

March 8, 2023

Dear Directors of the KFPD and KPPCSD,

In early January we renewed our request that your boards jointly analyze the costs, benefits and operational consequences of locating the Police Department and District administrations in various location options.

We have not seen either Board move this idea forward as an actionable item on your public agendas, other than the KPPCSD removing several locations from consideration for police department locations in Kensington. We understand that two directors from each board have met to discuss the option of locating both departments in the Public Safety Building (PSB), but these meetings have not been held publicly, thereby keeping the community from understanding what is being considered.

The February 15, 2023 KFPD agenda included an item to delay the renovation work on the PSB until June 1, 2023, to allow time to reach a decision with the KPPCSD on possible joint occupancy of the PSB.

As time is marching on we suggest that your Board staffs provide the financial, legal and operational analyses required for informed decision making. This does not have to take inordinate time. If it is already making substantial progress, please inform the public on the status in written reports in your agenda packets.

We urge the Boards as pursuant to your authorities:

1. Identify locations for the Police Department that meet essential operational requirements identified by the Chief and consistent with existing KPPCSD programs, requirements and policies. Will promising locations be assessed by architects who have designed police facilities?
2. Before a vote, it only makes sense that both Districts analyze how the options will affect their budgets, the KFPD leaseback loan, and operations for all possibly workable locations. The leaseback financing agreement obligates the KFPD to complete the project by a certain date and the financial consequences of a delay could be severe. Is it even possible for the contractor to implement a PSB redesign without triggering a loan payment call? Should not the public see updates on such evaluations?
3. The KPPCSD decision to eliminate many location options seems severely limiting and premature. We suggest you reconsider at least some options for locating the police department on properties owned by the KPPCSD—for example, the non-recreation area south of the Kensington library, or the parking lot. Another possibly viable option you might consider is part of the Unitarian Universalist Church property that temporarily houses the Kensington Fire Department.

Kensington residents will be deeply affected by choices that may result in less effective services, and they are on the hook to pay for implementation of these critical decisions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely, Rob Firmin, President KPOA, and the Board of Directors