

THE MUDDLE OVER THE SITE FOR ENGINE 22.

About a Dozen Locations Have Been Proposed—Though Discussed for A Year No Adjustment is in Sight.



Black squares indicate present locations of fire apparatus at the South End and in the adjacent section of the Back Bay. Circle No. 4, on Dartmouth St, represents where engine 22 was housed until the change of the railway tracks necessitated its removal. Circle No. 2, on Columbus Av, represents a new site proposed by several representative men. Circle No. 1, on Yarmouth St, represents the site recommended by the Fire Commissioner. Circle No. 3, represents the site proposed by the Mayor and the Board of Apportionment.

The above are but a few of the sites which the aldermen have under consideration. Altogether they have offers of about a dozen sites, but those numbered 1 and 2 are considered the most desirable because the selection of either would again place the fire engine in close proximity to Copley sq, which is the desire of the trustees of the art museum and the trustees of the public library, as well as most of the residents of the Back Bay.

The site numbered 1 was selected by Fire Commissioner Russell about a year ago. The board of aldermen of last year refused to accept it. The present board of aldermen is beginning to look

upon it with favor. While it is still near Copley sq and the old site of engine 22, it is the cheapest offered the city and can be had for \$23,000.

Recently Alderman McDonald suggested a site at the corner of Dartmouth and Appleton sts. He said when offering it to the board of aldermen that no one had yet bonded it. There was a deal of significance in this statement, for it is openly stated at city hall that if it were not for land speculators a site would have been selected long ago.

Though the site numbered 3 on the plan above has the approval of the mayor and the board of apportionment, it is not approved by a majority of the aldermen. The principal argument against it is that it is too far away from Copley sq. The present owners, it is understood, want \$38,000 for it, though

its assessed valuation is but \$18,600, and this fact stands in the way.

The several sites were visited by the aldermen a few days ago, but on their return they did not seem to be any nearer choosing one than before they went.

On Dartmouth st, within 100 feet of the old site, is a vacant lot of land which bears a "for sale" sign and which has been suggested for a site for the engine house. It is on the same side of Dartmouth st as the old engine house, on the Copley sq side of the railroad track, and consequently nearer the square. This site has not figured as yet in the question at city hall. When it was pointed out to one of the aldermen he stated that Commissioner Russell was opposed to locating the engine on that side of the railroad.

In view of the fact that the site which

the fire commissioner thought the most desirable was rejected, this concession to the fire commissioner seems rather odd.

Under a ruling of the corporation counsel the selection of a site rests with the city council. This means that after the aldermen get through with the proposition it will have to be taken up by the common council. The board of aldermen have been at it now for more than a year without coming to any conclusion, and there are only 13 members of that body. The common council has 75 members, who are likely to take as conflicting a view of this important question as the aldermen, in which event the selection of a site seems a long way off.

The board of aldermen will have a meeting at noon tomorrow and the question may be taken up.