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Township selects team to complete first two phases of Fire Station No. 5

BY SARAH WOJCIK

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SHELBY TOWNSHIP — On April 5, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the design-build team that Fire Chief Jim Swinkowski and Township Engineer Fazal Khan recommended to complete the first two phases in the development of Fire Station No. 5.

Swinkowski said he and Khan interviewed the four top teams after sending out a request for qualification, and Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick Inc. and Wing Construction Inc. came out on top.

“We went out for a request for qualification, not a request for proposal, because we wanted a team to come in here that was qualified to do the job and not just be the low bid,” Swinkowski said. “The building will be here for 50-plus years. We want something that will last, meet our needs and fit into the architecture of the area.”

Phase 1 will include the development of a schematic design, a topographical survey, soil borings, geotechnical engineering and a tree survey at a cost not to exceed \$43,100. Phase 2 will include the completion of construction documents and a traffic engineering study at a cost not to exceed \$43,300.

Phase 3, which has not yet been approved, will be the board’s final nod for the actual construction of the Fire Department’s fifth station.

Swinkowski estimated the total project to cost approximately \$1.9 million.

“The reason why we did phase 1 and 2 was transparency,” he said. “We didn’t want to (approve a \$2 million project). Then it’s really hard to get down to the numbers.”

The 4-acre site of the future fire station, acquired by the Fire Depart-

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Station

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ment in 2012, is located on the east side of Schoenherr Road, north of 21 Mile Road. Swinkowski said he did not yet have a date set for the groundbreaking.

The funds will come from the township's capital improvement fund. Swinkowski said the Fire Department has been saving money, as well as cutting back on costs, for years in order to absorb the full cost of the new station with little to no impact on its budget.

"There're no loans. There's no borrowing. It's all cash," Supervisor Rick Stathakis said. "(All of the estimates, including manpower and equipment, are) all laid out in our five-year forecast. I feel really good about the way this is going forward."

Swinkowski said the department first began talking about a fifth station in 2005 in order to address a developing community.

Fire Station No. 4, built in 1995 at 23 Mile and Mound roads, currently services the southeast quadrant of the township.

"We didn't know where the development would go, if they'd widen M-59 or widen 26 Mile, so we put (Fire Station No. 4) in the middle," he said. "The majority of development and (40 percent of) our runs are now in the southeast area — the one area we don't have a station."

With fires and heart attacks, he said, time is of the essence.

Swinkowski said the new station will be similar in size to the station currently located at 25 Mile and Shelby roads. He said it will be equipped with a fire engine, an ambulance, a utility truck and a staff of nine firefighters.

Like the site for the fifth station, a residential area surrounds the station at 25 Mile and Shelby roads. Swinkowski said the Fire Department has proven itself to be a good and quiet neighbor.

"We will be putting in a green zone, a buffer zone, and working with landscape specialists to do this with the homeowners," he said. "We don't want to just put in bushes. We want this to look nice."

With the new station, Swinkowski said he hopes the Fire Department's ISO rating will improve to a 3 or a 4. It currently stands at a 5. The worst possible rating is a 9.

For more information, call the Shelby Township Fire Department headquarters at (586) 731-3476.

Call Staff Writer Sarah Wojcik at (586) 498-1029.

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