

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Cross Seminole Trail Connector Corridor Alignment Study (Green Way Boulevard south and east to County Road 427/Longwood Lake Mary Road Intersection then east and south to Wade Street at State Road 419).

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS **DIVISION:** ENGINEERING

AUTHORIZED BY: Frank M. VanPelt III **CONTACT:** Frank M. VanPelt III EXT. 5703
for W. Gary Johnson, P.E., Director Jerry McCollum, P.E., County Engineer

Agenda Date <u>10-28-03</u>	Regular <input type="checkbox"/>	Consent <input type="checkbox"/>	Work Session <input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Public Hearing – 1:30 <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Hearing – 7:00 <input type="checkbox"/>		

MOTION / RECOMMENDATION:

Presentation

BACKGROUND:

In 2000, the voters approved a referendum providing funding for planning, design and construction of approximately 73 miles of recreational trails projects. The Cross Seminole Trail Connector was identified as one of the showcase trails within that program. In March of 2003, the County initiated the preliminary engineering work for the corridor alignment study. The results of the corridor alignment study, including the engineering consultant's recommended alignment are documented within the Cross Seminole Trail Connector – Corridor Alignment Technical Memorandum for County review. A summary of this report is attached. The next step in the overall production process is to begin the final design.

District 2 - Commissioner Randy Morris
District 4 - Commissioner Henley

Attachment: Project Information Package

Reviewed by:	_____
Co Atty: <u>NA</u>	_____
DFS:	_____
Other:	_____
DCM:	_____
CM:	_____
File No. <u>BPWE01</u>	_____

Cross Seminole Trail Connector Project

Seminole County, Florida

Prepared for:



Seminole County Public Works Department
Engineering Division
520 W. Lake Mary Boulevard, Suite 200
Sanford, Florida 32773

Prepared by:

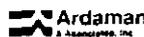


Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Transportation, Land Development, Environmental Services
135 W. Central Boulevard, Suite 800
Orlando, Florida 32801-2476
407-839-4006

In association with:



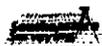
EMS scientists, engineers, planners



Ardaman & Associates, Inc.



Borrelli & Associates



Southeastern Surveying & Mapping Corp.

SEPTEMBER 2003

Executive Summary

The Cross Seminole Trail Connector (CSTC) will provide a critical link between the current terminus of the Wekiva Trail system, located at the Crossings (Green Way Blvd.), and the Cross Seminole Trail system which has a terminus at the new Winter Springs School near CR 419 and SR 434. This trail extension is approximately 5.7 miles in length and would be a 14-foot wide multipurpose system for nonmotorized and pedestrian use. Extensive data gathering and preliminary analysis has occurred as part of the preliminary analysis to review and evaluate potential trail alignments in the corridor. The CSTC was broken into three segments for the purposes of organizing the conceptual analysis and evaluating the potential alignments. The alignments considered do not follow any abandoned rail alignments, but rather follow other types of land uses that are conducive to the extents of the trail system.

The preliminary study has taken into consideration many natural and existing features in the corridor. These features and conditions include transportation corridors, utility easements, natural lands assets, key strategic connections to the system, wetland systems, soil conditions, cultural conditions, the railroad, crossings opportunities, environmental constraints and more. Portions of some alternative alignments cross over lands that would be subject to wetland impacts by a proposed trail system. Attempts have been made to minimize potential wetland impacts with the alignments and to utilize a boardwalk trail system when necessary. Roadway and railroad crossings have been limited to locations that are functional, can be approved, and provide safe passage, among other parameters. As a result, there were initially many alternative alignments have been boiled down to the segments shown in Figure 3. These segments are: **Segment 1-** from Green Way Blvd. and the Progress Energy Power Easement to CR 427. **Segment 2-** from CR 427 to SR 17/92. **Segment 3-** from SR 17/92 to the Winter Springs School site.

Based on the preliminary study and analysis performed in Work Order No. 1, the following recommendations are made to Seminole County as the preferred alignments to be authorized for the final design and permitting for the CSTC. These alignments are depicted in Figure 3 with additional detail provided in Figures 19-23.

Segment 1

The recommended alignment for Segment 1 is the 1C alignment. This alignment has minimal, if any wetlands impacts. Utilizing the Progress Energy easement, impacts are substantially already in place and the utility lines and the trail system can be good neighbors with complementary uses. There are no major commercial conflicts and, based on preliminary conversations to date with property owners, the ability to weave a trail system through this area and over the private properties looks favorable. This alignment will also require upgrading the rail crossing at CR 427.

This cannot be avoided and CSX may not welcome any modifications, but will have to consider the project needs.

Alignment 1A was attractive in terms of connectivity to the schools and library, but the alignment would traverse a crowded developed area along Green Way Blvd and the portion adjacent to Longwood-Lake Mary Road would require acquiring additional property since the right-of-way is inadequate. Properties affected by this would be commercial and residential properties, many of which would be contested. Alignment 1B has the same right-of-way constraints as alignment 1A along Longwood-Lake Mary Road. In addition, there are natural wetlands areas that would have to be crossed that would require environmental permitting and mitigation for wetland impacts. Extensive boardwalk systems would also drive the costs up for this alternative.

Segment 2

Segment 2 is centered within a lush setting of land preserved and under the management of Seminole County Natural Lands. The natural beauty of this setting will quietly make a strong statement about nature and will enhance the experience and enjoyment of each trail user. In order to minimize impacts to natural resources and wetlands, the alignment has been located relatively close to the General Hutchinson Parkway. As a result, the alignment is as far upland as is reasonably possible and is located in an area that has already been naturally drained by the ditch system south of the parkway. Thus, the trail will be located in the highest area possible, yet be a part of the natural environment. Some boardwalk will be required for portions of this segment. It is anticipated that the alignment will vary slightly, with the intent to avoid any specimen trees that might be in the final alignment corridor.

The recommended alignment is 2B, which is partially described in the foregoing paragraph. In addition, the southerly loop into and around Big Tree Park affords the County an opportunity to open up the park and enhance its curb appeal and attractiveness. A fresh new look with increased public traffic on a more regular basis can help rejuvenate the park and take advantage of one of the anchors in the CSTC corridor. It also avoids conflicting with inadequate right-of-way along the parkway, which would result from a true east-west alignment.

Segment 3

Segment 3 is the more complex of all of the alignments. This segment has Soldier Creek crossings, a rail crossing, connections to Soldier's Creek Park, a roadway crossing and linkage to the Environmental Science Center, among other things. Its major alignment for the eastern portion is within the Florida Power & Light right-of-way. The recommended alignment is a combination of several alignment segments. They are: Segment 3A to CR 419, then continuing south, switch to Segment 3B to cross CR 419 and make use of the existing railroad crossing at Osprey Trail, then continuing along Osprey Trail, connect to the FP & L right-of-way and then continue

south along the right-of-way. Next, the route would follow Alignment 3E, which corresponds to the 64 foot right-of-way for Old Sanford Oviedo Road. Placement of the trail in this right-of-way would necessitate adjustments in the roadway centerline and potentially refurbishing the roadway. Normal access to adjacent property owners and business will be maintained and minimal property issues would have to be handled. This route would bring the trail to the school site and the trail would connect to the cross Seminole Trail at the southeast corner of the school site.

As an alternative to 3E, the combined 3A, 3B, and 3C alignment south of the County's Natural Lands area has been considered. The alignment is as far south as it can be located to minimize wetland impacts and avoid any impacts to existing development or structures. This solution is complex and involves many facets of design, property use agreements/acquisition, and potential boardwalks. It is a route that can be designed and permitted. However, 3E is the more cost effective and the preferred route.

Former alternatives considered included making use of the CR 419 right-of-way. Also considered was a collocation within the CSX Aloma rail line which CSX will not approve. A modified alignment 3D contemplated a crossing of this rail line at grade to allow access to the east-west alignment of the F P & L right-of-way and staying in the FP&L right of up to the school site. Unfortunately, there is not enough right-of-way to allow for a trail within the CR 419 right-of-way and CSX will not approve a new at grade crossing, unless the County will give up three active crossings in return. Bridging over the railroad is an option, but very expensive and a complex design. This option is expensive with limited right-of-way and FP&L will resist an elevated structure. As a result, the combined alignments of 3A, 3B and 3E along Old Sanford Oviedo Road have emerged as the recommended route for the easterly end of the trail.

Design and Construction Sequencing

Segment 1C and Segment 2B lend themselves to a relatively direct and focused design approach. The railroad crossing at CR 427 will be somewhat complex, but should not delay design and permitting. Moving ahead with these two segments together would give the County the quickest startup for its efforts and would open up a significant portion of the CSTC system. Adding in that portion of Segment 3, which takes the trail to Soldier's Creek Park, would allow for a significant addition to the system that ties in key anchors in the trail system, specifically Big Tree Park and Soldier's Creek Park.

Given the use of the Old Sanford Oviedo right-of-way, the remaining Segment 3 from CR 419 east, could go to construction simultaneously with minimal wetland impacts, mitigation and normal acquisition of issues. The normal design process could go forward, subject to confirming right-of-way locations and working with the City of Winter Springs in making use of this right-of-way.

Moreover, it appears that all segments could be designed and permitted simultaneously. There will be involvement with property owners in Segment 1, the railroad for the CR 427 and Osprey Trail crossing and coordination with Natural Lands and FDEP in Segments 2 and 3. Coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department will be important for the park sites and trail design, as well as with the Seminole County Science Center. Other key stakeholders with whom agreements will be necessary are Progress Energy and Florida Power and Light Company. Finally, working with the City of Winter Springs and the Seminole County School Board will round out the majority of the groups or entities that will require specific detailed design coordination and agreements.

Summary

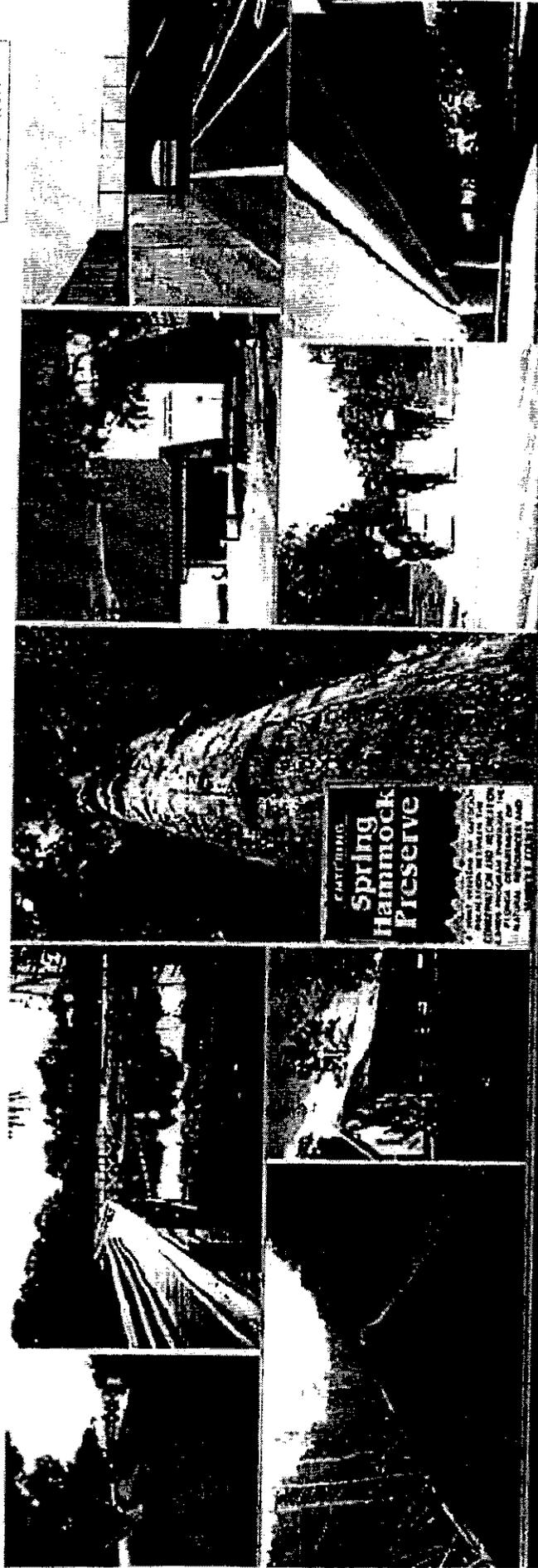
The Cross Seminole Trail Connector is an exciting challenge that will be one of the most unique trail systems in Florida. It is a wonderful opportunity to connect strategic assets owned or controlled by the County and affords the public a wonderful recreational trail system, which accesses public parks and their amenities. This will be a signature project by Seminole County. There are some challenges that remain, but the outcome will be something the County will be proud of and a system that provides unique connectivity to citizens, students and trail users in the corridor.



BCC Briefing

October 28, 2003

Cross Seminole Trail Connector

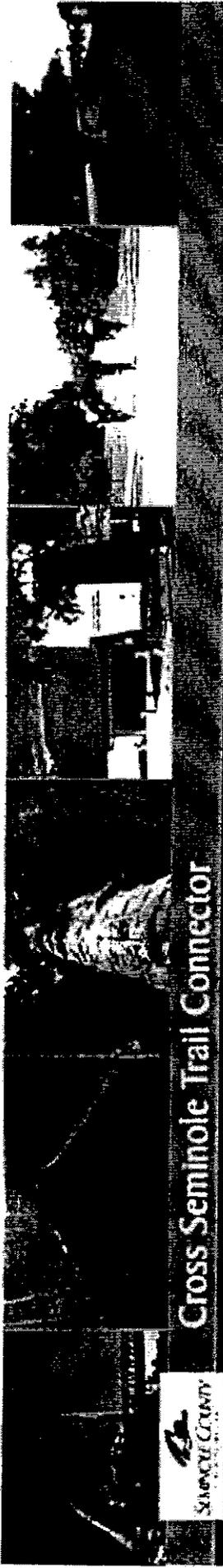


VHB Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.



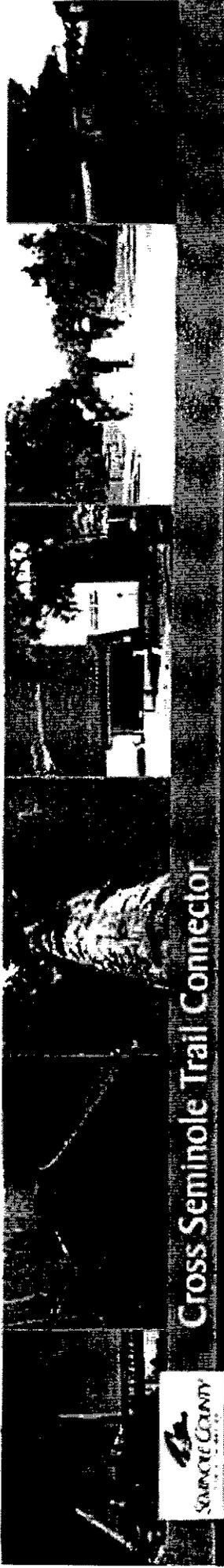
A Community Connection Project

The Cross Seminole Trail Connector will complete the East to West link between the Seminole Wekiva Trail System and the Cross Seminole Trail System while providing public access to a wide range of facilities and destinations.



Design Features/Goals

- Connect to local schools & neighborhoods
- Connect to natural lands & parks
- Construct boardwalks to minimize environmental impacts
- Coordinate with local businesses & property owners to minimize impacts
- Create a cost-effective & functional alignment



Cross Seminole Trail Connector

Stake Holders

- ~ Seminole County
- ~ FDOT
- ~ Citizens
- ~ FDEP
- ~ Local Communities
- ~ Local Businesses
- ~ Winter Springs
- ~ Property Owners
- ~ Longwood
- ~ Trail Associations
- ~ Lake Mary
- ~ and User Groups
- ~ SJRWMD
- ~ Utility Companies
- ~ ACOE



Cross Seminole Trail Connector

