



STAFF REPORT

Public Hearing to Consider Expanding the Utility Undergrounding District on Old County Road and Masonic Way (Rule 20A Underground Utilities Conversion)

September 23, 2003

Honorable Mayor and City Council:

Summary

The City Council is requested to extend the existing Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District to incorporate further properties along the south end of Old County Road. These properties are within the City of Belmont, but front onto a section of Old County Road that is within the San Mateo County unincorporated Harbor Industrial Area (HIA). The County is also establishing an underground utility district for the utility mains in their section of Old County Road, but cannot include the properties outside of its jurisdiction. Extending Belmont's Underground District will allow Belmont to require these properties to reconnect to the underground utilities and will allow Belmont to use its allocated Rule 20A funds to pay for the property electrical lateral service connections. The Council must hold a public hearing to obtain public comment prior to determining that the utilities undergrounding is in the general public interest to obtain funding through Rule 20A.

Background and Discussion

On April 8, 2003, the City Council established the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District, Resolution 9389. The Department of Public Works staff have been coordinating with the County of San Mateo staff to extend the undergrounding through the unincorporated HIA. The County agrees to use its Rule 20A funds to extend the undergrounding project to its southern boundary with the City of San Carlos (midway between Harbor Boulevard and Quarry Road). However, the 15 properties within Belmont city limits that front on the section of Old County Road in the unincorporated HIA need to be added to Belmont's underground district. Adding the Belmont properties to the established district will give the City authority to require reconnection to the underground utility mains in Old County Road and will allow the City to use Rule 20A funds to pay for the service reconnections.

Belmont's Ordinance 391 and Rule 20A require the City to determine that utility undergrounding is in the general public interest before a district can be established. This determination can be

made only after holding a public hearing and finding that one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. Undergrounding the utilities will eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electric facilities;
2. The streets within the proposed district are extensively used by the general public and carry a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
3. The streets within the district adjoin or pass through a civic area; and/or
4. The streets within the district are considered "arterial" or "major collector" roads as these terms are defined in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidance.

The Council made this determination prior to establishing the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District and the same rationale will apply to adding the 15 properties to the district.

On August 13, 2003, staff held a general informational neighborhood meeting for the 15 property owners who would be directly affected by the extension of the underground district. No property owners attended the meeting or called with questions.

On September 12, 2003, staff held a meeting with the County of San Mateo and the utility companies to discuss procedural steps and obtain an update of the design of undergrounding the utilities in the district previously established on April 8. PG&E estimates that it will need approximately nine months to design the undergrounding project and obtain necessary easements after it receives direction to proceed from Council. After the design is approved, PG&E estimates that construction will take another nine months.

The cost to underground the utilities in this extension of the district will be paid for by the County of San Mateo's Rule 20A fund allotment. Property service reconnection is expected to cost from around \$500 to \$1,500, or a total ranging from \$7,500 to \$22,500 for the 15 properties in the proposed district. The Council previously decided to use Rule 20A funds for service reconnection in the established district and may also use Rule 20A funds for these 15 properties.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact to the City's budget from this action. The City has a current Rule 20A allocation of slightly over \$1,464,000 and may also borrow up to five years of future allocations. The total available Rule 20A funding of approximately \$2,500,000 is sufficient to add payment of the service connection for 15 properties. It is also noted that \$1 million of Redevelopment Funds were allocated for this project. The City Council acting as the Redevelopment Agency may determine at a later date any Redevelopment Fund contributions, if any, for this project.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Council hold a public hearing to hear comments on the proposed extension to the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District. After consideration of these comments, staff recommends that the City Council determine that it is in

the general public interest to extend the district to the Cities southern boundary along Old County Road, the boundaries of which are shown on Exhibit A, attached and incorporated by reference to the resolution, and direct PG&E to use Belmont's Rule 20A funds to reconnect service in coordination with the County's underground project.

Alternatives

1. Refer back to staff for further information.
2. Deny the request.

Attachments

1. Resolution w/Attachment

Respectfully submitted,

Bennett Chun, P.E.
Civil Engineer

Raymond E. Davis, III, P.E., PTOE
Director of Public Works

Jere A. Kersnar
City Manager

RESOLUTION NO. _____
CITY OF BELMONT
San Mateo County California

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELMONT TO EXTEND
THE UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT ON OLD COUNTY ROAD AND
MASONIC WAY (RULE 20A UNDERGROUND UTILITIES CONVERSION)**

WHEREAS, on April 8, 2003, the City established the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District incorporation all of Old County Road within the Belmont City limits; and,

WHEREAS, San Mateo County is concurrently establishing an underground utility district to continue the utility undergrounding on Old County Road to their southern county limits; and,

WHEREAS, properties fronting on the unincorporated County section of Old County Road, but located within the City of Belmont need to be added to Belmont's Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District, so that their services will be reconnected in coordination with the San Mateo County project; and,

WHEREAS, there is sufficient funding available in the City's Rule 20A allocation to complete the service reconnection work for the properties in the extended district; and,

WHEREAS, the area comprising the established district with proposed extension is more particularly described in Exhibit A attached and incorporated by reference; and,

WHEREAS, on Tuesday, September 23, 2003, at the hour of 7:30 p.m., in the regular meeting place of City Council, Twin Pines Senior and Community Center, the City Council held a public hearing to hear all protests and receive evidence for and against the action herein proposed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belmont that:

1. It is in the general public interest to add properties along the south end of Old County Road to the established Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. Undergrounding the utilities will eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electric facilities on these streets;
 - b. These streets are extensively used by the general public and carry a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
 - c. These streets adjoin or pass through a civic area; and,
 - d. Old County Road is an arterial/major collector.
2. The Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District is hereby extended, the boundaries of which are shown on Exhibit A attached and incorporated by reference.

3. PG&E is directed to use City of Belmont's allocated Rule 20A funds to reconnect the service laterals for the properties added to the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District by this resolution.
4. The City Clerk is hereby instructed to notify all affected utilities and all persons owning real property within the extension to the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District within 10 days after the date of such adoption. The City Clerk shall further notify these property owners that they must allow reconnection of their services to the underground utilities. Such notification shall be made by mailing a copy of this resolution together with a copy of City of Belmont Ordinance 391 to property owners within the extension to the Old County Road and Masonic Way Underground Utility District as such are shown on the last equalized assessment roll and to the affected utilities.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held on September 23, 2003.

AYES, COUNCILMEMBER(S): _____

NOES, COUNCILMEMBER(S): _____

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBER(S): _____

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBER(S): _____

City Clerk of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

Mayor of the City of Belmont