



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
www.dnr.illinois.gov

Pat Quinn, Governor
Marc Miller, Director

December 5, 2015

Mr. Ryan Franklin
Village of Matteson
Planning Division
4900 Village Commons
Matteson, IL 60443

**RE: Matteson Center Business Park, Matteson, Cook County
Endangered Species Consultation Program
EcoCAT Review #1504959**

Dear Mr. Franklin:

The Department has received a submission from SPACECO, Inc., concerning the proposed Matteson Business Center for the purpose of consultation with the Village pursuant to the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act* [520 ILCS 10/11], the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act* [525 ILCS 30/17], and Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code Part 1075*.

The northern boundary of the proposed Matteson Center Business Park is contiguous with the boundary of the **Old Plank Trail Prairie Nature Preserve and INAI Site**, most of which is owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Consequently, this proximity makes it more likely that construction and operation of the Matteson Center Business Park will adversely modify environmental conditions within the Old Plank Trail Prairie Nature Preserve.

Most potential adverse modifications will result from decisions related to building locations, building elevations, fugitive light, and landscaping.

Buildings too high too close to the boundary have strong potential to alter the duration and quality of light reaching plants within the Nature Preserve. Because the proposed action is located along the southern margin of the Nature Preserve, the maximum occlusion of natural light will occur at the winter solstice. Thus, to model the degree of shadowing of the Nature Preserve this date should be chosen and the hours just after sunrise and just before sunset, when shadows will be at maximum lengths, should be considered. (While most plants are not actively growing in the winter, the Nature Preserve also provides habitat for small mammals and their predators, thus the preservation of natural circadian rhythms remains important.)

Because the developer of this parcel may not know at this point exactly what types of buildings may be desired by future tenants or owners, lots should be laid out in such a way that future buildings will be set

well back from the Nature Preserve boundary. Limits should be placed on building heights to assure that natural shadows do not fall within the Nature Preserve. Space between the buildings and the Nature Preserve boundary can be devoted to open space, parking areas, or storm water management facilities.

Outdoor lighting presents an additional avenue of adverse modification. Light standards should be no taller than necessary, and all outdoor lighting fixtures should be designed to direct light downward, resulting in less than one foot-candle experienced at the property line. Outdoor lighting should also be designed to emit light frequencies/colors which minimize the attraction of insects from within the Nature Preserve. The Preserve has already been adversely affected by light from Interstate 57 and from Miller Circle Drive; additional light pollution is undesirable.

Landscaping also presents threats. Old Plank Trail Prairie Nature Preserve contains high-quality tallgrass mesic prairie plant communities. It is important to avoid using aggressive non-native plants, or even invasive native plants which are incompatible with this vegetation. Ideally, bordering areas can be planted to a buffer of native vegetation from local seed sources. Any form of fencing may result in the introduction of undesirable plants from bird droppings, while the planting of trees, especially evergreens, may provide havens for raptors and mammalian meso-predators which may adversely affect the avian and small-mammal communities.

At one time, the Old Plank Road Trail Prairie provided essential habitat for the **Franklin's Ground Squirrel**, *Poliocitellus franklinii*, a species now listed as "threatened" by the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board. Populations of this animal remain in Cook and Will Counties, and juvenile animals can disperse more than six miles in their first season. This species is tolerant of urban disturbances and it has been many years since any comprehensive mammal survey of this area has been done. It is possible this site has been re-occupied by the Franklin's Ground Squirrel; personnel engaged in construction activities nearby should be alert for the presence of this animal. In Sangamon County, this species has shown a tendency to colonize soil stockpiles in areas disturbed by construction.

In addition, the Nature Preserve contains large numbers of the plant, **Rattlesnake Master**, *Eryngium yuccifolium*, which is the obligate host-plant for the State-listed threatened **Eryngium Stem-Borer Moth**, *Papaipema eryngii*, and substantial colonies of the **Northern Prairie Dropseed**, *Sporobolus heterolepis*, which is the obligate host plant for the State-listed threatened **Red-Veined Prairie Leaf-Hopper**, *Aflexia rubranura*. This Nature Preserve has not been surveyed for the presence of either insect. Populations of both listed species exist at a number of locations in Cook and Will Counties and may persist at this location. The developer should be made aware that, if these plants become established within the proposed development, the protected insects may follow, which would impose affirmative obligations on the property owner.

The Department offers the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1: The Village should prohibit structures which will cast shadows on the Nature Preserve at any time, including winter mornings and evenings.

Recommendation #2: The Village should prohibit lighting fixtures which will cast more than one foot-candle of light into the Nature Preserve, or which emit light in wavelengths which attract nocturnal insects.

Recommendation #3: The Village should prohibit any alteration of site drainage which will alter the hydrology of the Nature Preserve.

Recommendation #4: The Village should require a landscaping plan which does not employ invasive non-native plants near the Nature Preserve, and should consider establishing a buffer-yard to be planted to native prairie-community plants from local seed sources.

Recommendation #5: The Village should not allow the construction of any pathway or other point providing pedestrian or bicycle access to the Nature Preserve without first coordinating with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

Consultation on the part of the Department is closed, unless the Village desires additional information or advice related to this proposal. In accordance with 17 Ill. Adm. Code 1075.40(h), the Village should notify the Department of its decision regarding these recommendations, whether it will:

- Proceed with the action as originally proposed;
- Require the action to be modified per Department recommendations (please specify which measures if not all will be required); or
- Forgo the action.

This consultation is valid for two years unless new information becomes available which was not previously considered; or the proposed action is modified; or additional species, essential habitats, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the project has not been implemented within two years of the date of this letter, or any of the above listed conditions develop, a new consultation is necessary.

The natural resource review primarily reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database at the time of this consultation, and should not be regarded as a final statement on the site being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments.

If additional protected resources are encountered during the project's implementation, the applicant must comply with the applicable statutes and regulations. Also, note that termination does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement of the proposed action. Please contact me if you have questions regarding this review.

Sincerely,



Keith M. Shank
Impact Assessment Section
Division of Ecosystems and Environment
keith.shank@illinois.gov
(217) 785-5500

cc: Robert Anderson, SPACECO, Inc.
Dan Kirk, IDNR/ORC/Natural Heritage
Valerie Njapa, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
Kim Roman, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission