

St. George Safety Network

Property Acquired for Training, Maintenance, and Administrative Complex

As you may know, the St. George Fire Protection District, has been afforded a 1.5mil capital improvements tax by our Citizens. When the capital improvements program was renewed in 2006 we promised to purchase six new fire engines, purchase new equipment and upgrade our technology, acquire land for and construct a training, maintenance and administrative complex, and acquire land for a future fire station or fire stations.

Since then we have purchased the six new trucks we promised plus an additional ladder truck. We have bought the property adjacent to our station on Antioch Road and are preparing to enlarge that station to accommodate staffing needed to make it the permanent home of our third ladder company. We have also recently renovated our station on Perkins Road. The determination as to where our next station or stations may need to be constructed is a work in progress, because the exact location of stations and types of equipment they house is very dependent upon development in the area. For example, the re-location of Women's Hospital to the Airline-Pecue area will change where any new stations in that area need to be located to provide the maximum benefit to the public. So, property can't be acquired until we are nearer to construction of the new station or stations to assure we make the correct purchase. The final element of our five year capital improvements plan to be addressed is the acquisition of land and construction of our training, maintenance and administrative facility.

We have now embarked upon that phase of the plan approved by the voters. After an extensive and exhaustive search of available property in our District, we have purchased 8.1 acres on Airline Hwy, near Baringer-Foreman Road and next to the Kleinpeter Dairy. The total purchase price of \$1.8 million equates to \$5.10 per square foot. This is a very fair and favorable price for a tract of land that meets all our criteria to allow us to consolidate our training, maintenance, and administrative functions in one complex. At the present time our training facility consists of leased space in the Baringer Technology Park, our administrative offices are in the cinder block building (the former Village Pharmacy) and two trailers next to our station on Perkins Road, and our stores and support vehicle storage is located behind our station on Highlandia Drive.

As our District has developed, there are fewer and fewer large tracts of land that are not adjacent to residential or retail areas, or schools or places of worship, and those that do exist have become more and more expensive.

The first facility to be constructed will be the Training Center. This will finally provide us a central location to conduct daily training of on-duty crews and give us a place to conduct mandatory equipment testing. It will include several training structures utilizing modern technologies to lessen our dependence on LSU's Fire and Emergency Training Institute and other area fire departments' facilities in the conduct of our fire academy. We hope to begin construction of that phase by late summer or fall of 2010.

Eldon Ledoux

Public Information Officer
St. George Fire Protection District
13686 Perkins Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
(225) 454-6573 or (225) 279-1493