

Pathway between GSBN and Seagate

At the north end of GSBN there is a public easement that connects the County's beach parking lot to the walkway to the beach. The easement is a paved 4.5 foot path.

Over that last several years this public easement has become a convenient transition area from GSBN to Seagate for walkers and bicycle riders. As the usage has increased the area's landscaping has degraded, bicycle riders and pedestrians are less safe and motorized vehicles have been seen using the easement.

Several months ago County staff engaged an architect to redesign the easement. The design included a 12-foot wide path with divided lanes for bicycles and pedestrians. The existing Ficus trees would be removed to accommodate the increased width and new landscape material. There was no consideration for stopping illegal motorized vehicle usage. Funding for the improvements were to be allocated from the TDC,

At an early neighborhood meeting which included GSBN and Seagate residents and members of the bicycle community it was clear to all the plan presented was not workable. The City was also represented. Out of that meeting and subsequent meetings (attended by 20-25) the following objectives were agreed on:

1. The area must provide safe usage for both pedestrian and bicycles.
2. The landscaping should be improved without removing the large ficus trees which provide ambiance.
3. Control elements need to be included that will prohibit motorized vehicles.

On Monday, July 25 the County staff again met with the citizens group. The plan presented included:

1. An 8-foot wide paved path to be shared by pedestrians and bicycle riders will be installed in the same layout as the current 4.5-foot path. It was determined that this width is the maximum the easement will allow yet provide an adequate level of safety.
2. The large ficus tree, and hopefully the smaller one, will be retained. New landscape materials will be installed which will beautify the area and encourage usage of the paved path
3. Bollards with a 4 foot opening will be installed at both ends of the path to prohibit motorized vehicle use.

The Citizens group unanimously and enthusiastically supported this plan and encouraged the County to move ahead. Those attending included residents of GSBN and Seagate, the Park Shore Association, GSAC (Jane Cheffy and David Feight), and the Pathways coalition. Also attending were Reg Buxton and Michelle McCloud (Naples City Council), Penny Taylor (County Commissioner), Bill Moss (City Manager), Dana Souza (City Community Services Director).

