

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
Central Firehouse

Property Acquisition, Construction and Operation

Main Street and North Broad Street

City of Peekskill
Westchester County, New York



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Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

1.0 Executive Summary

The City of Peekskill is seeking to centralize the majority of its Fire Department operations at a Central Firehouse to be constructed at the proposed project site. This would allow the Fire Department to vacate five properties that are inadequate for the existing and future needs of the Fire Department and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) functions. A sub-station would continue to operate along Washington Street; this station is intended to primarily provide service to the southern section of the City.

The proposed Central Firehouse project site is located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Broad Street in downtown Peekskill. Broad Street and Main Street are designated as Routes 202 and 35. Main Street is also designated as Route 6. The proposed project site comprises approximately 1.5 acres and currently supports a portion of an existing one-story shopping center (1101-09 Main Street), a one-story commercial building (1137 Main Street) and a 2.5-story structure that currently houses two retail spaces and two apartments (1141 Main Street). 1137 Main Street has already been acquired by the City of Peekskill. The City is currently in contract to purchase 1141 Main Street. The City is continuing to negotiate with the owner of 1101-09 Main Street.

The project site is located at the eastern edge of the City's downtown area, very nearly at the geographic center of the City. The project site was one of four considered for the project including the block to the south between Park and Brown Street, the block to the east of Broad Street (the present location of Walgreen's) and the block to the south of Walgreen's.

The project site area is primarily non-residential in character with retail stores, offices, institutional uses such as a church and school and some residences and light industrial uses in the surrounding area. A Walgreen's drug store and associated parking area opened in February of 2011 on the east side of Broad Street across from the project site

In 1960, the majority of the project site and much of the surrounding area was designated as part of the Academy Street Urban Renewal Area; the majority of the project site was later acquired and redeveloped as the Crossroads shopping center as part of that Urban Renewal Plan. A fire station was planned on the subject block at that time but one was ultimately built further south at the corner of Broad Street and Crompond Road / South Division Street. The Crossroads shopping center was constructed in the mid 1970's. The commercial structure at 1137 Main Street was constructed in 1956. The structure at 1141 Main Street was originally constructed in 1880 as a residence, and was remodeled to accommodate professional use on the first floor in the 1930's. More recently this structure has supported two commercial spaces on the first floor and two apartments above.

Background

The City of Peekskill Fire Department is composed of 6 volunteer fire companies: Columbian Engine Co. #1, Cortlandt Hook & Ladder Co. #1, Washington Engine Co. #2, Columbian Hose Co. #1, Centennial Hose Co. #4, and the Peekskill Fire Patrol. The City's Fire Department is currently housed at the following six locations:

1. 824 Main Street (between Nelson & Decatur Ave.): Cortlandt Hook & Ladder #1
2. Crompond Road: Columbian Engine Co. #1
3. South Division Street: Washington Engine Company #2

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4. Dayton Lane: Columbian Hose Co. #1
5. 701 Washington Street: Centennial Hose Company #4
6. 425 Highland Avenue near Constant Avenue: Peekskill Fire Patrol (recently vacated)

The City of Peekskill is currently served by a corps of volunteer firefighters as well as twenty-five full time firefighters who reside in the fire houses.

Studies evaluating conditions at the City's existing firehouses, the space requirements for the City's public safety function, the feasibility and costs associated with renovations of existing firehouses and the siting of the Central Firehouse, including a study of the expected effect on response times have been completed.

These studies concluded that the buildings that have served the volunteer and full time firefighters for many years are out of date and do not meet State and Federal codes, or current fire protection standards. The buildings are deteriorated and in serious need of major renovation / rebuilding. It has long been a goal of the Fire Department to address and correct this situation.

One study assessed whether to renovate the City's six existing fire-houses or to build an entirely new Central Firehouse. Both of these options have significant operational and financial implications. It was determined that the best solution would be to build a new Central Firehouse that would replace five of the six existing fire houses, and to renovate the Washington Street firehouse to maintain response times in the southernmost section of the City. Renovation of the Washington Street firehouse is not planned as part of the proposed activities; however, if moneys remain after construction of the Central Firehouse is completed, they may be used for renovation of the Washington Street sub-station.

After review of the City's and the Fire Department's current and future needs, the Common Council determined that consolidation of five of the City's six fire companies into a newly constructed facility to be built and owned by the City is the most suitable and cost-effective option. Construction of the proposed firehouse would eliminate the need to address the problems and concerns at the City's existing firehouses.

The four existing fire houses on Highland Avenue, South Division Street, Crompond Road and Main Street would be vacated and the City would cease renting space in the privately owned firehouse near Dayton Lane. The existing fire house on Washington Street would remain as a substation.

The proposed firehouse would allow for centralized dispatching of most fire and emergency medical service calls. The firehouse is expected to have a useful life in excess of 100 years as compared to the existing firehouse facilities which have or very nearly have outlived their useful life. The Central Firehouse has been designed to accommodate future City growth and growth in the number of dispatches. The proposed Central Firehouse layout has sleeping accommodations for a total of ten (10) paid and six (6) volunteer firefighters at any time. Sleeping accommodations can be increased in the future if needed with changes to the interior layout.

The Central Firehouse would also allow for centralized firefighting and training functions which is expected to result in significant cost savings.

The Department's ladder truck, which is needed for almost all fire dispatches, would be housed in a more desirable central location. The ladder truck is currently housed at the Main Street station west of Nelson Avenue, as this is the only firehouse that can accommodate the truck.

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The proposed Central Firehouse has been designed to accommodate growth in career personnel (if needed) and equipment, and to accommodate emergencies. It is also expected that more efficient Fire Department operations will result from centralized operations at the new facility.

The proposed training space can also be leased out to nearby Fire Departments for use. The Central Firehouse has also been designed to provide community space, including a kitchen. The proposed Central Firehouse would also offer: improved coordination and execution of departmental operations including fire inspections, training, and fire hydrant testing. It will be an up to date facility with the ability to be retrofitted for future changes in State and Federal Codes and will allow for reduced maintenance and operating costs (two buildings rather than the existing six buildings).

Benefits would also include the elimination of daily fire truck movements around to different fire houses to facilitate training and staff coverage, and the elimination of the existing hazards and violations in the current buildings.

Project Description

Specifically, the City proposes to acquire the entirety of Lots 1 and 2 and a 57,200 square foot westerly portion of Lot 3 of block 3 of Tax Map 33.30. The City of Peekskill has acquired Lot 2 and is proposing to acquire all of Lot 1 and the 57,200 square foot (1.3-acre) easterly portion of Lot 3. Except for two apartments on the second story of Lot 1 (1141 Main Street) and an accessory garage at the same lot, project site uses are all non-residential.

The establishments that would be affected by the proposed property acquisition and demolition are listed below:

Establishments Displaced by the Proposed Acquisition (by commercial space)		
Property	Name / Type	Est. Square Footage (sf)
1101 Main Street	J's Unisex Salon	1,687 (gross)
	Urban Beauty Supply	3,505 (gross)
	Creative Nail Salon	1,704 (gross)
	Panio Liquors**	3,000 (Entire building:6,234 sf)
	Westchester Jewish Community Services	3,655 (gross)
1137 Main Street	City of Peekskill*	4,000
1141 Main Street****	Mary's Hair Salon***	Approx. 780
	Money Center	Approx. 940
Note: information above is current as of May, 2012		
* The property is currently in use as Peekskill Boxing under a temporary license agreement.		
** Panio Liquors occupies approx. half of its building. The Youth Bureau had previously used half of the building.		
***This business recently relocated to the east side of Broad Street.		
****The City is in contract to purchase this property.		

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No census of the number of workers has been completed; it is estimated that approximately 45 to 50 employees are employed at the existing on-site establishments, including approximately 25 at WJCS.

It is expected that vacancies within the portion of the Crossroads shopping center to remain could potentially accommodate some or all of the businesses and the institutional use that would be displaced. Businesses not able to relocate within the shopping center would be offered assistance to relocate elsewhere in the City of Peekskill.

Site Selection Rationale

The proposed Central Fire House location at Main Street and Broad Street is zoned C-2 Central Commercial which permits government offices in addition to retail stores, restaurants, non-government offices and other non-residential uses. Government uses are allowed in all of the City's commercial and manufacturing districts as of right but are not allowed in the City's residential districts. With the expected frequency of calls, the Central Fire House would be more appropriately sited in one of the City's non-residential areas away from residences.

The proposed location at Main and Broad Streets is very near the geographic center of the City of Peekskill. If a location were chosen elsewhere in the City, any location more than approximately 1,000 feet or so in any direction would increase response times in some portion of the area to be served to levels above those provided by the Fire Department at this time. These levels would be unacceptable.

Any location chosen on the basis of maintaining existing response times would necessarily be at or near the center of the City, in the C-2, C-3 or C-4 Districts. These sites all allow a range of uses similar to the proposed site. Like the proposed site, a choice of another site in the City's central geographic area would remove a potential large development site from the City's downtown commercial area.

The Central Fire House has been sited at the intersection of Main Street and Broad Street also known as Routes 6, 202, 35 and County Road 25. This is one of the most accessible locations in the City.

The proximity to these roadways allows for quick response to the approximately 90 calls per week that are expected to be made on average from the Central Fire House. The proposed bay doors have been oriented to Broad Street, a non grade-separated street unlike any other in Peekskill; Broad Street was designed with a wider right-of-way and paved area than is typical for a commercial thoroughfare in Peekskill. Traffic and overall pedestrian and vehicular activity levels along Broad Street are also relatively light compared to the other thoroughfares in the downtown area, including Main Street. Fire truck movements would be unhindered at the proposed location by traffic, parking or loading operations. Fire vehicles departing the Broad Street bays will be able to travel north or south via Broad Street, and can proceed to any of the downtown's east-west thoroughfares with ease.

With the design as proposed, returning trucks can access the Firehouse from the rear (two bays), or from Broad Street without substantially disrupting traffic by backing in along Broad Street.

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The proposed project location is also one of the most prominent in the City. At the proposed location the proposed building's architecture (and a monument / flagpole element at the Main / Broad Street corner) would be seen by travelers along each of the adjacent roadways. The building will provide a valuable visual identity for the main eastern entry way into the City's downtown.

Public investment – even to construct a non-tax revenue producing building such as is proposed – at this location would be expected to provide dividends in spurring future non-public sector investment near this location. In addition, the introduction of government use at the eastern end of the City's downtown area would introduce a level of activity to this area that has been missing since before the area was acquired and redeveloped in the 1960s and 70s. Future firefighters and those visiting the Central Fire House for business or pleasure would be likely to patronize the surrounding businesses.

In addition to the above, the choice of placing the project at the proposed location offers other benefits. With the vacancy rates that have historically been seen at the Crossroads Plaza shopping center, a reduction in the floor area and reconfiguration of the center would offer the following benefits:

1. The reduced floor area would be more in line with the current market in downtown Peekskill and would be more easily supported by the surrounding consumer population;
2. The floor area would be concentrated nearer the center's main area of activity (i.e., the Rite Aid entrance and the walkway from Main Street;
3. The shorter building length along Main Street would open the center visually to Main Street, partially addressing a long-standing issue of the center's disconnectedness to the rest of the downtown;
4. The change in vehicular access to include one entrance from Main Street and one from Park Street would serve to concentrate activity as compared to the current configuration which provides access from Main, Broad and Park Streets;
5. Pedestrian access will be enhanced through a new walkway along the pizzeria space, which also will be enhanced to include a window;
6. The center owner would no longer need to maintain or pay taxes on the areas that have historically been vacant (i.e., the two large former bank spaces, among others) and the relatively large parking lot;
7. Existing businesses at the center can be relocated into currently vacant space with less disruption than if they were relocated elsewhere in the City;
8. Overall investment in and improvement of the center to include signage, paving, walkways and changes to the façade along the future driveway would be made enhancing its potential for success.

Description of the Proposed Central Firehouse

The proposed new Central Firehouse would be 36,483 square feet in size. It will comprise a full first story and partial second story. Approximately 40 off-street parking spaces are also proposed.

The proposed Central Firehouse would be classified as an "essential facility" under the NYS Building Code. "Essential facilities" are intended to remain operational in the event of extreme loading whether from flood, wind, snow or earthquakes.

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Foundation plantings along the north (Main Street) façade and the east (Broad Street) facade of the proposed Central Firehouse building will be installed in a bed at the base of the building. The remaining area between the planting bed and the street curb will consist of pavers and concrete sidewalk. The final design will include a monument / flagpole feature at the corner of Main and Broad Streets.

Proposed Fire Department Operations

Equipment that would be housed at the proposed Central Firehouse will include the aerial ladder truck (diesel); three diesel pumpers, a diesel rescue truck, a gasoline Ford Explorer (ALS) and potentially a gasoline utility vehicle.

The Centennial Hose Co. #4 would remain in the 701 Washington Street sub-station with a pumper, two other vehicles and the Department's boat.

The majority of the Fire Department's career staff of 25 would be assigned to the Central Firehouse.

Currently, equipment is dispatched to incidents based on the type of incident, geographic proximity of stations to calls, and equipment availability. After relocation of five of the City's six fire companies to the Central Firehouse, equipment will be dispatched similarly as it is currently. Based on information provided by the City's Fire Department, over a typical week, public safety vehicles are expected to be dispatched from the Central Firehouse an average of eighty eight (88) times. Of this number, 70 to 80 percent, or between 62 and 70 dispatches, would be responses to emergency medical calls, which typically involve the ALS vehicle and/or the rescue vehicle, and sometimes an engine (pumper). The remaining 20 to 30 percent of calls (between 18 and 26) would be fire calls which involve between one and four pieces of equipment depending on the nature of the call.

On average it is expected that there will continue to be at least 70 to 80 dispatches of equipment to fires per month City-wide. The majority of these would be expected to be made from the Central Firehouse.

Acquisition and Eminent Domain

The City of Peekskill Common Council may make a determination to use eminent domain to acquire the portion of the project site at 1101-09 Main Street ("Crossroads Plaza" shopping center). All residential and commercial tenants, and the property owners must be notified of public hearings required under the NYS Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL), and the NYS State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

The City of Peekskill intends to provide relocation services and payments to all residential and commercial tenants displaced by the proposed project.

The City of Peekskill Department of Planning and Development will administer relocation services and payments. In addition to providing relocation services and payments, the City of Peekskill will assist with identifying satisfactory accommodations for residential and commercial tenants.

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NYS's General Municipal Law limits the amount that can be authorized to cover moving expenses to no more than \$1,000 for each residential tenant, and to no more than \$25,000 for each commercial tenant.

Closure and Demolition of Onsite Structures

Activities at the proposed Central Firehouse project site are expected to begin in late 2012 or early 2013 after final approvals have been received, and the property has been acquired.

The proposed project would be constructed over approximately 18 months from start of demolition to installation of final finishes. Demolition of existing buildings and pavements is expected to occur during the first two months. Site preparation and construction activities are expected to occur over an approximate 16 month timeframe. Installation of landscaping and fixtures and finishes in the Central Firehouse building are expected to occur during the last six months.

Prior to the start of demolition, the parking area that will remain open and protected from the adjacent construction activities will be delineated. Passenger vehicle and pedestrian access from Park Street will be limited to the existing westerly parking lot entrance. The existing northerly entrance along Main Street shall be utilized for construction vehicles. A new entrance along Main Street will be built and used for construction vehicles only during construction. After construction is complete this entrance will provide pedestrian and vehicle access to the shopping center.

It is anticipated that the sidewalks along Main Street and Broad Street on the block of the proposed construction activity will be closed to pedestrian access during demolition of the existing buildings. Approximately four (4) on street parking spaces on Broad Street will be permanently removed by the proposed action. Signage limiting parking in this area has already been installed. Pedestrian access on Main Street will be directed to the north side of the street; pedestrian access on Broad Street will be directed to the easterly side of the street.

It is expected that at least 54 parking spaces within the existing shopping center parking area will be kept available for parking at all times during construction of the proposed Central Firehouse. It is noted that the existing driveway to Main Street primarily used by exiting traffic from the Crossroads Plaza will be closed early in construction; a new access drive will be constructed but will not be open until construction is substantially complete. This may be accelerated to be made useable by the end of the third month, if conditions warrant.

The greatest potential for disruption will be when changes to the easterly wall of the shopping center are implemented. The business at this location is the pizzeria which may need to close briefly during demolition and reconstruction of the easterly wall of the shopping center. Disruption will be minimized as much as possible. Brief disruptions to remaining shopping center businesses may occur during demolition as well; these will be minimized as much as possible.

It is anticipated at this time that the buildings will be removed in one phase – all debris will be sorted and recycled or disposed in accordance with applicable waste handling procedures of the receiving waste handling transfer station. The majority of the construction and demolition debris will be recycled.

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Project Approvals, Involved Agencies and Public Participation

Project funding and site acquisition and decisions on project construction expenditures will be made by the City's Common Council. The Common Council will continue to act as Lead Agency for the purposes of SEQRA. The City is conducting a coordinated review of this Type 1 action. The proposed project is a Type 1 action since the north side of Main Street opposite the proposed project site is within a designated National Register District.

In August of 2011, the City's Common Council amended the City Code to exempt public safety uses from review by the City's Historic Landmarks Preservation Board (HLPB). This action exempts public safety uses including the Central Firehouse, the City Police station, the Washington Street Fire sub-station, and the fire stations to be closed from City HLPB review, if applicable.

The proposed facility complies with the yard, coverage and FAR requirements of the City's C-2 regulations. While not restricted in the City's Central Commercial C-2 District, the maximum 53-foot height and overall average height of the proposed facility would be in character with surrounding commercial buildings in the downtown area.

Off-street parking for the proposed Central Firehouse would be provided in a parking area to be provided on the project site. It is expected that the number of spaces would be adequate to serve firefighters and any other personnel that would be at the Central Firehouse at most times.

Final site plan approval by the City of Peekskill Planning Commission for the Central Firehouse project is not needed since, in August of 2011, a determination of public need based on the balancing of interests test was made by the City's Common Council.

Subdivision and Amended Site Plan approval will be required for the portion of the Crossroads Plaza shopping center that would not be acquired as part of the proposed activities. In addition, exterior changes to the shopping center would be reviewed by the City's Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB). The details of the Amended Site Plan and approvals will be finalized as negotiations with the owners of the Crossroads Plaza shopping center proceed.

Other involved or interested agencies include:

- Westchester County Health Department (kitchen and realty re-subdivision)
- Westchester County Department of Public Work and Transportations: roadway work and operating bus lines
- Westchester County Planning Board: activities along County roadways
- NYS Dep't of Transportation: activity along NYS roadways
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: interest in National Register district mapped to north of site
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation: redevelopment site disturbance Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Acquisition Costs and Funding

The proposed Central Firehouse is currently projected to cost \$15,685,024, which includes \$2,750,000 in estimated land acquisition costs. This amount will be funded through issuance of bonds, with debt service to be primarily funded through the City's deed transfer tax and property taxes.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

Use and/or Disposition of Remaining City Firehouses

The Washington Street firehouse will be retained for use as a sub-station to serve the southern portion of the City. This station will continue to house the Centennial Fire Company.

Depending on their disposition, a SEQRA determination(s) will be made at a future date for the four (4) City-owned firehouses that would be vacated when the fire companies relocate to the Central Firehouse. Any sale of the firehouses would be completed in accordance with the City Charter.

It is anticipated that the Cortlandt Hook & Ladder firehouse will continue to house the City's Youth Bureau. A portion of this firehouse has been used for this purpose for several years.

No decision has yet been made as to the future use or disposition of the Peekskill Fire Patrol building on Highland Avenue, the Columbian Engine Co. #1 firehouse on Crompond Road or the Washington Engine Company #2 on South Division Street. The Peekskill Fire Patrol building has already been vacated.

The rented firehouse on Dayton Lane housing Columbian Hose Co. #1 will no longer be leased by the City.

Potential Effects of the Proposed Action

The following summarizes the effects of the proposed action identified and discussed in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement:

- Displacement of resident(s) of one apartment, five businesses and one institutional user (mental health clinic). It is expected that the residential tenant and one business will be relocating voluntarily. Property occupied by the remaining four commercial tenants and institutional user may be acquired by eminent domain.
- Relocation of four commercial tenants and one institutional user. Will likely be able to relocate at the project site.
- Permanent change to size, layout, access and signage of Crossroads Plaza shopping center. Approval of amended site and subdivision plans will be needed.
- Projected reduction of between \$187,425 and \$214,200 in potential annual rental income to the landlord of the Crossroads Plaza shopping center. (Annual contract rents for the occupied retail spaces to be acquired total \$208,748 as of July 2011.)
- Temporary effects on Crossroads Plaza parking area during construction, including loss of 83 parking spaces. Parking to remain on site during construction and municipal parking within a block or so of the center is anticipated to be adequate to meet the daily needs of tenants at Crossroads Plaza, and non-residential users in the surrounding area.
- Temporary construction-related effects on area noise, air quality, shopping center appearance and ease of access, shopping and doing business in project site area.
- Temporary loss of approximately half of Park Street's permit parking spaces during construction.
- Removal of approximately 17,200 square feet of commercial space in a shopping center setting from the inventory of space downtown.
- Change in use from retail / service commercial to government public safety on south side of Main Street between James Street and Broad Street.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

- Temporary construction related effects to residents', visitors' and workers' use and enjoyment of their property.
- Funding plan increases City expenditures by projected \$980,000 in debt service payments on additional debt of \$15.7 million. Net increase in annual expenditures with energy savings projected to be \$868,200.
- Increase in aggregate City debt from current \$25,100,593 to just under \$38,700,000 in year 2013, the likely year that debt will be incurred. This represents an increase from 17.2 percent to 26.5 percent of the City's current constitutional debt limit of \$145,917,338.
- Aggregated increase of \$60 to \$70 per year on a typical Peekskill home valued at \$260,000. Two one percent increases amounting to approximately \$40 to \$45 per year have already been enacted. Implementation of the final one percent increase (\$20 to \$25 per year) will be programmed when the debt service schedule for the project has been finalized.
- Removal of an estimated \$85,438 of taxable assessed valuation from the City property tax roll. This represents a decrease of 0.13 percent from \$65,945,852 to \$65,860,414, and a reduction in potential tax revenue of \$19,030.
- Permanent changes to area visual appearance and surrounding views. Overall change in appearance is expected to be positive.
- Demolition of 1141 Main Street, a contributing element to the local Downtown historic district
- Temporary construction effects on area traffic and parking patterns including loss of approximately half of Park Street's angled permit parking spaces for duration of construction.
- Temporary construction effects on Crossroads Plaza delivery and waste storage and removal operations.
- Temporary minor effects of construction on Main Street and Broad Street, including effects on on-street metered parking, sidewalks and bus stop locations.
- Temporary construction effects on public bus operations along Main Street and Broad Street.
- Permanent changes in vehicle ingress and egress, and pedestrian access to Crossroads Plaza shopping center.
- Elimination of four on-street parking spaces along Broad Street (southbound).
- Increased use of Broad Street and Park Street (for returning ladder trucks) by emergency vehicles.
- Increase in number of daily impulsive noise events at Main and Broad Streets primarily as trucks depart the proposed Central Fire House. Overall noise levels at this location would increase slightly.
- Temporary increase in noise levels during demolition, site work and construction.
- Potential slight increase in pollutant concentrations associated with diesel fire truck engines at the project site. Such pollutants include carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides and small amounts of particulate matter. Indoor air quality to be mitigated with exhaust reclamation system. This will also minimize any increase in pollutant concentrations outside of the facility as well.
- Changes to storm drains, hydrants, electrical lines and onsite drainage infrastructure locations.
- Changes as needed to onsite easements to accommodate drainage, and to allow for fire truck travel over the Crossroads Plaza parking area.
- Slight increase in response time for easternmost section of City compared to current condition.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

- Displacement and relocation of not-for-profit Westchester Jewish Community Services Family Mental Health Clinic.
- Removal, reuse, recycling and / or disposal of approximately 800 cubic yards of construction and demolition debris.
- Potential removal of fill material and /or buried hazardous substances from project site during demolition and site work.

Mitigation Measures

Relocation Services

Relocation of Westchester Jewish Community Services, existing businesses and residents displaced by the proposed action would occur prior to the commencement of demolition activities. It is expected that businesses displaced by the proposed action would be relocated within the remaining area of the Crossroads Plaza or in nearby downtown areas. If space is unavailable in the Crossroads Plaza, space is currently available elsewhere in the downtown.

Resident(s) of the occupied apartment in 1141 Main Street would be relocated to an appropriate location nearby within the City. Comparable apartments are available in the downtown area, and in adjacent neighborhoods.

The City Department of Planning & Development will provide assistance in identifying relocation opportunities for on-site tenants and commercial establishments as needed.

Relocation costs to be covered by the City of Peekskill will include moving expenses as required by NYS's General Municipal Law. Moving expenses may include:

- packing expenses and moving expenses,
- storage of personal property,
- the cost of dismantling, disconnecting, and reconnecting machinery and utilities,
- loss of personal property caused by the move,
- the expense of searching for a substitute business site,
- moving insurance,
- advertising related to the move, and
- related expenses.

NYS's General Municipal Law limits the amount that can be authorized to cover moving expenses to no more than \$1,000 for each residential tenant, and to no more than \$25,000 for each commercial tenant.

If eminent domain is not utilized it is expected that relocation assistance offered by the City of Peekskill will be determined as part of negotiations with property owners.

Crossroads Plaza Operations and Layout

The City is committed to working with the Crossroads Plaza shopping center owner:

- to enhance the visibility of the center from Main Street;
- to provide suitable pedestrian improvements, signage, lighting, landscaping, and parking lot appurtenances for the portions of the center's common areas affected;

Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

- to implement changes to the center's eastern structural wall;
- to review and approve an amended site plan and subdivision application;
- to maintain access to the center and to minimize disruption of shopping center operations, including parking, during demolition and construction;
- to assist tenants of the center with relocation activities;
- to maintain an orderly and attractive appearance for the remainder of the shopping center during construction.

Construction of the new access driveway from Main Street may be accelerated to be made useable by the end of the third month, if conditions warrant.

Short-term effects on shopping center parking will be addressed through the use of existing municipal metered spaces at the James Street Ramp Garage, the adjacent lot and on streets in the area surrounding the project site. Other effects such as changes to pedestrian routes will be minimized as much as practicable.

Disturbance during construction to existing business operations will be minimized to the maximum extent practicable. Business relocation will be completed as quickly as possible and disturbance to businesses that will not be displaced would be minimized as much as possible.

Long-term effects to the overall shopping center layout and appearance from the proposed project are expected to be positive. Permanent changes proposed at the shopping center include new paving, curbing and landscaping in the shopping center parking area. The existing loading area will be reconfigured. The shopping center would have a new eastern exterior wall with a window (along the new Main Street driveway). Also in this area would be new signage, lawn and / or plantings, and lighting. Signage along Park Street will also be relocated as necessary in consultation with the owner.

As discussed in chapters 3.1 and 3.2, the assessed valuation for the shopping center is projected to be reduced by \$52,938.

Negotiations between the shopping center owner and the City will address a protocol for use of the parking area, resolve issues of liability should vehicle accidents occur, resolve the aesthetics and appearance at the future property line, and finalize the layout of the parking area and number of off-street spaces to be contained within it. Final approval of the parking area layout, the final number of off-street parking spaces, changes to the loading area, the lot re-subdivision and circulation from the shopping center lot onto the Central Fire House lot will be required from the City Planning Commission.

Maintenance of Adequate Parking during Construction

During construction a minimum of 54 off-street parking spaces will be maintained for use in the Crossroads Plaza parking lot. This is roughly equivalent to three rows of spaces as currently striped.

The opportunity exists to convert permit parking spaces along Park Street (that is, those 15 to 20 that will not be affected by construction activities) to metered or non-metered spaces for use by Crossroads Plaza workers and patrons. This option would be temporary and would necessarily involve directing permit parkers to use the James Street facility, or permit spaces along Brown or James Street during the construction period.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

Construction workers will be directed not to park in spaces designated for patrons, workers and business owners at the Crossroads Plaza.

Retail Continuity along Main Street

The proposed memorial and other streetscape changes along Main Street will ameliorate the effect of removing the existing retail uses and limited pedestrian activity along the portion of Main Street to be used for the project. The inclusion of a destination at the proposed Central Fire House – a small museum – along with community and meeting space will also ameliorate this effect. The City will request that Westchester County place a bus shelter and / or seating at the Bee-Line bus stops adjacent to the project. The City will also install street furniture in this area.

Proposed Design

The City's Historic Preservation Planner has requested that the bay doors fronting on Broad Street be painted tan rather than white as is currently shown on the proposed project renderings. Final construction plans will reflect this change.

Landscaping within the proposed Central Fire House parking area will be specified to allow minimal obstruction of views of the shopping center from points to the east.

The City will review the street furnishings along Main Street near the intersection of Broad Street and will request that seating and / or shelters be provided for bus patrons, and will provide street furniture within the proposed memorial park area as needed.

Noise and Air Quality

Existing Fire Department equipment is maintained to keep unnecessary noise to a minimum, and most activities in the proposed Central Firehouse facility bays such as maintenance and repair would be shielded by the overhead doors, which will be closed most of the time.

It is noted that properties in and around existing firehouses can expect a slight reduction in impulsive noise levels after the firehouses are vacated by the Fire Department. Future noise levels at the vacated firehouses would be a function of future activities programmed at these locations.

The proposed Central Firehouse will be equipped with an indoor exhaust reclamation system which is expected to trap the majority of diesel pollutants emitted by idling vehicles. This system is designed to be a 100 percent source capture exhaust system, compliant with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommendations.

Demolition and Construction

A subsurface investigation will be completed after details of access to the three properties have been worked out with the property-owners.

A Clerk of the Works will be hired to provide for inspections and quality control of construction.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Executive Summary

Pursuant to building code requirements, investigations will be made of the presence of hazardous materials in existing building materials such as asbestos and lead paint. These investigations will reveal the nature of the materials, whether removal of the material or any portion of it is needed prior to demolition, and / or what types of remediation if any are needed. Proper remediation measures will be taken if hazardous materials are identified. Notice will be given to the surrounding community of demolition activities, and demolition safety protocols will be utilized to minimize the spread of dust and airborne contamination.

Appropriate chain link fencing will be constructed to control access into the project site, and to provide security. Screening will be incorporated into the fencing in consultation with City officials.

Alternatives

The City also analyzed the cost to renovate the existing fire stations and bring them to current Federal, State and industry codes and standards.

In addition to a renovation option, and the selected site on the west side of Broad Street between Main and Park Streets, the City reviewed the following three alternative sites for the Central Firehouse:

1. East side of Broad Street between Main and Park Streets
2. West side of Broad Street between Park and Brown Streets
3. East side of Broad Street between Park Street and Lincoln Terrace

The City reviewed one-, two- and three-story options for the Central Firehouse, concluding that a two-story option presented the most efficient interior layout while retaining use of outdoor space for off-street parking and exercise area.

The ramifications of doing nothing were also considered by the City, as was an alternative without the use of eminent domain.

Please refer to Chapter 4.0 for discussion and analysis of each of the alternatives.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

2.0 Description of the Proposed Action

2.1 Background and History

The proposed Central Firehouse project site is located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Broad Street in downtown Peekskill. Figure 2-1 shows the project location. Figure 2-2 shows a recent aerial photograph of the area. Broad Street and Main Street are designated as Routes 202 and 35. Main Street is also designated as Route 6.

The proposed project site comprises approximately 1.5 acres and currently supports a portion of an existing one-story shopping center, a one-story commercial building and a 2.5-story former residential structure that currently houses two retail spaces and two apartments.

The project site is located at the eastern edge of the City's downtown area, very nearly at the geographic center of the City. The project site was one of four considered for the project including the block to the south between Park and Brown Street, the block to the east of Broad Street (the present location of Walgreen's) and the block to the south of Walgreen's as shown on Figure 2-3. North is at the top of Figures 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3.

It is noted that response times and considerations used in the decision to locate the Central Firehouse are discussed in more detail later in this chapter and in chapter 3.7 of this document.

The project site area is primarily non-residential in character with retail stores, offices, institutional uses such as a church and school and some residences and light industrial uses in the surrounding area. A Walgreen's drug store and associated parking area opened in February of 2011 on the east side of Broad Street across from the project site. The surrounding land use pattern is shown in Figure 3.1-1 included in chapter 3.1. Land use on the project site is summarized in Table 2-1 on page 2-6.

In 1960, the majority of the project site and much of the surrounding area was designated as part of the Academy Street Urban Renewal Area; the majority of the project site was later acquired and redeveloped as the Crossroads shopping center as part of that Urban Renewal Plan. A fire station was planned on the subject block at that time but one was ultimately built further south at the corner of Broad Street and Crompond Road / South Division Street. Figure 3.1-3 in chapter 3.1 shows an Illustrative Site Plan for the Academy Street Renewal project. Prior to 1960 the area supported a mix of residential and commercial uses and structures.

The project site is identified in detail in section 2.3 of this chapter. The Crossroads shopping center was constructed in the mid 1970's. The commercial structure at 1137 Main Street was constructed in 1956. The structure at 1141 Main Street was originally constructed in 1880, and was remodeled to its current commercial / residential configuration, in the early 1930's. Prior to that, this structure was a single-family residence.

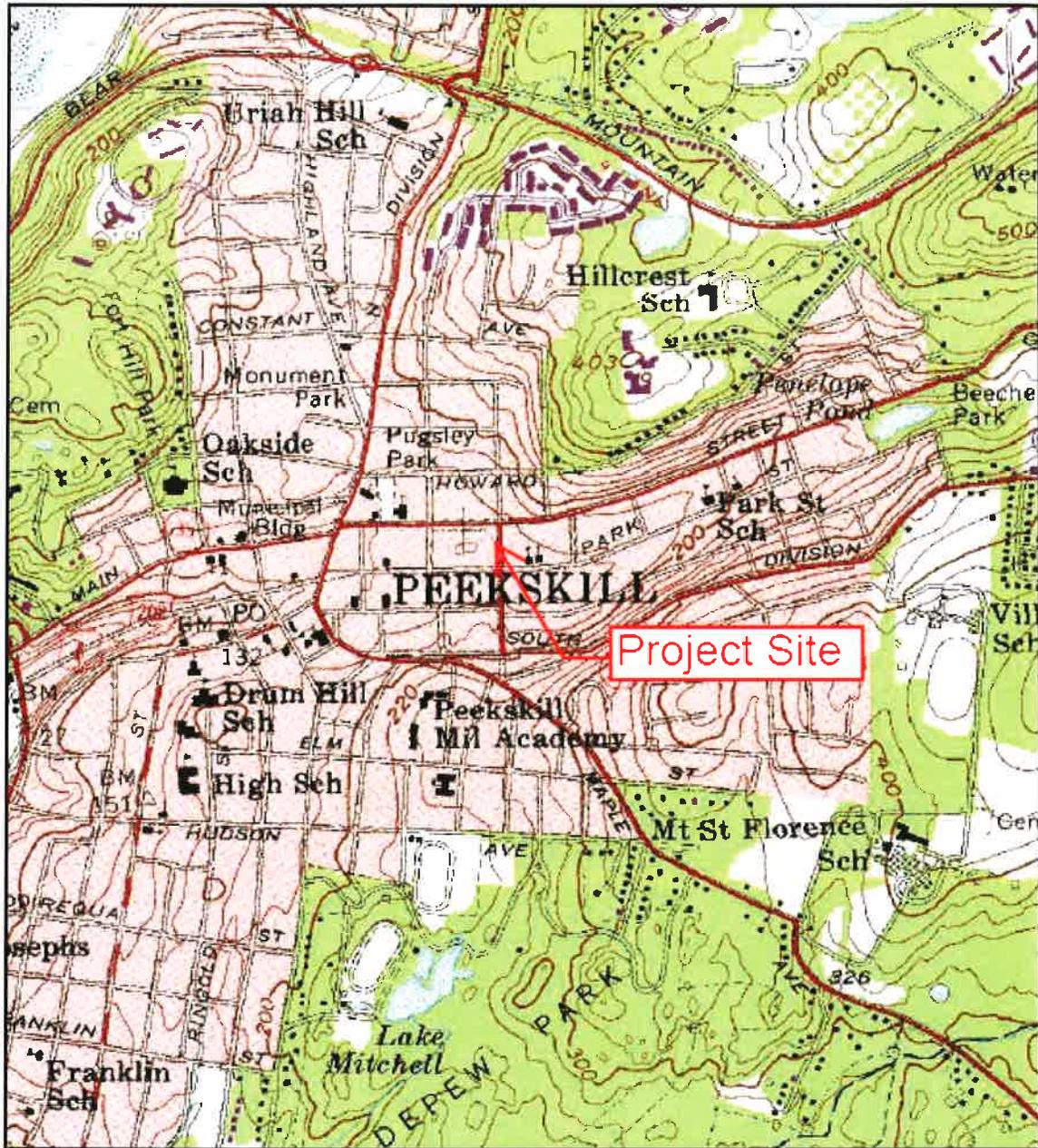


Figure 2-1: Project Location

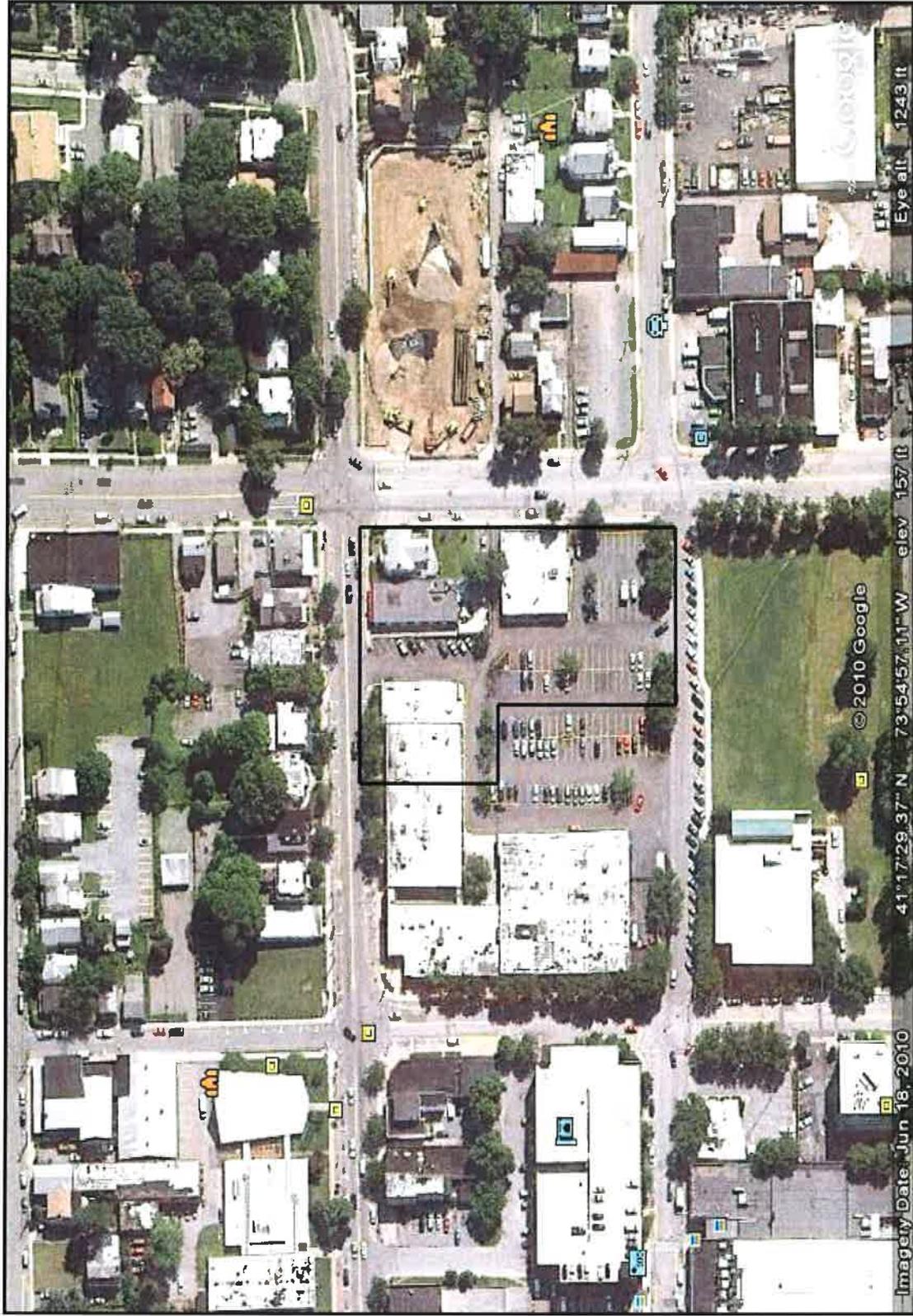


Figure 2-2: 2010 Aerial Photo



Figure 2-3: Project Site and Alternative Sites

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

2.2 Project Need and Purpose

The City of Peekskill is seeking to centralize the majority of its Fire Department operations at a Central Firehouse to be constructed at the southwest corner of Main Street (US Route 6) and Broad Street in the City's downtown area. The proposed firehouse would allow the Fire Department to vacate five properties that are inadequate for the existing and future needs of the Fire Department and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) functions. Specifically construction of the Central Firehouse would address or alleviate the following problems and concerns at the City's existing firehouses:

- Unsafe truck entry & exit
- No driveway aprons
- Inadequate space in truck bays
- Numerous code violations
- Health risks
- No firematic support
- Negligible training capabilities
- Deteriorated conditions
- Energy inefficient buildings
- Fuel tank concerns

A sub-station would continue to operate along Washington Street; this station is intended to primarily provide service to the southern section of the City.

Current Fire Department Operations

The City of Peekskill Fire Department is composed of 6 volunteer fire companies: Columbian Engine Co. #1, Cortlandt Hook & Ladder Co. #1, Washington Engine Co. #2, Columbian Hose Co. #1, Centennial Hose Co. #4, and the Peekskill Fire Patrol. The City's Fire Department is currently housed at the following six locations:

1. 824 Main Street (between Nelson & Decatur Ave.): Cortlandt Hook & Ladder #1
2. Crompond Road: Columbian Engine Co. #1
3. South Division Street: Washington Engine Company #2
4. Dayton Lane: Columbian Hose Co. #1
5. 701 Washington Street: Centennial Hose Company #4
6. 425 Highland Avenue near Constant Avenue: Peekskill Fire Patrol (recently vacated)

There are approximately 107 volunteers and 25 career firefighters. The Department has one aerial or "hook and ladder" truck stationed on Main Street, one rescue truck, four engines (pumper trucks) stationed on Washington Street, Dayton Lane, Crompond Road and South Division Street, and two paramedic fly cars stationed on Washington Street and Crompond Road.

In 2011, the Department responded to 970 fire calls, approximately 2,000 Advanced Life Support calls, and approximately 1,000 Basic Life Support calls.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

Basic Life Support is dispatched when the Peekskill Volunteer Ambulance Corps is not available to respond.

Advanced Life Support responses are part of the Cortlandt Regional Paramedic Program which responded to a total 4,880 calls in Peekskill and Cortlandt in 2011. The Program responded to approximately 2,300 calls within the City of Peekskill in 2011. Emergency medical call volumes have been growing between nine and ten percent per year for the past several years.

The City of Peekskill is currently served by a corps of volunteer firefighters as well as twenty-five full time firefighters who reside in the fire houses listed earlier.

Studies of Fire Department Operations and Requirements

Studies evaluating conditions at the City's existing firehouses, the space requirements for the City's public safety function, the feasibility and costs associated with renovations of existing firehouses and the siting of the Central Firehouse, including a study of the expected effect on response times have been posted on the City of Peekskill web-site. These studies include:

- City of Peekskill Fire Station Renovation Study (summary)
- Fire Station Location Study
- City of Peekskill Fire HQ Design Program & Specific Sites Analysis
- A Study of the Steps Required to provide for Current and Future Needs of the Peekskill Fire Department by Renovating and Adding onto the Current Facilities
- Report on the Building and Site Study for the New Fire Headquarters, City of Peekskill, October 27, 2008 prepared by Manitou Incorporated and Mitchell Associates Architects (this report added to website in April 2012)

All of the studies were prepared by Mitchell Associates Architects. Manitou, Inc. assisted in selecting the proposed location of the Central Firehouse.

Certain materials have been excerpted from the above studies and are provided in this report as Appendices. The entire Fire Station Location Study is provided in Appendix E. Excerpts from the Building and Site Study and its accompanying presentation are provided in Appendix J. All of the reports are incorporated herein by reference. The Building and Site Study excerpt includes a summary of the steps taken since the study was commissioned by the City in February of 2008.

As noted earlier, the studies concluded that the buildings that have served the volunteer and full time fire-fighters for many years are out of date and do not meet State and Federal codes, or current fire protection standards. Additionally, the buildings are deteriorated and in serious need of major renovation / rebuilding. It has long been a goal of the Fire Department to address and correct this situation.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

The Renovation Study assessed whether to renovate the City's six existing fire-houses or to build an entirely new Central Firehouse. Both of these options have significant operational and financial implications. The study was conducted by Mitchell Associates who specializes in the design of fire stations and an expert in fire department operations and station location. It was determined that the best solution would be to build a new Central Firehouse that would replace five of the six existing fire houses, and to renovate the Washington Street firehouse to maintain response times in the southernmost section of the City.

The four existing fire houses on Highland Avenue, South Division Street, Crompond Road and Main Street will be vacated and the City will cease renting space in the privately owned firehouse near Dayton Lane. The existing fire house on Washington Street would remain as a substation.

Benefits of the Proposed Action

As outlined earlier, construction of the proposed firehouse would eliminate the need to address a number of problems and concerns at the City's existing firehouses. After review of the City's and the Fire Department's current and future needs, the Common Council determined that consolidation of five of the City's six fire companies into a newly constructed facility to be built and owned by the City is the most suitable and cost-effective option.

The proposed firehouse would allow for centralized dispatching of most fire and emergency medical service calls. The firehouse is expected to have a useful life in excess of 100 years as compared to the existing firehouse facilities which have or very nearly have outlived their useful life. The Central Firehouse has been designed to accommodate future City growth and growth in the number of dispatches. Towards this end, the Central Firehouse incorporates a total of eight (8) vehicle equipment bays, and living, community and training space for volunteer and paid firefighters. The proposed Central Firehouse layout has sleeping accommodations for a total of ten (10) paid and six (6) volunteer firefighters at any time. Sleeping accommodations can be increased in the future if needed with changes to the interior layout.

The Central Firehouse would also allow for centralized firefighting and training functions which is expected to result in significant cost savings. One example is mandatory training which is currently completed outside of the City, which would now be accommodated onsite. This allows firefighters undergoing training to continue to respond to calls without the need to bring in another shift of firefighters, resulting in cost saving to both the City and firefighters.

The Department's ladder truck, which is needed for almost all fire dispatches, would be housed in a more desirable central location. The ladder truck is currently housed at the Main Street station west of Nelson Avenue, as this is the only firehouse that can accommodate the truck.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

The proposed Central Firehouse has been designed to accommodate future growth in career personnel (if needed) and equipment. It is also expected that more efficient Fire Department operations will result from centralized operations at the new facility.

The proposed training space can also be leased out to nearby Fire Departments for use.

It is noted that meeting space has been allocated at the proposed Central Fire House. The floor area is less than the sum of similar space at the existing fire houses to be vacated.

The Central Firehouse has also been designed to provide community space, including a kitchen.

The proposed Central Firehouse would also offer improved coordination and execution of departmental operations including fire inspections, training, and fire hydrant testing.

It will be an up to date facility with the ability to be retrofitted for future changes in State and Federal Codes and will allow for reduced maintenance and operating costs (two buildings rather than the existing six buildings). It will include a central training facility; a central meeting space for all fire companies; sanitary and modern sleeping and eating accommodations for career staff; modern meeting and recruiting rooms for volunteers.

Benefits would also include the elimination of daily fire truck movements around to different fire houses to facilitate training and staff coverage, and the elimination of the existing hazards and violations in the current buildings.

The proposed Central Firehouse will be classified as an “essential facility” under the NYS Building Code. “Essential facilities” are intended to remain operational in the event of extreme loading whether from flood, wind, snow or earthquakes.

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

2.3 Project Site Identification and Background

Identification of properties acquired and to be acquired

Figure 2-4 below provides a copy of the current tax map (TM 33.3) for the project site's block. Main Street runs across the top of this figure. The City proposes to acquire the entirety of Lots 1 and 2 and the easterly portion of Lot 3. Table 2-1 below provides information on each lot.

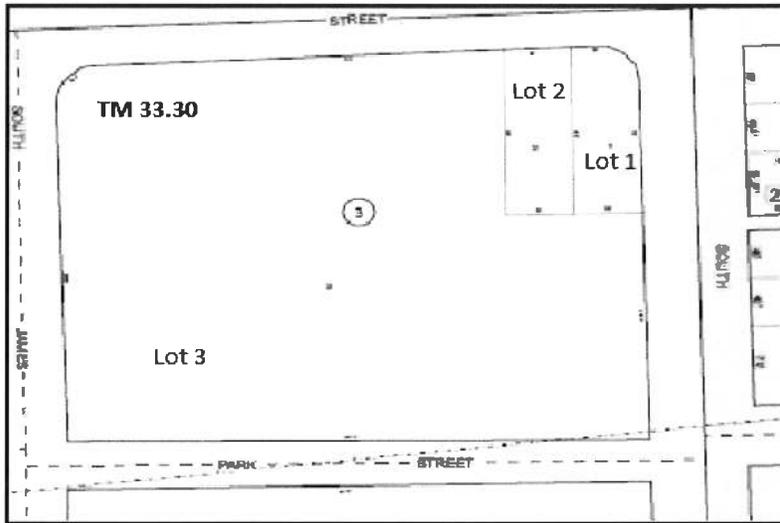


Figure 2-4: Current Tax Map

As outlined in Table 2-1 below, the City of Peekskill has acquired Lots 1 and 2 and is proposing to acquire a 57,200 square foot (1.3-acre) portion of Lot 3. Figure 2-5 on the following page shows the eastern portions of Lot 3, the shopping center, that the City proposes to acquire.

Table 2-1 Lot Acquisition Summary					
Owner	Address	Tax Map #	Use	Lot Size	Bldg Size
City of Peekskill	1141 Main Street	33.30-3-1	418*, 3-sty offices, apts.	50 x 140 (7,000 sf)	±2,750 sf + bsmt.
City of Peekskill	1137 Main Street	33.30-3-2	484*, 1-sty comm'l	50 x 140 (7,000 sf)	40 x 100 bldg (4,000 sf)
Peekskill Heights, Inc.	1101 Main Street	33.30-3-3	452*, Neighborhood shopping ctr	Approx. 129,000 sf. City to acquire ±57,200 sf	53,276 sf City to acq. ±17,200 sf.
*NYS Office of Real Property Service Classification Code Property Survey, Badey & Watson, March 30, 2011 (depicting property to be acquired)					



Figure 2-5: Area of Partial Taking, Crossroads Plaza Shopping Center

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

Except for two apartments on the second story of Lot 1 (1141 Main Street) and an accessory garage at the same lot, project site uses are all non-residential.

A diagram showing a schematic breakdown of the existing structures at the project site by business and use is provided as Figure 2-6.

Pictures of the project site are provided in Appendix G.

Identification of tenants in acquisition area

Table 2-2 summarizes the establishments that would be affected by the proposed property acquisition and demolition. In addition to the five businesses and community mental health clinic (Westchester Jewish Community Services or WJCS) that would be displaced, one residential tenant at 1141 Main Street would also be displaced.

Table 2-2 Establishments Displaced by the Proposed Acquisition (by commercial space)		
Property	Name / Type	Est. Square Footage (sf)
1101 Main Street	J's Unisex Salon	1,687 (gross)
	Urban Beauty Supply	3,505 (gross)
	Creative Nail Salon	1,704 (gross)
	Panio Liquors**	3,000 (Entire building:6,234 sf)
	WJCS	3,655 (gross)
1137 Main Street	City of Peekskill*	4,000
1141 Main Street****	Mary's Hair Salon***	Approx. 780
	Money Center	Approx. 940
Note: information above is current as of May, 2012		
* The property is currently in use as Peekskill Boxing under a temporary license agreement.		
** Panio Liquors occupies approx. half of its building. The Youth Bureau had previously used half of the building.		
***This business recently relocated to the east side of Broad Street.		
****The City is in contract to purchase this property.		

Additional information is provided in chapter 3.1 of this report.

No census of the number of workers has been completed; it is estimated that approximately 45 to 50 employees are employed at the existing on-site establishments, including approximately 25 at WJCS.

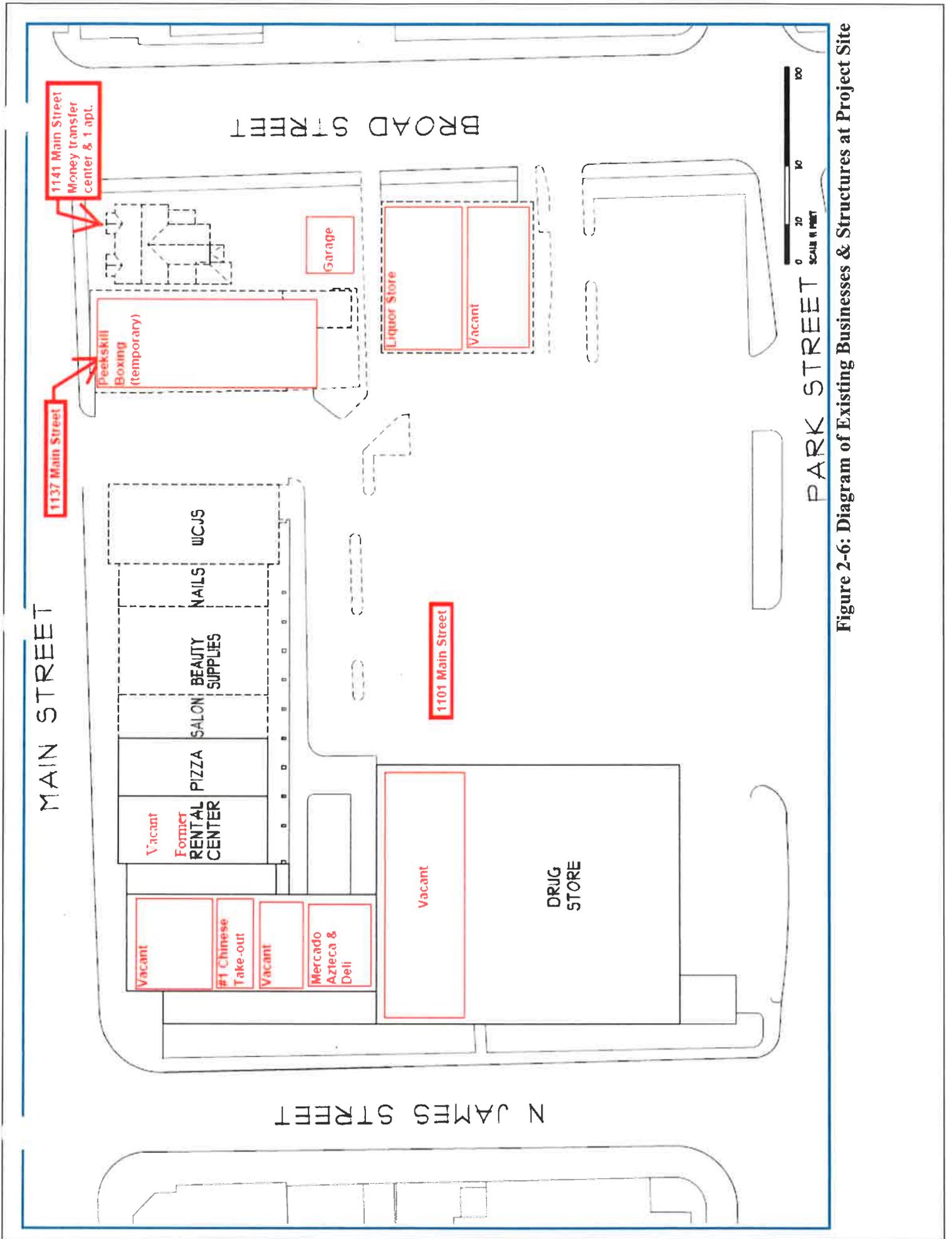


Figure 2-6: Diagram of Existing Businesses & Structures at Project Site

Peekskill Central Firehouse Project Description

The property at 1137 Main Street was acquired by the City of Peekskill in 2011 for approximately \$570,000. The City is in contract to purchase 1141 Main Street for \$485,000 plus \$29,500 in relocation costs and attorney's fees.

One additional retail store space in the proposed acquisition area is currently vacant as shown on Figure 2-6. This area comprises a portion of the building presently housing the liquor store; its size is estimated at 3,000 square feet. This space and the space currently occupied by Westchester Jewish Community Services were designed to accommodate banks with drive-thru facilities. The space adjacent to Panio Liquors was most recently used by the City of Peekskill Youth Bureau.

The total land area already acquired and proposed to be acquired by the City is as follows:

- 1141 Main Street: 7,000 sf
- 1137 Main Street 7,000 sf
- 1101-09 Main Street 57,200 sf

Total Acquired: 71,200 sf

After acquisition is complete, the Crossroads Plaza will comprise a single lot with an area of approximately 72,000 square feet.

The final land area to be acquired at 1101-09 Main Street is subject to the final subdivision plan.

It is expected that vacancies within the portion of the Crossroads shopping center to remain could potentially accommodate some or all of the businesses and the mental health clinic that would be displaced. As shown on Figure 2-6, four vacant spaces are located in the portion of the retail center proposed to remain including one that potentially could be divided. The exact size of each space is currently unknown.

The spaces that could be re-occupied that are vacant as of March 2012 include:

1. Mar Azul / Cholacuenia Restaurant (potentially double space)
2. Former Phone Store
3. Space next to Rite-Aid
4. Former Rent-a-Center

Businesses not able to relocate within the shopping center would be offered assistance to relocate elsewhere in the City of Peekskill.

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2.4 Project Site Conditions

Geology, topography and soils

As outlined in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan or SWPPP (“swip”) included in Appendix K, the project site consists entirely of Uf or Urban Land type soils. Urban Land soils have been mapped in downtown village and city centers in areas where 60 percent or more of the land surface is covered with buildings or other structures. Urban Land soils have typically been disturbed and often support parking lots and shopping centers such as comprise the proposed project site. According to the Soil Survey of Putnam and Westchester Counties, New York (prepared by the USDA Soil Conservation Service) Urban Land soils have variable properties.

The topography onsite is essentially flat. With the area’s historical disturbance and location on the former plain adjacent to the McGregory Brook streambed, there is a low likelihood of subsurface rock at depths that would affect construction.

The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan includes a Demolition Plan. In addition to onsite structures at 1137 and 1141 Main Street and the portions of the Crossroads Plaza to be acquired, demolition activities will affect:

- existing pavements and curbing in the parking and walkway areas of the shopping center;
- landscaping within the shopping center parking area;
- landscaping and paving within the driveway and yard areas of 1137 and 1141 Main Street; and
- trees, vegetation and paving along the Main and Park Street façades of the shopping center.

Sidewalk and street pavements along the site’s perimeter will be removed as needed for utility work. All work will be permitted and areas affected restored as required.

The overall amount of disturbance of the site is estimated to be 1.703 acres by the project engineer.

Details on the proposed drainage and utility plans are provided in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) included in Appendix K. Existing drainage conditions are also briefly discussed later in this chapter.

Details on construction phasing and waste management are provided in chapter 3.8 of this report.

Prior to construction soil testing will be completed as needed to confirm sub-surface conditions and the bearing capacity of onsite soils. Any below grade oil tanks or other potentially hazardous materials will be removed in accordance with local, County, State and Federal requirements.

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As a level site that has historically supported structures and paving, the likelihood of significant erosion is low, although soil can make its way into the local stormwater collection system and can become airborne when left unvegetated or unstabilized. Erosion and sediment control measures are outlined in the SWPPP (see Appendix K). Where necessary, soil will be left exposed for as little time as possible. If stockpiled, such areas will be stabilized within a hay bale / silt fence barrier. Exposed areas of soil will be temporarily vegetated, mulched or re-vegetated as quickly as possible. Other control measures include dust control by watering, a stabilized stone construction entrance and exit driveway along Park Street, and protection of storm drain inlets.

Water resources and drainage

The proposed project site is almost entirely covered with paving or structures (impervious surfaces). The parking lot of the shopping center includes curbing that directs runoff to existing storm drain inlets. Existing roof leaders and gutters direct stormwater to paved areas and then to drainage inlets. Curbing and catch basins are also located along the improved streets that form the perimeter of the project site. Some stormwater that falls on the project site is disposed of via these facilities.

As noted earlier, the overall amount of disturbance of the site is estimated to be 1.703 acres by project engineers.

The project site is almost completely covered in pavements or structures at this time. No increase is anticipated in the amount of impervious surface area with the project as compared to the current condition. The overall configuration of the site's impervious area will be similar with the project compared to current conditions.

All drainage currently leaving the site is ultimately discharged to the Hudson River via an existing 96-inch corrugated metal pipe that travels along the site's southern boundary which carries McGregory Brook. This will continue to be the case with the proposed project, although a portion of the runoff will be treated by an underground filtration system to be located beneath the proposed project parking area along Park Street.

The proposed filtration system has been designed to treat 25 percent of the computed stormwater volume per the site redevelopment criteria outlined in the current NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Stormwater Management Design Manual. With treatment, the quality of stormwater runoff leaving the site will be improved compared to current conditions.

As noted earlier, details on construction phasing and waste management are provided in chapter 3.8 of this report.

A portion of the 100-year floodplain associated with McGregory Brook is mapped along the project site's southern perimeter along Park Street. No change is proposed to the culvert that carries the brook and no change is proposed to the floodway or floodplain; as such the proposed project will not adversely affect potential flooding conditions.

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Terrestrial and aquatic ecology

The proposed project site currently supports structures and pavements and small amounts of landscaping which will all be disturbed during demolition and construction. The site currently may be frequented by species typical to an urban environment such as squirrels, sea gulls and pigeons but it does not offer significant habitat value. No adverse effects are expected from project activities on any resident species; onsite species would be able to move to nearby areas. After completion of the project, it is expected that vegetation will be restored at or above a level that currently exists on the site.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) was queried relative to the potential for significant habitat or rare and endangered species to be located at the project site. Correspondence is included in Appendix F.

No rare plants or animals, or significant habitat are located at the project site.

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2.5 Project Site Selection

The City also analyzed the cost to renovate the existing fire stations and bring them to current Federal, State and industry codes and standards. In addition to a renovation option, and the selected site on the west side of Broad Street between Main and Park Streets, the City reviewed the following three alternative sites for the Central Firehouse:

1. East side of Broad Street between Main and Park Streets
2. West side of Broad Street between Park and Brown Streets
3. East side of Broad Street between Park Street and Lincoln Terrace

Finally, the City reviewed one-, two- and three-story options for the Central Firehouse, concluding that a two-story option presented the most efficient interior layout while retaining use of outdoor space for off-street parking and exercise area.

The ramifications of doing nothing were also considered by the City, as was an alternative without the use of eminent domain.

Specific details and discussion regarding each of these alternatives are provided in Chapter 4.0 Alternatives.

Site Selection Rationale

The proposed Central Fire House location at Main Street and Broad Street is zoned C-2 Central Commercial which permits government offices in addition to retail stores, restaurants, non-government offices and other non-residential uses. Government uses are allowed in all of the City's commercial and manufacturing districts as of right but are not allowed in the City's residential districts. With the expected frequency of calls, the Central Fire House would be more appropriately sited in one of the City's non-residential areas away from residences.

The proposed location at Main and Broad Streets is very near the geographic center of the City of Peekskill. If a location were chosen elsewhere in the City, any location more than approximately 1,000 feet or so in any direction would increase response times in some portion of the area to be served to levels above those provided by the Fire Department at this time. These levels would be unacceptable.

Any location chosen on the basis of maintaining existing response times would necessarily be at or near the center of the City, in the C-2, C-3 or C-4 Districts. These sites all allow a range of uses similar to the proposed site. Like the proposed site, a choice of another site in the City's central geographic area would remove a potential large development site from the City's downtown commercial area.

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The Central Fire House has been sited at the intersection of Main Street and Broad Street also known as Routes 6, 202, 35 and County Road 25. This is one of the most accessible locations in the City.

The proximity to these roadways allows for quick response to the approximately 90 calls per week that are expected to be made on average from the Central Fire House. The proposed bay doors have been oriented to Broad Street, a non grade-separated street unlike any other in Peekskill; Broad Street was designed with a wider right-of-way and paved area than is typical for a commercial thoroughfare in Peekskill. Traffic and overall pedestrian and vehicular activity levels along Broad Street are also relatively light compared to the other thoroughfares in the downtown area, including Main Street. Fire truck movements would be unhindered at the proposed location by traffic, parking or loading operations. Fire vehicles departing the Broad Street bays will be able to travel north or south via Broad Street, and can proceed to any of the downtown's east-west thoroughfares with ease.

With the design as proposed, returning trucks can access the Firehouse from the rear (two bays), or from Broad Street without substantially disrupting traffic by backing in along Broad Street.

The proposed project location is also one of the most prominent in the City. At the proposed location the proposed building's architecture (and a monument / flagpole element at the Main / Broad Street corner) would be seen by travelers along each of the adjacent roadways. The building will provide a valuable visual identity for the main eastern entry way into the City's downtown.

Public investment – even to construct a non-tax revenue producing building such as is proposed – at this location would be expected to provide dividends in spurring future non-public sector investment near this location. In addition, the introduction of government use at the eastern end of the City's downtown area would introduce a level of activity to this area that has been missing since before the area was acquired and redeveloped in the 1960s and 70s. Future firefighters and those visiting the Central Fire House for business or pleasure would be likely to patronize the surrounding businesses.

In addition to the above, the choice of placing the project at the proposed location offers other benefits. With the vacancy rates that have historically been seen at the Crossroads Plaza shopping center, a reduction in the floor area and reconfiguration of the center would offer the following benefits:

1. The reduced floor area would be more in line with the current market in downtown Peekskill and would be more easily supported by the surrounding consumer population;
2. The floor area would be concentrated nearer the center's main area of activity (i.e., the Rite Aid entrance and the walkway from Main Street);

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3. The shorter building length along Main Street would open the center visually to Main Street, partially addressing a long-standing issue of the center's disconnectedness to the rest of the downtown;
4. The change in vehicular access to include one entrance from Main Street and one from Park Street would serve to concentrate activity as compared to the current configuration which provides access from Main, Broad and Park Streets;
5. Pedestrian access will be enhanced through a new walkway along the pizzeria space, which also will be enhanced to include a window;
6. The center owner would no longer need to maintain or pay taxes on the areas that have historically been vacant (i.e., the two large former bank spaces, among others) and the relatively large parking lot;
7. Existing businesses at the center can be relocated into currently vacant space with less disruption than if they were relocated elsewhere in the City;
8. Overall investment in and improvement of the center to include signage, paving, walkways and changes to the façade along the future driveway would be made enhancing its potential for success.

It is noted that public input into the decision-making process surrounding the Central Fire House has been solicited for several years including Common Council meetings, and at meetings organized specifically to discuss the Fire Department's needs, renovations to the existing fire houses, and the Central Fire House.