

CAPISTRANO BAY DISTRICT
AGENDA REPORT
October 4, 2016

Old Business

ITEM 9a

Undergrounding Utilities

Recap from the previous meeting (late July):

The Board discussed that there is an issue with available space on the ground in the southern half of the community to fit ground-level transformers. While the southern half of the road seems wide enough, the reality is that the District's right-of-way for the road in this area is only 20 feet in width (the northern half of the road is 30 feet). All the extra space you see is property owned by the Railroad and SDGE cannot place transformers on RR property. SDGE requires deeded easements and the RR ownership does not grant easements – only temporary licenses for limited use. The seaward side in the southern half of the community is a problem as well, with most homes sitting just a few feet from the roadway.

A possible option for the southern half of the community was explored to leave the transformers up on the poles and distribute all the power downward on the poles and thereby eliminate all the overhead lines and leave only the poles with transformers. SDGE cannot permit this configuration for rigid safety reasons having to do with how the primary and secondary power lines feed into the transformers. The high-voltage primary power has to feed into the pole-mounted transformers from above and cannot be brought up from underneath, so this option is not a possibility.

Our consultant, Utility Specialists Inc, suggested another option for the southern half of the community, one of which has been done previously in other communities with similar tight space restrictions. This would be to leave the power poles and transformers in place along with the top power lines (this is the primary feed – the three thin wires at the very top) and underground the secondary power and all of the lower communications cables and lines. The consultant thinks this option could cut the cost by 50%.

The consultant still feels that placement of ground-level transformers for the northern half of the community is a workable option, thereby allowing all overhead wires, transformers and telephone poles to be undergrounded. Remember, however, that if all the telephone poles are removed, the street lights need to be mounted on alternate decorative street lamp poles.

On the following four pages are before/after photos of the power line mess along Beach Road. The second photo in each sample has been edited to remove the cables and lines that make up the secondary wires so you can get an idea of what this option would look like. In this option, the power poles and the transformers (for the southern half of the community) would remain in their current locations as is depicted in the photo samples.

35351 to 35371

BEFORE



AFTER



35455 to 35471

BEFORE



AFTER



35411 to 35431

BEFORE



AFTER



35595 to 35581

BEFORE



AFTER

