

## Post office land needed for Western Bypass in Algonquin

By Elena Ferrarin, Daily Herald

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A strip of land belonging to the U.S. Postal Service is the last stumbling block before the construction of the Western Bypass in Algonquin can begin, McHenry County officials said.

The Illinois Department of Transportation needs to acquire a small portion of the property at 801 W. Algonquin Road in Algonquin, where the post office is located, in order to build the bypass, McHenry County Chairman Ken Koehler said Friday. The post office building would not be affected, he said.

The long-anticipated project is designed to relieve congestion in downtown Algonquin by allowing traffic on Route 31 to bypass the intersection with Route 62.

"If (IDOT) can't acquire the property, it will delay the project," Koehler said, adding he recently was told by IDOT that was the last parcel needed. IDOT has been working on this for the last couple of years, but the federal agency "just put it off hoping it would go away," Koehler said.

Koehler said he has discussed the issue with elected officials including U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and U.S. Rep. Don Manzullo.

McHenry County Director of Transportation Joe Korpalski Jr. said the land is "right at the heart of where the project would be." Because the land belongs to a federal agency, IDOT cannot acquire it through condemnation lawsuits as it has done with other land it needed, Korpalski said.

IDOT filed several condemnation lawsuits for properties along the bypass route, the last one regarding Meyer Material Co. at 10500 S. Route 31. The company wanted to retain mining rights, which delayed the proceedings, IDOT attorneys said in November.

Court records show that IDOT filed motions for immediate vesting of the title, also known as "quick take" motions, for the Meyer parcels in December.

Representatives from IDOT and the U.S. Postal Service could not be immediately reached for comment.

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