



LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES
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Preservation, Restoration, Education and Recreation

DATE: November 3, 2014

MEMO TO: Carol Calabresa, Chair
Land Preservation and Acquisition Committee

Bonnie Thomson Carter, Chair
Planning and Restoration Committee

Pat Carey, Chair
Finance and Administrative Committee

FROM: Randall L. Seebach, Director
Planning, Conservation and Development

SUBJECT: IDOT–Route 22 Road Improvements at Heron Creek and Egret Marsh

POLICY DIRECTION: Policy direction regarding a request from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to consider permanent and temporary easements on IL Route 22 and Old McHenry Road at Heron Creek and Egret Marsh Forest Preserves, to authorize permission to sign a Letter of Intent between IDOT and the District, and to negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement.

BACKGROUND: The lands for Heron Creek and Egret Marsh Forest Preserves were acquired and developed with the knowledge that the adjoining segment of IL Route 22 would be improved at a future date. Since 2008, IDOT has been in regular contact regarding the proposed improvements to Route 22 and the potential easements that will be needed to complete the improvements.

The District was awarded an Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Open Space Lands Development Program (OSLAD) grant to develop trails, shelters, restrooms and a playground at Heron Creek Forest Preserve. In May 2009, the District’s Land Preservation and Acquisition and Finance and Administrative Committees reviewed a Policy Direction regarding the preliminary plans for the Route 22 improvements and the need for future easements associated with the project, and approved IDOT’s request to adjust boundaries cited within the grant to coincide with the boundaries of the highway improvement project.

As part of the planned improvements, IDOT is requesting permanent easements to construct and maintain a retaining wall and a naturalized drainage swale, and temporary easements for grading and tree mitigation planting. As part of the proposed improvements, IDOT will construct a shared-use path on the south side of Route 22 that will provide an important connection linking together Egret Marsh and Heron Creek Forest Preserves, and a short section of trail connecting the proposed shared-use path to the existing trail at Heron Creek.

In accordance with the District’s adopted Ordinance Regarding Licenses and Easements for Public Services, authorization is needed from the Land Preservation and Acquisition Committee and the Finance and Administrative Committee to enter into negotiations with IDOT regarding a possible grant of easements and/or the transfer of fee-simple interest in some portions of the property needed by IDOT for the road project. Since the previous policy direction is over five (5) years old, staff is seeking approval to sign the Letter of Intent with IDOT and for authorization to negotiate an intergovernmental agreement.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: Policy Direction is required in accordance with District policy.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Director of Finance, Director of Operations and Public Safety, Legal Counsel

FINANCIAL DATA: At this time there is no financial impact.

PRESENTER: Randall L. Seebach