



DATE: March 6, 2023

MEMO TO: Paras Parekh, Chair
Planning Committee

FROM: Randall L. Seebach
Director of Planning and Land Preservation

REQUEST: Provide policy direction regarding a request from the Village of Libertyville (Village) and the Libertyville Township Road District (Road District) to consider waiving easement fees associated with granting 0.622 acres of temporary easements and a 0.008-acre permanent easement at Old School Forest Preserve for the reconstruction of the Rockland Road bridge over the Des Plaines River.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Public Access and Connections

FINANCIAL DATA: There is no financial impact at this time.

BACKGROUND: The Village and the Road District are in the process completing a Phase I engineering study for the future reconstruction of Rockland Road bridge and its roadway approaches and the realignment of an existing 300-foot long trail connecting to the Des Plaines River Trail. The purpose of the project is to reconstruct the deteriorating bridge over the Des Plaines River, raise the bridge above the 30-year floodplain elevation, and provide an improved pedestrian connection to the main stem of the Des Plaines River Trail.

As part of the improvements, the Village and the Road District are requesting 0.622 acres of temporary construction easements for bridge construction access and realignment of the connector trail and a 0.008-acre permanent easement for the installation and long-term maintenance of stone rip rap for the southeast bridge abutment. At the District's request, within a portion of the temporary easements, the Road District will remove and reconstruct an existing 300-foot long trail connecting an existing pedestrian walkway to the Des Plaines River Trail.

On January 3, 2022, the Planning Committee provided policy direction authorizing staff to sign a letter of concurrence that the project will have no adverse effect on the activities, features and attributes of Old School Forest Preserve and to negotiate an easement agreement. On January 27, 2023, the District received a letter from the Village (see attached) requesting the District consider donating the temporary and permanent easements that are required for the bridge reconstruction project.

Staff is seeking Committee direction whether to waive the easement fees that would otherwise be payable under the District's License and Easement Ordinance. A negotiated easement agreement will be brought back to the Committee for its review and approval at a future meeting.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Corporate Counsel.



January 27, 2023

Alex Ty Kovach, Executive Director
Lake County Forest Preserve District
1899 W. Winchester Road
Libertyville, IL 60048

**Re: Rockland Road Bridge over Des Plaines River Reconstruction
Village of Libertyville and Libertyville Township Road District
Section No. 16-00118-00-BR
Request for LCFPD Easements Donation**

Dear Alex:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) consider a donation in lieu of monetary compensation for the temporary and permanent easements that are anticipated to be necessary to construct and maintain the referenced project. As you are aware, the Village of Libertyville (Village), together with the Libertyville Township Road District (LTRD) through a cost-sharing agreement, are completing a Preliminary Engineering Study for the reconstruction of the Rockland Road bridge over the Des Plaines River. The bridge is in poor condition and needs replacement. The limits are Riverside Drive in the Village to the Des Plaines River Trail (DPRT) crossing of Rockland Road in Libertyville Township. Funding for engineering and construction includes STP-Bridge Funds, Township Bridge Program Funds, and local matches from the Village and Township. The project scope consists of reconstruction of the bridge structure and its roadway approaches, the establishment of a continuous walkway from the bridge to the Des Plaines River Trail Crossing, and addition of bicycle accommodations to the roadway cross section.

The Old School Forest Preserve exists east of the bridge both north and south of Rockland Road. Project representatives from the Village and LTRD have coordinated extensively with LCFPD staff to develop a plan that avoids and minimizes impacts to forest preserve property to the greatest extent practicable. In fact, the proposed plan enhances the forest preserve property in many ways. The project avoids permanent right-of-way (ROW) acquisition by minimizing the proposed bridge width to minimum standards, minimizing shoulder widths, and proposing pedestrian facilities at the back of curb where possible. Proposed retaining walls will minimize impacts to the forest preserve, wetlands, and floodplain. By reducing floodplain fill, compensatory storage will be accommodated completely within roadway ROW, and not in forest preserve property. Aside from one permanent easement (PE) for abutment protection, all others are temporary easements (TE), for grading and construction access.

Due to the use of forest preserve property for the proposed transportation improvements, Section 4(f) coordination was required. LCFPD concurred that the project will not have an adverse effect on the features that qualify the property for protection under Section 4(f). Please see attached **Exhibit A-5**, extracted from the Section 4(f) documentation, which illustrates the proposed PE and TE use areas:

- Orange shading represents 0.008 acres of PE for bridge abutment protection.
- Blue shading represents 0.112 acres of TE for bridge construction access.
- Dark purple shading represents 0.020 acres of TE for retaining wall construction.
- Light purple shading represents 0.260 acres of TE to remove the existing connector path between the Rockland Road shoulder and the Des Plaines River Trail. LCFPD representatives noted that this path does not meet ADA criteria and is susceptible to washouts during high water periods. Here, the connector path will be removed, and the ground restored with natural plantings specified by LCFPD.
- Light red shading represents 0.230 acres of TE to construct a new connection for people walking to and from the DPRT, improving safety. Together with the proposed sidewalk connection off the east end of the bridge, the new pedestrian connection on forest preserve property will be ADA compliant and provide a more direct connection to the DPRT so that people will not feel compelled to walk along roadway pavement to avoid excess travel distance. The proposed sidewalk connection will be at a higher elevation and will also include drainage features to avoid overtopping and erosion following storm events. This will subsequently reduce maintenance frequency and effort. The proposed sidewalk connection also has a smaller footprint than the existing connector path, allowing for a net increase in vegetated area. Project representatives worked with LCFPD staff to place the proposed path such that it will avoid or minimize impacts to key existing mature trees.

In total, donation in lieu of monetary compensation is requested for 0.008 acres of Permanent Easement and 0.622 acres of Temporary Easement. These areas are approximate pending preparation of detailed plats and legal descriptions.

All work within the PE and TE areas, including existing path removal and restoration, and proposed connector construction, will be funded as part of the bridge reconstruction project. We understand that LCFPD is dedicated to preserving the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the area. The Village and LTRD share that commitment and will work closely with the LCFPD to ensure that the construction process causes as little disruption to the area as possible.

We hope for a favorable response to our request for the **LCFPD** to agree to a donation in lieu of monetary compensation for the temporary and permanent easements and would be happy to discuss any questions that you may have. You can contact me at either 847/918-2027 or kamidei@libertyville.com.

Very truly yours,



Kelly Amidei
Village Administrator
Village of Libertyville

