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## Open Letter to the Setauket Fire District Commissioners:

The Civic Association of the Setaukets and Stony Brook respectfully requests that the Bond Issue vote be delayed. The purpose for the delay is to establish a good faith dialogue between those designing the structure and all the stakeholders in the community. The good faith aspect is that suggestions from stakeholders during the dialogue will result in a better plan for a new firehouse. This is a difficult time for a tax increase. If such a dialogue were to take place, when it comes time to vote the community can be assured that we have the best possible plan on the table and the best use of our tax dollars.

Our position is based upon the following shortcomings of the process.

- We do not believe that either the Fire Department Rank and File or the Community was afforded adequate opportunity to participate in creating the plan.
- Green Buildings and LEED certification are mandated in almost all municipal and responsible corporate construction. The current proposal pays no attention to this. No cost-benefit estimate over the long lifetime of the building(s), considering trade offs of construction costs and long term savings, was done. This is an important economic and conservation consideration to the community especially now with utility costs rapidly escalating.
- The questions of how long the Setauket Fire Department will remain mainly volunteer and non-residential must be addressed. Will the proposed design adapt well to having residential paid department members in the future? Was this considered?
- How much of the space in the two buildings will be devoted to serving the District Commissioners and administrative needs? If fire districts are consolidated, what will be the use of these spaces? Are these spaces too generous?
- What are the cost trade offs of having two new building expansions as opposed to having one larger building?
- The Streetscape or aesthetic appearance of the structure is important for the community. The firehouse should be an important architectural center of Setauket minimizing large expanses of cement and retaining walls. For example, has consideration been given to placing the new building at the corner of 25A and Old Town Road? Using the elevation differences one could locate back-in truck bays underneath the structure facing downhill toward where the present house is located. This would allow for a less tall structure along the streets with the open bays facing an inside courtyard. This is just one possible alternate example that would better conform to present model design concepts.

We realize that many aspects of a firehouse are mandated by Federal, State regulations and NFPA guidelines. However, all the above points are within the Commissioner's discretion.

Our Civic Association greatly respects our neighbors who volunteer for our fire departments. Many are on our Board. These volunteers deserve a safe firehouse. Unfortunately, the Setauket main firehouse is coming to the end of its life.

We need to postpone the Bond Vote and initiate a substantive dialogue with the stakeholders so we can arrive at a plan that the community can support.

Respectfully,

Herb Mones, President

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