
RAVINIA FIRE STATION REDEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS / ANSWERS

The Ravinia Fire Station (Station #32), constructed in 1929 as a sub-station, has undergone several major remodels over the years. These remodels were necessary to accommodate changes in service delivery. Remodels have consisted of changing interior station configuration, expansion of the bay doors, removal of the fire pole and center support column between apparatus doors to accommodate larger vehicles, and various upgrades to incorporate American Disability Act (ADA) requirements. The Department has outgrown the station and creates challenges with internal operability, lack of efficiencies and service delivery.

In 2015, an internal location study based on response times was conducted and it was determined the best location for response is the current location. In 2016, the City worked with Williams Architects to identify the needs of the Fire Department and allow the Department to improve its service delivery for public safety purposes. In 2017, the City is seeking community input on the redevelopment of the fire station. Redeveloping a fire station that allows the department to provide emergency response services in an efficient and effective manner is of utmost importance. A station that is compatible with the neighborhood in terms of design and scale and provides appropriate landscaping and lighting in the neighborhood is very important. Public feedback is welcome and encouraged. Below are a series of questions and answers pertaining to this project. This document will be regularly updated and available on the City's web site at www.cityhpil.com/raviniafire

Questions and feedback from the May 18, 2017 Neighborhood Meeting are highlighted in red.

Questions & Answers

BACKGROUND

1. Why does the station have to be replaced?

The Ravinia Fire Station was built in 1929 and originally designed for a single engine response with two personnel. In 1966 this station responded to 127 calls for service. In 2016, 50 years later, this station responded to over 1800 calls for service. Today this station operates with four personnel staffing an Engine and Ambulance. Advancements in modern day firefighting and EMS equipment have proved challenging due to the size of this equipment. There is only 3-4" of clearance between the station and fire engine. This is a serious concern since we are designing the lowest profile engines we can so they can fit in this station. The limited foot print of the Ravinia fire station is not conducive to call response, training, and maintenance of equipment. A new station would provide accommodations for female firefighters as well as providing an ADA compliant building. The city is interested in designing and constructing a public safety facility that will serve the community for the next 100 years.

FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

2. What is the service area for the Station and will it change?

The City has three fire stations whereby each station has 10 response grids that are the primary response area for those stations. The service area for the Ravinia Fire Station will not change. Ravinia Fire Station responds on average to 1850 calls for service per year.

3. Why is a 6-minute response time important and where is this standard derived?

A primary goal of the Fire Department is to deliver a firefighting force on the scene of a structure fire before the fire reaches the flashover stage. A flashover occurs when the temperature in an area is high enough to ignite all flammable material simultaneously. Once a fire reaches flashover, the threat to life safety of both the citizens and firefighters is greatly increased. When the Fire Department arrives on the scene of a structure fire, there are a variety of tasks that must be performed in a coordinated effort in order to have a successful and safe outcome. In the emergency medical field, the time frame of six minutes is one that has been used for years to determine a standard of care for delivering life-saving techniques. Once the brain has been deprived of oxygen for greater than six minutes, the chances of survival are greatly decreased.

4. Is the response time of 6 minutes or less affected when there is a train?

The Department strives to maintain a response time of 6 minutes or less even when a train is present. Crews will take alternative routes with an underpass if a train is blocking an intersection.

5. Will response times be affected during construction of the new station?

No, plans will be put into place to ensure that response times will not be jeopardized during construction.

6. What do the abbreviations EMS, GIS, ADA mean?

EMS stands for Emergency Medical Services. EMS provide out of hospital care for those with an illness or an injury.

GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems. GIS is a mapping technology that allows the user to create and interact with a variety of maps and data sources. GIS integrates databases with georeferenced spatial data (maps tied to specific known locations).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life. There are very specific building requirements for property owners and contractors to ensure that buildings are constructed and in compliance with the Disabilities Act.



7. What is the difference between a Squad and Truck?

A Squad is a special operations vehicle that carries tools and equipment for heavy rescue. Most notably a squad carries the “Jaws of Life.” The crew of a squad is responsible for gaining entry to vehicles, equipment, and structures. The Squad can also operate as an engine whose primary focus is fire suppression.

A Truck is a specialized vehicle that has a hydraulically operated 100’ ladder. The Truck also carries various size ground ladders. Basic Truck company operations include; forcing entry, search and rescue, ventilation, providing ladder egress for victims and firefighters, over-hall (searching for hot spots), and shutting down utilities. The Truck also has a pump that is used during defensive operations where large amounts of water are needed for extinguishment of large/difficult fires.

8. What is the height of the current station?

The current station is 31 feet.

9. What will the third bay be used for on the proposed plan?

Storage for reserve apparatus, training in adverse weather conditions, and housing for an additional ambulance that is primarily used during the Ravinia Festival season.

10. Identify the benefits, challenges and features of the larger site plan compared to the two-bay site plan that does not include acquisition of two homes?

Three Bay Plan Advantages:

- *Storage for additional front line vehicle*
- *Training room for personnel*
- *Storage and equipment space to meet future demands*

Two Bay Plan Challenges:

- *Dormitory would be located on the second floor which hampers response times*
- *The crew would call themselves out of service more often thereby placing greater strains on area stations; the crew would be called out for training and to get larger equipment and supplies, in part.*

11. Why do we need the amenities at the proposed new station that the headquarter station already has?

The City seeks to construct a fire station that will serve the public for many decades. A fully functioning station will provide for improved safety operations, improved public safety and increased efficiency. For example, Ravinia Fire Station have to remove themselves from service every time they travel to headquarters for training, to dry their hose after an incident and to obtain supplies.

12. Is there a map depicting the response times from the other two HP stations?

Yes. Copies of these maps will be posted on the City’s web site at www.cityhpil.com/RaviniaFire



13. Please provide a breakdown of calls by Department.

In 2016, Ravinia Engine 32 responded to 605 emergency medical incidents, and Ravinia Ambulance 32 responded to 1156 emergency medical incidents. Engine 32 responded to 824 fire/rescue related incidents, and Ambulance 32 to 702 fire/rescue related incidents in 2016.

14. Why are there so many calls out of this station compared to 50 years ago?

Population changes, automatic fire alarm responses, and emergency medical service calls that weren't Fire Department responses 50 years ago.

PLANNING AND DESIGN

15. What location options were considered?

The City explored Kennedy Park, north end of Brown Park, the current location, and the current location expanded to Pleasant Avenue. Response maps for coverage have proven the ideal location to be in the vicinity of the current location which is 692 Burton Avenue.

16. What happened to the 2009 plan to consider relocation of the station to Kennedy Park?

In consideration of Ravinia Festival traffic, the entry and response from Clavey Road, and projected emergency response service times to the district, it was determined that the Ravinia District was the optimal location for the station.

17. Would you consider relocating in Brown Park south of the tennis courts?

The current location which transitions from the business district to the neighborhood is ideal. Constructing a fire station deeper in a neighborhood creates challenges due to noise and response. The Fire Department prefers responding to incidents using commercial roads versus neighborhood roads. On commercial roads the Fire Department has control of the flow of traffic by use of Opticom, a traffic signaling device that gives control to emergency vehicles to stop opposing traffic and allowing emergency vehicles to safely navigate intersections.

18. Have you considered two buildings, one for emergency response and the other for other uses?

Response times are a critical piece to station location and configuration. A two building configuration would not be conducive to reducing or even maintaining current service levels. Maintenance of two buildings and duplication of dispatch notification equipment would be cost prohibitive.

19. Have you considered the 7-11 property that is privately owned?

The 7-11 property was not considered as part of this project due to future commercial/residential considerations for this property and the location of the site.



20. Can you build a station across the street?

Conceptual drawings to build across the street in Brown Park have been explored. Although this site can support a new fire station, it is less desirable than the current site. All options are being considered.

21. Is there any other site that could be used to build this station?

Multiple sites have been explored however the response times from the current location has proven to be the most desirable. The goal of the Fire Department is to respond to all incidents in 6 minutes or less from the time we receive the call. Moving the station further west increases the response times to the east creating challenges that are difficult to overcome.

22. One concept plan contemplates the sale of two adjoining single family homes. What if the homeowners don't sell their property?

The City is able to use the existing footprint of the property for a new structure without having to purchase the two adjoining properties. Thoughtful consideration of all available sites will be explored.

23. Is there a Plan B?

The City explored multiple plans for this project. The preferred plan is being presented at the monthly neighborhood meetings. "Plan B" would consider developing the current site or consider building across the street in Brown Park.

24. Does "Plan B" at the current site include three bays?

The Plan reflects two bays, but deeper bays.

25. Are there other area stations that are comparable in scale?

There are multiple area stations that are comparable in scale to what is being presented for the future of the Ravinia Fire Station. Station 19 in Deerfield, Station 12 in Northbrook and Station 6 in Glenview to name a few. The conceptual drawings for Ravinia Fire Station are in line with "best practices" and address public safety needs for a fire station.

26. What is the estimated square footage of the proposed fire station?

The anticipated square footage of a new modern fire station would be 11,000 square feet to 14,000 square feet. Most of this space is used for the apparatus bays.

27. Is the old fire station going to be demolished?

The City has considered several concepts pertaining to a new fire station. If the concept of using the existing site is chosen, then the existing structure would be demolished. The design of the new structure would be consistent with the neighborhood. The City has explored recycling the bricks from the old station and incorporating them into the design of the new fire station.



28. What will happen to fire safety services during construction if the station is built on the same site?

The Fire Department will be 100% operational during the construction of the new station. During construction, auto-aid agreements with neighboring communities will be enhanced to ensure public safety standards are met. Temporary facilities would be explored.

29. Is the parking lot west of the station shared with Walgreens?

The parking lot west of the station is a City parking lot; it is not shared with Walgreens.

30. How will water runoff be managed?

The City will adhere to all drainage requirements in the development of a new fire station. Permeable surfaces for parking will be considered as part of the plan.

31. Would Pleasant Avenue still dead end at the alley?

Yes, the City does not intend to open the street to through traffic. The City will address the overgrowth of bushes off the sidewalk to improve visibility for pedestrians.

32. Why do we need more parking?

The City is interested in a station that can serve the community for the next 100 years. There is an interest in resurfacing the current adjoining public parking lot as part of the Fire Station redevelopment plan. Additional parking spaces will be pursued to the site plan provided the additional parking does not negatively impact the adjacent neighborhood.

33. How many parking spaces are in the current parking lot? How many are proposed?

The current parking lot has 21 parking spaces and the proposed plan could increase the number of parking spaces to 40. Eight (8) parking spaces would be necessary for the Fire Department.

34. Can the City pursue off-site parking, where would parking for a smaller station go, and can a parking study be commissioned with existing lots in the Ravinia District?

Yes. Offsite parking can be pursued pursuant to the City's zoning regulations. A traffic study would be conducted as part of the City's planned development process.

35. Where would the fire vehicle access point be for the new Station?

The fire vehicle access point for Site C Site Option 2 (shown in the monthly presentation) will remain the same as the current fire station. All apparatus will exit onto Burton Avenue.

36. Have you considered an underpass at Roger Williams?

An underpass at the intersection of the railroad tracks and Roger Williams has not been considered. At this time, traffic considerations do not warrant a study of this intersection.

37. Will green building or sustainable building practices be considered?



Yes, the City will evaluate environmentally responsible and resource efficient considerations throughout the building including design, construction, operation, maintenance, and demolition.

38. Will landscaping be part of the plan?

The City will incorporate a comprehensive landscape plan that would buffer the neighborhood from the parking lot limiting the impact to the neighborhood.

39. Where will the ingress/egress be for the proposed parking lot?

Ingress/egress is proposed off the alley where the current access to the parking lot is located. A comprehensive landscape barrier would be incorporated in the plan to buffer the parking lot from the neighborhood.

40. What is the proposed height of the building?

The proposed height of the building would be in compliance with the City's Zoning Code, Zoned R6, which is 30 ft.

41. Why does the proposed plan include a community meeting room?

The proposed plan includes a classroom used primarily for personnel to maintain training certifications and paramedic licenses. This room would be open to the public to use as a community room given the current demand on the meeting rooms at the Police Department and Library. Almost 20 years ago, the main headquarter fire station located at 1130 Central was built to include public meeting space and various community groups actively use this space. The City anticipates future usage to increase which will allow the community to use this public space.

42. Why can't you construct an addition to the existing station?

To meet the current space needs of the Fire Department, the reconfiguration and addition to the current station would be as expensive if not more expensive than building new.

43. How long will this take to build?

The construction of a new fire station is currently not on the City's 5 year capital improvement plan schedule. The earliest the construction would take place would be 2022. Plans and designs developed today will be viable when the station is developed. Each year the City reviews its capital improvement plan and will assess if the station can be constructed earlier. *The City will explore the plans that do not include acquisition of the two single family homes in light of the public feedback.*

The City is being proactive and is seeking community input on this project well in advance of the build. The formal planning process (through the commission) will take 6-9 months, and the estimated construction time is 9-10 months.

44. What is the approval process for a fire station?



The City will adhere to its plan design and development process which includes formal review and consideration by the City's Plan & Design Commission and final approval by the City Council. Public meetings will be held as part of this project. In advance of the formal planning process, the City has planned several neighborhood meetings to share the preliminary work conducted to date, and to obtain public feedback before further planning commences.

45. Will public opinion be sought for this project?

The City encourages public feedback and has scheduled multiple meetings. Neighborhood meetings are scheduled on the third Thursday of every month at Fire Station headquarters, 1130 Central Road from January 19 through July 20, 2017. The meetings begin at 6:00 PM. The presentation information and public feedback will be posted to the City's web site.

46. Is there a way to expand community input?

The City is inviting individuals to these neighborhood meetings using all modes of communication available including but not limited to media releases, The Highlander, social media, electronic newsletter, HPTV, the City web site and direct mail. The City initially mailed letters to 132 households inviting property owners to the neighborhood engagement meetings. We have expanded this direct mail effort to more than 4,300 households.

47. If the one homeowner is not willing to sell, and the City is not going to undertake eminent domain, why are we still considering the plan that involves acquisition of the two single family homes??

The plan involving the purchase of homes is being considered because it was part of the City's review process. It will remain part of the discussion at least throughout the completion of the neighborhood meeting process, if only to allow other residents to see what has been considered.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

48. How much is this going to cost?

The cost of a new fire station is dependent on the square footage of the building. When constructing a public safety building, technologies for public safety such as dispatch alerting and mobile network support are included in the costs. The costs will also vary dependent of the location, engineering, and future technologies. A rough estimate based on similar fire stations built in neighboring communities is approximately \$450 per sq. ft. Costs for similar firehouses based on recent neighboring departments range from 6-7 million.

49. Will my property taxes be increased to support this project?



No, an increase in property taxes is not anticipated to offset the design, engineering or construction costs of the fire station. The City will incorporate these costs into its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

OTHER QUESTIONS

50.How can I stay abreast of this project?

The City will be coordinating several neighborhood meetings in order to share the preliminary work that has been conducted thus far and to obtain public feedback on the project. This questions/answers document will be updated regularly based on public feedback. Neighborhood meetings are planned the third Thursday of every month starting January 19, 2017 through July 20, 2017. Meetings will be held at 6:00 PM at Fire Station headquarters, 1130 Central in Highland Park.

Individuals may also contact the City to be included on an email list for updates. If you would like to be included in the notification list, please contact 847.433.3110.

If you have any questions, contact Chief Dan Pease at dpease@cityhpil.com or call 847.433.3110. You may also contact Ghida Neukirch, City Manager at gneukirch@cityhpil.com or call 847.926.1000.

FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY:

“The conceptual drawing of the proposed station looks and ‘feels’ like a commercial building”

“If you come south on Pleasant Avenue, it’s an unsafe crossing by the alley. The proposed new parking lot would create an opportunity for improved design”

“Consider the building in correlation with the neighborhood uses (parks, future development of the 7/11”

“Revisit the alley/Walgreens development and what was/was not implemented for possible consideration as part of the station development”

“Consider the flow of traffic within the alley”

“Consider creative and thoughtful design and architecture”

There was support for the public meeting space.

“Suggestion for the City to Plan a tour of the Ravinia Fire Station”

“Concern that city landscaping is not being maintained”



“Understand the desire for the Fire Department to address their needs, but concern with the scale of the development in a residential area”

“Support to keep this station in the Ravinia District; there are already apartments and other large structures in the neighborhood. We are lucky to have a fire station in the Ravinia area”

“There are areas of the space needs slide that don’t appear to be necessities”

“Request to show the site plan that doesn’t include acquisition of the two single family homes”

“Continued concern with insufficient maintenance of the current landscape area on the City’s property”

Serious concerns with the fire station development encroaching into the residential area. No support for the plan that includes the acquisition of the two single family homes.

“We don’t want to look at additional parking spots outside our windows”

“There’s already too many lights coming through our windows”

“Our property values are already going to be affected by talk of a bigger fire station”

“Headlights already come thru the bush berm by Walgreens”

“The talk of this new station can destabilize our home resale prices”

“We are OK with a plan that doesn’t include purchase of the two houses and expanding the site”

“The berm will never block out everything”

“Concern with a long process that includes an expanded footprint, the devalue of property and uncertainty until a decision is made”

“Values the FD presence and the importance of the services they provide”

“Extremely concerned with a larger site plan that encroaches in the neighborhood”

“Currently, residents expressed concern with lights, noise, running vehicles (diesel fumes) and traffic”

“Neighbors don’t like being in limbo on a final plan because it hurts our home values”

“Our first choice is the plan to build the station on the existing site without buying the two houses behind it”

“We would like more certainty on when the City is going to decide on a plan, and we would like to stay involved with opportunities for input after the July meeting”



