

## **Fire Station Building Committee**

The need for a new fire station was originally discussed in 2007, and for a number of reasons, the project not looked at again until 2014. At the 2015 Annual Town Meeting, funds were appropriated, and the town hired an architectural firm to conduct a feasibility study. The study was to determine the feasibility of renovating and expanding the existing fire station to suit the needs of today's fire service. While the study proved it could be done, it would have been at a large cost, would have required acquiring multiple buildings and an extended construction time because of the on-going fire department operation. The architectural firm, at our request, looked at moving the project to the existing Town Hall. The idea was to add on, and renovate that structure to replace the existing fire station. That concept was not appealing to the Board of Selectmen and others in attendance during a public presentation. It was decided at that time to form a Fire Station Building Committee (FSBC). The charge of the committee would be to determine a suitable site, and explore funding options for a new fire station. The committee was originally comprised of thirteen members, and between May and December of 2016 we met monthly and sometimes more often than that. The committee vetted 13 sites using a weighted evaluation tool that looked at multiple factors. We eventually narrowed our location choices down to five. Our top choice ended up being eliminated, at least temporarily, because of the obstacles involved with building at that location. We have since identified a suitable site and will be negotiating with the property owner on a price to acquire it. The site was originally one of our top choices with direct access to Sudbury Street, in the downtown area. It is approximately a single acre, give or take, and has no structures on it. It is a sloping lot both front to back and side

to side. The second part of the FSBC was to look at funding options, but it was determined that a suitable site needed to be chosen first.

We feel that a fire station about 17,500-18,000 square feet is appropriate to meet the needs of the community. The current facility is about 9,000 square feet, with the major deficiency being the undersized apparatus floor. The apparatus and mechanical systems would comprise about 9,000 square feet and the remainder would be administrative and living space.