



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

PLANS TO REBUILD TVF&R FIRE STATION TEMPORARILY ON HOLD

Last summer, Washington County approved TVF&R's land use application to rebuild Fire Station 68 at 13545 NW Evergreen Street in the Oak Hills area. That application is temporarily on hold following an Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) ruling. The construction project was appealed to LUBA by a citizen who disagreed with Washington County's interpretation of the code and subsequent approval of TVF&R's land use application.

LUBA had the authority to make one of three rulings: approve, reverse, or remand the case back to the Washington County Hearings Officer. LUBA ruled to remand the case back to Washington County for potential code amendment. The two code issues in question center on whether this station fits the definition of a 'satellite station' and traffic count for that site. Prior to the LUBA appeal, the Washington County Planning Department and a Hearings Officer conducted comprehensive analysis and review, and ultimately determined that TVF&R's development application met the code.

TVF&R Public Information Officer Karen Eubanks states, "We now find ourselves in the middle of two land use arenas at odds with their interpretation of the code and some work needs to be done to clarify the code for the purposes of our project. We are excited to participate in that process." The District sees a code amendment as a critical step in helping guide future land use decisions, not only as it relates to its own fire station construction, but also other public buildings that serve the community like libraries and police stations. In addition to pursuing a code amendment, the District also plans to appeal to the Oregon Court of Appeals. A code amendment and appeal are expected to take at least six months.

Until Washington County reinstates its approval for construction, work at the site may not be undertaken. In the past month, the District had removed an existing home from the property and began some grading and excavating work. The site will be secured until a land use decision is rendered.

Background:

The rebuild of Fire Station 68 was identified in TVF&R's 2006 Bond Measure, approved by 68.9% of voters. After an extensive search for property that was properly zoned, adequately-sized, financially feasible, and had good access for emergency response, the site was selected. As a regional provider of fire protection and emergency medical services, Station 68 plays a critical part in serving not only the local neighborhood but the northwest corner of TVF&R's service area.

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