



By **Bill Parsons**, Vice Chairman, Seven Oaks CDD



## SEVEN OAKS NATURE TRAIL

The picture above shows a portion of the 2.5 mile nature trail that goes through some of the very scenic areas of Seven Oaks. In the past, there has only been minor changes to the nature trail such as adding a few trash cans and removing some faded signs on posts that had rotted. In addition, the access pictured below was added at Pinecrest in October 2010 for \$1,350 and the concrete was replaced at some bridges in December 2010 for \$1,950.



A few months ago, the Board made the decision to make major improvements to the nature trail. We allocated \$25,000 to buy lumber so the CDD maintenance staff can replace 700 pieces. The worst 35 have already been replaced and the remaining will be replaced in the coming months.

To make the major improvements, the CDD Board asked our engineer to get bids on repaving the entire nature trail. He sent seven firms an invitation to repave the nature trail. Of the four firms who looked at the nature trail, they were reluctant to do the work due to risk of damaging the bridges. One firm, DuraSeal Asphalt Sealing and Paving, submitted a price of \$146,861. The CDD Board told the engineer to tell the firms that we would waive liability for the bridges.

Only one other company submitted a bid, and it was significantly higher. DuraSeal said they would not need a waiver for the bridges as they would install a mid-span support and tracks to "bridge" the wooden planks to reduce the stress on the bridge supports and beams. The Board asked the engineer to include correcting the two low areas on the nature trail that flood. DuraSeal increased their bid to \$151,160 to increase the thickness of the asphalt and install drains for these two areas. On October 10, 2012, the CDD Board approved for DuraSeal to do the work. ❖

## TRAIL EXPANSION

In 2001, the developers of Seven Oaks, Crown Community Development, submitted a rezoning petition to Pasco County to replace a 195 acre golf course planned for Seven Oaks with an 8 mile nature trail. The golf course got eliminated, but the documentation for an 8 mile nature trail was not included. By 2002, the builders had bought lots from Crown and were selling them to homeowners. During the first few years, the people who had bought homes in Seven Oaks were told that there would be an 8 mile nature trail. The 8 mile nature trail news was even posted on Crown's Website, and there were large maps on the walls in builders' sales offices showing the 8 mile nature trail. In 2004, the Seven Oaks Residents Council discovered that Crown no longer intended to extend the nature trail be-

yond its current 2.5 miles. For several years, they tried to get Crown to add the remainder of the 8 mile nature trail, but Crown would not agree to extend it.

In 2010, American Consulting Engineers of Florida, the engineering firm that the CDD uses, agreed to provide the CDD Board a proposal at no cost on expanding the nature trail. The engineering firm's proposal, dated April 13, 2010, provided the estimated construction and engineering cost to expand the nature trail approximately 4.5 miles. The portion of the nature trail expansion south of the power lines could take one of three routes. Depending on the route chosen, the cost for the entire expansion would be \$2,141,606, \$2,564,211, or \$2,666,830. The Board decided not to pursue the expansion.



Two areas of the nature trail that show why the trail will be resurfaced.



Rotten board on bridge on nature trail.



Flooded area on nature trail.