemicals, fuel, and vehicle wash water?

- The new station will be designed and built to safeguard groundwater and comply with King County codes.
- The station will include an approved septic system in compliance with health department standards.
- Paved areas will be minimized and runoff contained in an onsite retention pond.

How much of the site will be used for station construction?

- The station and supporting infrastructure (including storm water retention pond, parking, and driveway) will occupy approximately 25% of the site.
- The rest of the site will be left undisturbed.

Will my insurance go down if I live next to the new fire station?

- KCFD 45 doesn't set homeowner insurance rates.
- The best person to talk to about insurance rates is your insurance agent.
- We can say that many insurance companies base their rates for fire service on response times and proximity to a staffed fire station.

There is apparently a road maintenance agreement on 318th. How will this project affect that agreement? Will KCFD 45 participate in the agreement?

- KCFD 45 will be significantly upgrading (and paving) 318th from NE Cherry Valley road to the southern property line of the station site. These improvements will provide a paved surface for mail boxes and trash/recycling pickup.
- We are not aware of any notice in the property title about a road maintenance agreement on 318th for the new station property.

Project schedule

What is the proposed project schedule?

There are many variables when planning a project like this. Here is a tentative schedule, which is subject to change:

- KCFD 45 purchased the property in the spring of 2017.
- KCFD 45 applied for a Conditional Use Permit in September 2017, the Conditional Use Permit was granted in January 2018.
- KCFD 45 Proposition One was placed on the ballot in April 2018. If approved, the district would sell bonds to pay for the construction of the new station, purchase emergency vehicles, and make some upgrades to the headquarters station. The bonds would be repaid by an increase in property taxes. Approximately 59% of voters said “yes” to the measure, but the measure was approximately 12 votes short of the required 60% yes vote.
- On August 1st the KCFD 45 Board of Commissioners voted to place the measure on the November 6th ballot.
- If the ballot measure receives the required 60% yes votes to pass, work will resume on permitting and construction of the station.
- Building permits – submit in January 2019? for 5-6 month review.
- Project out for bid – late spring 2019.
- Construction to begin – summer 2019.
- Move in/complete - summer of 2020.

Finances

How will we pay for the new station?

- The station is estimated to cost \$4.5 to \$5 million.

- The additional revenue will be used to pay for a new fire engine, aid car, and to make upgrades to the headquarters fire station.
- The district anticipates using a combination of reserve funds and voter approved bonds to pay for the new station.

How will you pay for increased staffing?

The district expects to see increased revenue from the following sources:

- Increased revenue based on growth and economic recovery that we didn't have in 2009-2012
- Ask the voters to approve an increase in operations funding in 2020.

What is the relationship between the value of a property (Assessed Value) and the fire district's operations levy rate?

- Under state law, the fire district asks the voters to set a levy rate. The maximum allowed by law is \$1.50 per \$1,000 assessed value.
- State law limits the fire district's budget to an increase of approximately 1% per year. If the district's expenses (normal or due to expanded operations) increase more than 1%, the district must ask the voters to increase the levy rate.
- If the district does not ask for a rate increase, the rate collected drops as Assessed Value increases. Without a voter-approved rate increase, a \$1.50 levy rate will decrease over time.