



Springfield renews effort to sell closed fire stations on Sumner Avenue and Oakland Street

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SPRINGFIELD — The city has renewed an effort to sell two closed fire stations on Sumner Avenue and Oakland Street, saying both sites offer great potential for housing or other uses in harmony with those neighborhoods.

Oakland Street fire station in Springfield, shown during its closing ceremony in October of 2010. The station is one of two in Springfield now for sale.

File photo by Mark M. Murray, The Republican

While the city will entertain all proposed uses, it is hoped that the old fire station at 1043 Sumner Ave., in **East Forest Park** will be converted into a single-family house, and the larger Oakland Street station in **Forest Park** be converted into a commercial, residential, or mixed-use development, officials said.

The properties are being sold separately, "as is," and bids must be received by July 31, at 2 p.m., at the Office of Procurement at City Hall.

"It's a unique opportunity," Mayor **Domenic J. Sarno** said this week. "You have seen it across the country where old fire stations are being redeveloped, many times with an urban pioneer who wants to live in them."

The two fire stations were closed in recent years, and were replaced by a single, state-of-the-art fire station on White Street.

Sarno said the Oakland Street station might be ideal for someone to have both a home and small business there.

"Obviously, we would work with the neighborhood, too," Sarno said. "We would take into consideration neighborhood concerns."

The sale of each site will include a historic preservation deed restriction that will require any exterior changes to be approved by the Historical Commission. The Oakland Street station was built in 1894, and the Sumner Avenue station was constructed in 1925.

The properties were initially advertised for proposals last fall. The city received three proposals for the Sumner Avenue property but no offers for the Oakland Street site.

Sumner Avenue fire station in Springfield, shown here in 2007, has been closed for a decade. The station is now for sale for redevelopment.

File photo / Michael S. Gordon

However, the Request for Proposals for the Sumner Avenue station last fall was subsequently canceled because it was learned that the property still needed to be formally declared as surplus.

The City Council voted unanimously on May 6, to declare both stations as surplus, leading to the new Request for Proposals.

Samalid Hogan, senior project manager for the city's Office of Planning and Economic Development, said the redevelopment of both stations will be a "great asset" for each neighborhood.

"Since the last request for proposals, we've had several calls from interested developers for each property," Hogan said. "We are very optimistic that we will find suitable developers that will make the redevelopment of these properties a great success."

The Sumner Avenue station has two floors and a basement, with a total of 6,630 square feet, zoned Residence B.

The Oakland Street station at the corner of Dickinson Street, was two-stories high and totals approximately 7,340 square feet, zoned Business A.

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