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businesses**

Page » A7

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ART COURTESY OF SHELBY TOWNSHIP

The Shelby Township Board of Trustees on June 7 unanimously approved the site plan for Fire Station No. 5, a new 7,400-square-foot facility that will be located on a 4-acre site adjacent to King of Kings Lutheran Church on Schoenherr Road, north of 21 Mile Road.

Trustees approve site plan for new fire station

By SEAN DELANEY

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The Board of Trustees on June 7 unanimously approved the site plan for Fire Station No. 5, a new 7,400-square-foot facility that will be located on a 4-acre site adjacent to King of Kings Lutheran Church on Schoenherr Road, north of 21 Mile Road.

“The building and the parking have been really strategically located by pushing it to the north of the site, leaving a substantial buffer between the (station) and the homes in the subdivision to the south,” Planning and Zoning Director Glenn Wynn said. “It maximizes separation and mini-

mizes nuisances.”

The 4-acre site was purchased by the township in 2012. Funds for purchase of the property, as well as the funds for the design phase and construction, come from the Fire Department’s capital improvement fund.

“Because of the financial foresight and expertise of Fire Chief (Jim) Swinkowski, we are on our way to a new, fully equipped and staffed fire station with no impact on the Fire Department’s annual budget and with no need for more taxes,” Township Supervisor Richard Stathakis said. “There are no loans. There is no borrowing. It’s all cash. And it’s all because of the

STATION » PAGE A6

Station

FROM PAGE A1

leadership of Chief Swinkowski and the good work of our firefighters.”

Swinkowski said officials have been mulling over the idea of adding a fifth fire station for the approximately 36-square-mile township since 2005.

“This need was identified years ago, and we purchased the 4-acre parcel in preparation that someday we would need it,” he said.

In anticipation of that day, the department worked steadily over the years to lower its operating expenses and cut unnecessary costs.

“We wanted to be able to do this without having a major impact on our residents,” Swinkowski said. “Our reduced costs and spending has really lowered our operational costs to the point where doing this (building the station) and adding additional manpower is not going to change our millage rate. Everything is going to stay the same.”

When asked about the need for a fifth fire station in the southeastern portion of the township, Swinkowski said the area from 22 Mile Road to Hall Road and M-53 to Hayes Road is actually the busiest in Shelby Township in terms of fire and EMS runs.

“When you look at our run volumes, when you look at the 12 ½ square miles east of M-53, which is now covered by one station, 40 percent of our runs are being handled by that one station,” he said. “Of that 40 percent, a vast majority of those runs are south of 22 Mile Road.”

Fire Department officials claim that adding a new station will improve response times for residents during an emergency and reduce the stress on other stations currently servicing the southeastern portion of the township.

Swinkowski estimates the total project to cost approximately \$1.9 million and hopes the station will be operational by the end of 2016.