

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

ALAMEDA POWER & TELECOM
UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT #30
TOWN HALL MEETING

Tuesday, April 25, 2006
6:30 p.m.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MR. ORBETA: Good evening, everyone. We're
3 happy that you all have joined us here tonight. For
4 those of you whom I have had not had the pleasure of
5 meeting, my name is Bob Orbeta. I'm the Administrative
6 Services Manager for Alameda Power & Telecom.

7 Several of my colleagues are here tonight, but
8 before I introduce them, let me begin by introducing
9 three members of the Public Utilities Board. Vice
10 President Chuck Bangert, Commissioner John McCahan and
11 Commissioner Peter Holmes.

12 Let me also introduce to you Alameda Power &
13 Telecom staff. There's Cris Banaban, our engineering
14 and planning manager, Dean Bachelor, who is our
15 operations manager back there. From our marketing
16 department up front, Andrea Faizi and Kathy Moehring.
17 Our communications supervisor Matt McCabe and last but
18 not least our Underground Utility District Project
19 Manager, the electric engineer involved in this, is Tom
20 Ting.

21 Tom's going to take over the mike in a few
22 minutes, but first let me review the purpose and the
23 process of tonight's meeting. In April, staff provided
24 a report to the Public Utilities Board with
25 recommendations for the Underground Utility District

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 30.

2 Our intent this evening is to provide information
3 and the process on the undergrounding issues
4 surrounding Underground District 30, which is all part
5 of your neighborhood.

6 As some of you know, several residents in your
7 neighborhood have addressed the Public Utilities Board
8 on several occasions citing concerns about and
9 suggesting alternatives to current underground
10 construction standards. Staff has been directed by the
11 Board to provide information and gather information
12 from neighborhood residents and project participants
13 and present it to the Board along with staff's
14 recommendations for Board consideration and action.

15 We expect to recommend that the Board take action
16 at its June meeting. That meeting is going to be on
17 June 19th at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council chambers.

18 Our meeting tonight is being transcribed and our
19 presentation and any resulting comments should be
20 considered in the public record. You can also submit
21 comments after the meeting by going to our website at
22 www.Alamedapt.com. In the Customer Service section you
23 can provide written comments there.

24 If you have some written questions or comments,
25 we'll be more than happy to take them this evening

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 also. And we're asking for written comments so that we
2 have a clear record of everybody and there is no
3 misunderstandings.

4 We would like the comments by May 12th. The
5 reason we need it then is to incorporate it in the
6 packet for the June meeting. And the meeting notes
7 from tonight from the transcription will be included in
8 the Board packet.

9 A little history. In November of 2004, the City
10 Council passed a resolution on the next phase of the
11 Undergrounding Project, Phase 6. Underground Utility
12 District 30 was the No. 1 priority in Phase 6.

13 We are currently working on two other districts
14 right now. One is 29, which is the library project,
15 and we're working to underground that block in front of
16 the new library. And then there's another small
17 project on Shoreline Drive that we're working on right
18 now. Those are the two current projects in progress.

19 Now I'm going to turn it over to Tom to talk about
20 the details on the project.

21 MR. TING: Thank you, Bob. I'm hoping to give
22 you an overview of the project and hopefully answer
23 some of your questions. I'm sure I'll probably
24 generate more questions. Will you please hold your
25 questions until the end as I finish my presentation.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Then we will have a question and answer period at the
2 end.

3 They say this project involves the removal of all
4 of the overhead wires and equipment that are currently
5 mounted on the wood poles. The underground District 30
6 includes Bay Street from Central Avenue to the lagoon,
7 St. Charles Street from Central Avenue to the lagoon,
8 San Antonio from Bay Street to almost to Hawthorne and
9 also Fair Oaks Avenue.

10 The typical timeframe for completion of a project
11 of this size is probably two to three years. That's
12 from the start of -- the initial design, the
13 preliminary design to the actual completion of
14 construction and removal of all the poles.

15 It's actually broken down in several different
16 phases. The first phase is the composite design of all
17 the utility structures, procurement of the easements
18 needed for that equipment and the other facilities, and
19 then going out to bid for the installation of those
20 facilities.

21 The next step would be the actual construction of
22 all the substructures, which are all the boxes,
23 conduits underground, the equipment pads, and things
24 like that. And actual service restoration. Once
25 that's all completed, the next step the utility would

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 actually go in there and install all of their wires and
2 all of their equipment in those locations.

3 Once that system is energized or in operation,
4 then there is the cut-over of each individual
5 homeowner's service. The actual cut-over, we make sure
6 you cut over to the underground system before we remove
7 the overhead system so there's no gap in there.

8 There's a gap when we actually do the cut-over,
9 but it's not like you're without service at any time.
10 Then there's the actual removal of all the overhead
11 facilities once everybody is on the underground system,
12 and then finally the removal of the poles by the last
13 utility of the pole.

14 Initially when we started this project with the
15 preliminary design back in October, we had anticipated
16 going out to bid for the substructures in June of 2006,
17 and complete starting construction of the substructure
18 in October of 2006. With the comments that we've
19 received from some of the homeowners and discussions
20 with the PUB, we've basically pushed back the schedule.
21 It's been delayed.

22 Agencies and utilities involved with this project.
23 We're an underground project. The City of Alameda
24 Public Works Department has overall responsibility for
25 the project in assuring that the work that we do meets

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 the resolution that's passed by the City Council.

2 Alameda Power & Telecom is responsible for the
3 electric facilities on the poles and also for the cable
4 TV and Internet that's part of our telecom group. And
5 we're also acting as the unique utility that
6 coordinates all the work with the other utilities, the
7 other utilities being AT&T and Comcast.

8 We collect all of their designs. We prepare a
9 composite sketch of all the substructures that need to
10 be installed. We go out to bid. We coordinate the
11 actual construction and project management of the
12 substructures, and then we make sure that everything is
13 completed at the end.

14 Around the room -- I've seen many of you look at
15 it -- there are four drawings around the room. Each of
16 them are identical, so you only really need to look at
17 one. They indicate, or they are actually a composite
18 sketch of all the facility's equipment and boxes that
19 each of the utilities wants to install. It's color
20 coded so that you could see what types of equipment
21 we're planning to install near your home.

22 There are also photographs on there indicating
23 what some of that equipment would look like. There's a
24 transformer, there's a Cable TV pedestal, either a rock
25 pedestal or a plastic case, and there's also a picture

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 of the sidewalk boxes.

2 The way that we're going to install this is with a
3 joint trench. There's a dash line that's shown on the
4 drawings that indicates where we would be trenching in
5 the sidewalks. We will have one trench line in the
6 sidewalk where we will be installing conduits for all
7 the utilities.

8 In addition to that, there will be different
9 locations. There will be boxes to provide service for
10 each of the homes and also to assist in pulling cables
11 and things like that.

12 In addition to that, Alameda Power & Telecom is
13 looking at installing pad-mounted transformers and
14 pedestal-mounted communication amplifiers. You can see
15 those in the two larger drawings.

16 AT&T, all of their equipment will actually be
17 below ground. They have an above-ground cabinet that's
18 actually located at Bay Street and Central outside of
19 the underground district. So everything they need is
20 going to be sent from there, and everything else in the
21 district is going to be underground.

22 Comcast is going to have some underground, and
23 they're also going to have some above ground
24 pedestal-mounted cabinets.

25 One thing I want to mention, these drawings are

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 only diagrammatic. The boxes themselves are not to
2 scale. The street is the scale, the lots are to scale,
3 but the boxes themselves are not to scale. So when we
4 actually go out there and install the substructures,
5 they could move based on the field conditions as they
6 do the construction, 30 feet either way, one way or the
7 other.

8 Moving on to transformers. Transformers are
9 basically used to reduce voltage to a level that can be
10 used in the home. Alameda Power & Telecom distributes
11 power around the city at 12,000 volts. We use a
12 transformer to lower that voltage to 120/240 which is
13 what everyone uses in their home.

14 Currently, the picture on the left shows the
15 transformers that we have on the wood poles. There are
16 eight total in the area, four on Bay Street and four on
17 St. Charles. The new design would be using the
18 pad-mounted transformers, which are on the right.
19 We've designed it to try to reduce the number of
20 transformers that we've been installing. We would
21 install down to four total for the area.

22 Looking at the picture, you might think that the
23 overhead transformer is actually a lot smaller than the
24 pad-mounted transformers. But in actuality when you
25 bring that overhead transformer down, 40 feet down from

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 the pole, it's slightly -- it's not as small as you
2 think it is. It's probably three to four feet tall and
3 about 2 feet in diameter.

4 The transformers themselves will require a 10-foot
5 by 10-foot easement. The actual size of the
6 transformer isn't actually 10 feet by 10. It actually
7 sits on a 4 by 4 footpad and stands approximately 32
8 inches tall.

9 Alameda Power & Telecom requires clearance around
10 the transformer for working clearance, basically safety
11 if we need to go and get in there and work on the
12 transformer.

13 There can be landscaping installed around the
14 transformer. There's an image on these that shows some
15 bushes around the transformer, just to try to hide or
16 to try to mitigate the visual impact of the
17 transformer.

18 The pad-mounted transformers are in Alameda Power
19 & Telecom's construction standards. During discussions
20 with a homeowner's group, they had asked us to explore
21 the option of installing submersible transformers.
22 These would be transformers inside of a box set below
23 ground so that there would be no visual impacts by
24 that.

25 Though Alameda Power & Telecom does have five

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 submersible transformers, these are larger and in the
2 Park Street area where there's no space for pad-mounted
3 transformers. So those were installed basically for
4 technical reasons. There is no other viable option for
5 doing that.

6 The homeowners made a request to the PUB for
7 Alameda Power & Telecom to deviate from the
8 construction standards and allow for the installation
9 of submersible transformers. For reasons relating to
10 safety, reliability and economics, Alameda Power &
11 Telecom staff recommended that we not deviate from
12 those construction standards and stay with the
13 installation of pad-mounted transformers. The Public
14 Utility Board members are reviewing that right now.

15 Moving on to street lights. There are currently
16 three types of street lights installed in the
17 Underground District 30 area. Starting from the left,
18 there are the pendant-type lights. These are pendant
19 lights on San Antonio. These will remain in place.
20 The only change that we've made will be the service
21 will be converted from overhead coming from the wires
22 to an underground service.

23 In the middle are the post-top globe lights on Bay
24 Street and St. Charles closer to the lagoon. These
25 will also remain, but there will be some modifications

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 that need to be made to these. We need to facilitate a
2 photo cell control. Right now there's one photo cell
3 that controls all the lights on Bay and all the lights
4 on St. Charles of these type. Those are actually
5 mounted on the wood poles. Once the wood poles come
6 down, now we don't have control on these. We need to
7 see if we can somehow mount photo cells on these
8 lights.

9 Also being considered based on -- because we've
10 received comments from some of the homeowners is the
11 possibility of replacing the lamps in these with
12 high-pressure sodium to increase the illumination in
13 the area. The high-pressure sodium lights are going to
14 give off -- different from the existing -- but they'll
15 give off a golden white kind of colored light, similar
16 to what's existing on San Antonio and the other parts
17 of Bay Street and Fair Oaks.

18 Everywhere else there are the cobra-head lights
19 mounted on wood poles. These lights need to be
20 replaced. They are mounted on the wood poles. When
21 the wood poles come down, the lights will come down and
22 we'll be installing new lights.

23 There was a request made to the PUB by the
24 homeowners and some of the Alameda citizens that rather
25 than going back with cobra-head lights, we look at

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 installing historic replicas.

2 Currently in Alameda Power & Telecom standards we
3 have two types of replicas. On the left is the
4 post-top acorn. This actual picture is from the Bay
5 Port Development on Ralph Appezzato Way just west of
6 the college. And then also there are the pendant
7 lights, historical replica pendant lights on the right.
8 This image was taken from Santa Clara Avenue at Park
9 Street if you'd like to take a look at that.

10 The recommendation from Alameda Power & Telecom
11 staff was to replace the cobra-head lights with
12 historical replicas that are currently in our standards
13 which are either one of these two lights. This is also
14 under consideration by the Board members.

15 Trees. Alameda Power & Telecom has been working
16 with a consulting arborist. This arborist is actually
17 familiar with the area. He's actually been out in the
18 area and has done some work with the city. He actually
19 just started yesterday working on developing a survey
20 of all of the trees. He's going to summarize his
21 findings and detail any potential tree damage that
22 might occur once we do our trenching, provide
23 recommendations on working around the trees and provide
24 recommendations for possible tree replacement if there
25 is disease to these trees. But he's going to provide a

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 matrix of all the trees and what his recommendations
2 are.

3 We're going to do our best to preserve the
4 integrity of the existing trees. But digging in the
5 sidewalks, any digging out there, there's a possibility
6 of doing some damage. We'll do whatever we can to make
7 sure that that does not happen.

8 Now, some of the homeowner responsibilities. Like
9 I said, everything out on the streets and in the
10 sidewalks with the main lines are going to be paid by
11 the respective utilities. The homeowner's
12 responsibility starts on the work on their own
13 property. That involves the whole service conversion,
14 your electric service, your phone service and your
15 cable television service will have to be placed
16 underground.

17 Right now they're coming from the poles. There's
18 all kinds of overhead wires. You'll have to install
19 either a joint trench, meaning that all the utilities
20 can place or have conduits in a single trench,
21 installation of the electric service wires and
22 termination at the service panel.

23 There are two options for doing this electric
24 service conversion. Both of these are allowed under
25 Alameda Power & Telecom construction, and they're only

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 allowed for underground districts.

2 The preferred option is on the left and basically
3 the dark line is the underground service coming up
4 alongside of the house. And we intercept the weather
5 head conduit coming down from the roof and feed the
6 meter panel from there. The second option, which is if
7 you can't do the first one, would be to install a
8 second weather head altogether rising up towards the
9 side of the house and doing a wire connection at the
10 top where we need service through there.

11 One of these options should work in most
12 applications out there that I've seen. Obviously the
13 homeowner has the option of repairing or replacing
14 their service altogether with an underground service
15 upgrading it.

16 The estimated cost of doing one of these projects
17 is between 3 and \$5,000. The cost varies based on the
18 type of service that you can do, the length of the
19 trench, whether we're trenching through grass or
20 through landscape or whether you have to go through
21 your driveway.

22 Some other considerations. Some homeowners I know
23 have discussed going out for group bids. As part of
24 our bid package, we're going to be -- included as a
25 line item would be for our contractor doing our work,

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 to actually do the underground service conversion on
2 private property. That will be offered to you as an
3 option.

4 So you have the option of either going out and
5 getting your own contractor, checking out our
6 contractor to see if it's competitive, or going out as
7 a group to see if you can get a competitive bid for the
8 work.

9 The homeowner -- concerning paying for the actual
10 conversion, the homeowner pays for the full conversion
11 up front. AP&T will reimburse a portion of that
12 through a subsidy which I'm going to talk about.

13 A portion of the cost for this are subsidized by
14 Alameda Power & Telecom. For 2006, homeowners are
15 responsible for the first approximately \$1,600 of the
16 cost. This amount is adjusted annually based on the
17 Bay Area Consumer Price Index.

18 Conditions applied to the subsidy are that it only
19 applies for owner-occupied residences, and it applies
20 to the electric service conversion only, and it doesn't
21 apply for any cost-for-service upgrades or repairs not
22 related to the service conversion.

23 So going back to the other slide where I talked
24 about homeowners have the option of upgrading their own
25 service rather than doing one of the options that I

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 presented, those costs would not be included in this
2 subsidy.

3 Looking at an example of this, let's say we have
4 an estimated price of \$3,000 for the total conversion.
5 Working through the cost of the electric service
6 conversion and the cost of the trench of the other
7 utilities, the actual customer total cost to the
8 homeowner would be \$2,300.

9 Now I'll turn it back over to Bob for the next
10 step.

11 MR. ORBETA: I know that was a lot of
12 information, but we wanted to save a lot of time for
13 comments.

14 Again, the next steps is we're going to provide
15 whatever comments tonight to the Public Utility Board,
16 and the Public Utility Board will act on the staff's
17 recommendations for the transformers, street lights,
18 etc, all the issues that are germane to this. Once
19 that happens, we will finalize the design of the
20 project and prepare bid specifications for the
21 substructures.

22 So one last bit of housekeeping, and I should have
23 mentioned it at the beginning. We'd like to thank
24 Mastic and Jackie Krause back there for allowing us,
25 hosting this meeting. So thank you very much Jackie.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 And with that, we will open it up to questions.

2 MS. WERNER: Peggy Werner, W-E-R-N-E-R, 1324
3 Bay Street. When I got the first letter about this
4 possibly taking place, I had a member of AP&T come to
5 my house and explain to me what a transformer was and
6 where he wanted to put it.

7 I was led to believe it was the smaller of the two
8 pictures up there. I was also told that you were
9 planning to put it in my front yard. I was also told
10 if I strongly objected, it didn't matter because you
11 guys could use eminent domain to put it in my yard.
12 All of which does not sit well with me.

13 I'm a single parent of two. I basically cannot
14 afford to have my property value go down by having that
15 big ugly box in my front yard. I see it as a safety
16 issue. I also see it as a beautification issue. And I
17 see it definitely as a property value issue.

18 And my question is could you explain to me the
19 procurement of easement, what you mean by that?

20 MR. TING: I would like to address this. I
21 was the one that met with you out at your site. I
22 don't recall telling you that it was what we were going
23 to do.

24 Your question was what's the worst case, and I
25 explained that in worst case well, we could go through

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 the eminent domain process. I feel I also explained
2 that that's not the process that we would want to go
3 through. We would work with homeowners as best as
4 possible to try to either relocate it or there is a
5 possibility that we could move transformers.

6 The initial location that was presented to you was
7 a preliminary location based on our best design.

8 MS. WERNER: Which is also still on the map?

9 MR. TING: Yes. We have not changed the
10 design yet because of all these issues we've been
11 working through with the homeowners and the PUB. So
12 the preliminary design actually sits as preliminary.
13 It has not changed since that first time in January.

14 In terms of the easement process, we would need to
15 work with the homeowners where we would like to have a
16 transformer installed. The transformers are needed
17 basically just to serve customers in the area.

18 The whole easement process is to try to negotiate
19 with customers and see whether they will grant that to
20 us. If you decide you don't want the easement, then we
21 need to see whether we can move it somewhere else,
22 whether it's somewhere else or someone else in the area
23 that would be amenable to having a transformer in their
24 front yard.

25 MS. WERNER: Frankly, I do not want to have

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 that transformer in my front yard, nor do I want to
2 foist that particular transformer on any of my
3 neighbors. So I would appreciate knowing what the
4 difference in cost to AP&T would be in undergrounding
5 rather than putting those ugly transformers on our
6 property.

7 MR. ORBETA: We could provide the
8 difference -- again, the standards that APT uses are
9 above-ground transformers. Tom's done some research
10 with various cities in the Bay Area; city of Palo Alto,
11 city of Santa Clara. And for residential
12 neighborhoods, for undergrounding, those utilities
13 require above-ground transformers. We believe that for
14 the liability safety reasons Tom's discussed before
15 that we should go ahead with the above-ground
16 transformers.

17 MS. WERNER: I suggest you look for other
18 options.

19 MR. ORBETA: We have looked at other options
20 and we will continue to look at other options. One of
21 the issues -- we have been criticized in the past for
22 not spending underground funds as quickly as possible.

23 So one of the options that we could do is if we
24 cannot get easements from the neighborhoods is to
25 request to move to the next project on the priority

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 list. That is an option also. So we can do that. We
2 can request that. I don't know --

3 MS. WERNER: I don't want to take that as a
4 threat.

5 MR. ORBETA: It's not a threat ma'am. I
6 apologize. We have been meeting with folks since
7 January on this, and I think that we've tried to come a
8 long way in answering questions, providing information
9 and trying to work with everybody in the neighborhood.

10 We are trying to work as hard as we can. We are
11 trying to provide as many options as possible. And we
12 will try to work with all the homeowners in the
13 neighborhood.

14 MS. WERNER: So am I accurate in that if I
15 don't allow you an easement then this won't be put on
16 my property?

17 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: You have the
18 only pole on the block.

19 MS. WERNER: Lucky me.

20 MR. LEWIS: If I could address that, please,
21 as an alternative that has not been suggested or
22 thought of.

23 MR. ORBETA: Sure.

24 MR. LEWIS: Sy Lewis. 1128 Bay Street. And
25 if I understand, the purpose of undergrounding the

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 wires is a beautification issue and a safety issue.
2 However, we currently have transformers on poles. We
3 could theoretically, from my point of view, leave some
4 transformers on poles, eliminating the wires (except
5 for up and down those poles) and eliminate the
6 transformers in people's front yards, simply leaving,
7 as somebody suggested, the only pole on the block. But
8 then you wouldn't have wires going up and down the
9 street. You wouldn't have to cut the trees to
10 accommodate the wires, and you wouldn't have any new
11 issue of beautification. In other words, nothing new
12 would be added to the neighborhood.

13 MR. ORBETA: That is one of the options that
14 Tom has looked at. We can add his findings on that to
15 the Board packet, but that is an option that was
16 discussed already.

17 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: What are his
18 findings?

19 MR. TING: Technically speaking, it is
20 feasible. The pole -- we would probably have to
21 increase the size of the pole to facilitate just having
22 a transformer up there and not having it unsafe for our
23 people to get up there and climb if necessary, things
24 like that.

25 The one thing that needs to be considered is there

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 would need to be a variance given by the City Council,
2 because the resolution is that for an underground
3 district everything goes underground except for some
4 pad-mounted transformers, cable TV pedestals, things
5 like that. Having a pole on a transformer up there is
6 going to be in violation of that resolution. So that
7 would have to go to the City Council for a variance
8 from that.

9 MR> OSTER: Jim Oster, O-S-T-E-R. 1200 Bay.
10 Are we allowed to vote that you go to the next
11 district? Are we allowed to ask for that? And if so,
12 what is that process? In other words, pass on this
13 undergrounding and you guys can go to the next one on
14 the list. How does that process work?

15 MR. ORBETA: The City Council approves the
16 priority listing of the underground districts, and any
17 variance to that would have to be addressed by the City
18 Council. So you would have to go to them and request.

19 MR> OSTER: So would I go? Would all of us
20 go? Would the majority of the folks that want to go
21 go, if in fact that happens or wants to happen?

22 MR. ORBETA: It would have to be requested to
23 be put on the agenda for the City Council than if you
24 just showed up for the meeting, I believe. I think
25 there would have to be a request to place it on the

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 agenda for the City Council so that they can take
2 action on reprioritizing districts.

3 MR. GASKILL: John Gaskill, 1251 Bay Street.
4 I'm underlining that gentleman's question. There's too
5 much non-undergrounding here for an undergrounding
6 project.

7 And if you look at Bay Street, that end of Bay
8 Street, and there's another unobstructed view of broad
9 lawns with setbacks. And this is just going to muck it
10 up. At least that's how I feel. Normally I think --
11 nobody is questioning you and the fact that you guys
12 are probably doing the best you can.

13 But suppose we just decide we don't want to do it
14 and you say, well, we have to go to the -- because of
15 these reasons. And our trees are in this. And all
16 those great stately trees are a big concern to us.

17 Suppose we just decide we don't want to do it.
18 You say go to the City council. What would staff's
19 recommendation be; let them have their way or hell, no,
20 make them do it?

21 MR. ORBETA: It's not a hell no, make them do
22 it. We will do what's directed by the Council. We
23 have no opinion as far as setting the District
24 priorities.

25 MR. GASKILL: No, no. I understand. But

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 they're just going to ask you. Aren't they?

2 MR. ORBETA: As far as that, I don't believe
3 it. On Phase 6 of the priorities, there's 12
4 underground districts in Phase 6. This district
5 happens to be the first one. So we don't care which
6 districts we do. The funding is available to do this,
7 and we're willing to -- any of those districts that are
8 on the priority list.

9 MR. GASKILL: Ultimately, does it come down
10 to we don't want it, therefore we won't do it?

11 MR. ORBETA: Yes.

12 MR. GASKILL: Or is it we don't want it but
13 who cares?

14 MR. ORBETA: If you don't want it and the
15 City Council says that you do not want it, then we will
16 move to the next district that they direct us to move
17 to.

18 MR. GASKILL: I suppose once you get this
19 steamroller going and you start putting these
20 structures up above ground, that's the way it's going
21 to be all across town, isn't it?

22 MR. ORBETA: Yes, sir.

23 MR. GASKILL: Why not downtown? You can just
24 dig a bigger hole can't you? Why can't you just dig a
25 bigger hole on our street like you did downtown?

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. ORBETA: Let me have Tom speak in
2 technical terms.

3 MR. TING: Addressing the possibility of
4 sticking transformers below ground. There are safety
5 liability and economic reasons behind that. The
6 transformers in the Park Street area were installed
7 that way because there is no room to install
8 pad-mounted transformers. Those are in huge vaults,
9 probably from here to the wall to the ceiling. It's a
10 large vault. It's a big hole.

11 Obviously we're not going to need something that
12 large for installing transformers in the underground
13 district area, residential areas, but it does include
14 sticking it in a large vault. Those transformers also
15 have Sump pumps, lights, things like that in them that
16 pump water out of it.

17 Putting transformers in this residential area, we
18 won't have all that equipment in there. You'll be
19 hearing sump pumps going off pumping water out of the
20 box; not just water from the ground cable but also
21 water from rain. Water will fill up the box. Water
22 from watering lawns will fill up the box.

23 So there are some issues with placing things on
24 the ground. The transformers will be sitting in water
25 the majority of the time. There is corrosion that

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 happens to the transformer. So there are some
2 drawbacks to putting things below ground. Any
3 corrosion to those transformers is going to impact the
4 service reliability of those transformers.

5 So the maintenance and operation -- we've found in
6 talking to the other utilities, those transformers last
7 maybe half the life span of a normal pad-mounted
8 transformer. So there's some economic and reliability
9 issues with that.

10 Obviously being inside a box, if it's full of
11 water, it's going to take us longer to pump that box
12 out if we need to do some repairs to that. So if one
13 of those transformers fails, it's going to take at
14 least a couple of hours just to pump the box out so
15 that we can actually do some work in it.

16 So our preference is not to install a transformer
17 underground. Basically because of other experiences
18 from other utilities, they've had more experience than
19 us. We have five transformers on Park Street. These
20 are all larger transformers. As I said, they are there
21 because they have to be there.

22 MR. NEAL: Grif Neal. 1334 Bay Street. This
23 for me -- and I really appreciate the PUB coming
24 tonight to listen to the comments immaterial of what
25 you decide to do on Bay Street, what the community on

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Bay Street decides to do.

2 For me, we're making a decision here on
3 above-ground transformers that are going to end up
4 throughout the community. And I would strongly suggest
5 everyone goes to Google and searches distribution
6 transformer plus fatality. And see what result you
7 get.

8 There's a startling picture -- I think it's the
9 third hit -- of one of these things flaming after I
10 believe it's a lightning strike. All three major
11 transformer manufacturer groups or transformer
12 manufacturers group Schneider, ABB and Howard, make
13 below-ground dry transformers, single phase and this
14 size for residential installation.

15 The presentation of the PUB two months ago
16 indicated that would cost a total of roughly \$30,000 in
17 total for the area. So it's \$7500 per transformer.

18 I understand that there's some concern about
19 reliability, but I think we have to think bigger issues
20 here. There's potential for vandalism of these things;
21 they're very high voltage. If one of these cases gets
22 damaged and opened, a small child might walk up and put
23 a hand in. It's certainly easy for a car to run into
24 one of these, especially next to driveways.

25 And finally, frankly, I think a decision is being

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 made to make AP&T's life a little bit easier at the
2 potential expense of our neighbors from a safety
3 standpoint. So immaterial of what we do on Bay Street,
4 if we move to the next district and we set this
5 precedent in place, I think we're taking a grave risk.

6 To me, it's just foolish when hundreds of
7 thousands of these single-phase dry transformers are
8 sold and installed by utilities all other the country
9 each and ever day. And I think it's disingenuous at
10 best to pick a few small municipalities like Palo Alto
11 and say we talked to them without going to communities
12 like Evanston on the north side of Chicago which does
13 this on a regular basis underground because they have
14 the same kind of historic character, similar housing
15 demographic to what we have in Alameda.

16 So I just hope that we can kind of set back from
17 the Bay Street discussion for a second -- and I
18 understand the issues about do we want to do this or
19 don't we -- and think a little bit more broadly about
20 the impact on the community. And frankly, as all of us
21 are owners of this utility indirectly, I think we need
22 to think about the liability exposure we incur. Thank
23 you.

24 MR. ORBETA: Other questions on other issues.
25 Or more on these.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. COYLE: Hi. Steve Coyle. 1049 Fair Oaks.
2 First a comment. Actually, I'm pretty strongly in
3 favor of this. So I'll cast a dissenting vote to
4 what's been said so far because I think the poles and
5 the lines are a lot uglier than these things on the
6 sidewalks.

7 But my question is why dig up the sidewalk? Any
8 utility running from the house to the street is going
9 to be there in the street two feet in, just the same as
10 it is in the sidewalk. So why not just dig up the
11 street a little bit? It would seem more like that
12 would be easier on the trees and a little easier on a
13 few other things.

14 MR. TING: There's actually other utilities
15 in the sidewalk that we would need to worry about --
16 actually, I'm sorry; on the street -- that we would
17 need to worry about. You have the sewer lines. We
18 have the water -- East Bay MUD has their water lines
19 out in the street. Basically if we were out in the
20 street we would still need laterals going across the
21 sidewalk to feed every home.

22 MR. COYLE: Sure, sure. But when you dig a
23 lengthwise line down there, then you do cut all the
24 tree roots. There's a lateral line all the way to the
25 house to whatever utility is in the street anyway. So I

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 don't quite follow why it's better to do it a little
2 further in the sidewalk.

3 MR. TING: Basically because of all the other
4 utilities there are, the other utilities out in the
5 street.

6 MR. COYLE: Do you know who they are?

7 MR. TING: Well, there are some safety issues
8 also with having it out in the street if our electrical
9 workers have to do work in them. We try to keep our
10 boxes out of the street just so that either you don't
11 have cars parked in them if we need to access boxes or
12 if they actually have to work out on the street to do
13 some troubleshooting. So the plan was to stick it on
14 the sidewalk off of the street area even though
15 basically you would have a lateral every 30 feet for
16 each of those homes.

17 MR. COYLE: Okay. So it's an access to the
18 box issue?

19 MR. TING: Part of it is access to the box
20 car, like our line workers, and also to keep them out
21 of the line of traffic.

22 MS. PERBOWL: June Perbowl. 1331 St.
23 Charles. Can I ask the name of the arborist who's doing
24 the investigation on the shade trees?

25 MR. TING: We've been working with Steve

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Batchelder. I believe he's been out there and has done
2 some work in the area for the city.

3 MS. GARDNER: Sharon Gardner. We happen to
4 have a very large gas main in our sidewalk. And I will
5 comment that there is no sump pump. We have one in our
6 house. There is some accumulation of water, and I
7 question whether a sump pump would necessarily be
8 needed for some of the heights and the elevation that
9 we have at these current locations. There may be a
10 little water. I check them regularly.

11 I will also say that we have ten colored boxes on
12 our property, and I question the validity of that. I
13 really want to analyze that closely from a personal
14 standpoint, but I would like to see us go underground
15 to a greater extent than to believe that we must
16 install sump pumps and other extra things that may or
17 may not be necessary.

18 The gas main. There are six in the city of
19 Alameda. We have one of them. They are built concrete
20 solid. They do not get water from our trees. They may
21 get it from the top in the poles for venting, but I
22 think there are other alternatives to those high things
23 you should look at.

24 MS. SAMUELSON: Melinda Samuelson. 1235 Bay
25 Street. I would like to ask both of you, are you

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 receiving the message that you are hearing from the
2 people here tonight who are obviously worried about the
3 transformers, the boxes, the trees, the impact on the
4 trees? They're making suggestions on alternatives and
5 they are asking the ultimate question of how do we
6 decline to participate in this?

7 And what I would like for you all to think about
8 is we will probably now go back to our little
9 neighborhood huddles and discuss all of this. Are you
10 hearing that we are just the first of many, and that
11 what we bring up tonight, whether we choose to go
12 forward or choose to opt out, you will be hearing again
13 and again because we're not unique, and the neighbors
14 don't want transformers on their front yards. They
15 don't want hubs and all of this up and down the street.

16 And are you actually willing to consider that if
17 we are the first of the large residential blocks and we
18 have been very vocal and you've been very cooperative
19 in working with us, that maybe we should be kind of the
20 guinea pig and that what we are bringing to you as a
21 suggestion should be incorporated into the standard
22 rather than reverting back to what has been a
23 commercial standard or a planned development, new
24 development where people buy the house and the
25 transformer is also there.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Because I don't think that we are unique. And I
2 think the complaints and the disagreements and the
3 "please pick an alternative"-type suggestions you will
4 be encountering henceforward in the older residential
5 neighborhoods. I kind of have the impression that
6 you're reluctant to change your construction standard.

7 And so it's like, okay. Well, if the two blocks
8 of Bay Street decide they don't want to do it, they'll
9 just not do it. But you're going to stick to your
10 standards. And I'm just wondering if there's been any
11 consideration on your part going back and saying you
12 know, maybe we should reconsider the construction
13 standard when we're going into older neighborhoods,
14 older residential neighborhoods?

15 MR. ORBETA: We hear your comments and we've
16 been -- as I said before, we've been trying to work
17 with a lot of you since January. We will go back after
18 this meeting, look at the notes, look at the comments.

19 Staff can make recommendations. However, we're
20 willing to do -- if we're told to do underground,
21 submersible or above ground, that's at the direction of
22 the Board.

23 So we hear you, and we've been trying to work with
24 you on numerous issues. So we will go back and assess
25 all of these comments. Absolutely.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. JONES: I'd just like to make a comment.
2 My name is Larry Jones. I live at 1121 Bay Street. I
3 applaud you for doing your job very well.

4 I was one of the people that stood in front of the
5 Board the other evening who suggested that I made a
6 mistake because I didn't believe this project had
7 wheels from the very start. But some of my
8 well-meaning neighbors took up an awful lot of your
9 time without any consensus from their neighbors. And
10 it is my opinion that the majority of the people on
11 lower Bay Street want to preserve those trees, feel
12 that this project is going to damage those trees and
13 are against it.

14 Jeff brought up can we get postponed? I'm curious
15 can we just plain old secede?

16 MR. ORBETA: That's a decision for the City
17 Council to make.

18 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: The PUB, do
19 they do what the City Council say or is it reversed?

20 MR. ORBETA: The City Council, as far as the
21 prioritizing of the underground districts, that is
22 under the City Council's domain.

23 MR. JONES: That's not very good news.

24 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: So the answer
25 is if the City Council can tell the Public Utilities

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Board yay or nay or what to do and it sort of flows
2 down from there.

3 MR. ORBETA: With regards to the prioritizing
4 of the district --

5 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Correct.

6 MR. ORBETA: -- yes.

7 MR. LEIFER: I'm Hank Leifer. I'm at 1338
8 St. Charles. One thing that you've said a number of
9 times that kind of bothers me a little bit is just you
10 kind of say over and over, "We take our marching orders
11 from the City Council." The City Council, not being a
12 bunch of power engineers, utilities engineers, they
13 take your recommendations.

14 So we've been discussing tonight that there are
15 options. This gentleman talked about some of the stuff
16 he found on Google. I think that bears some research.
17 To say that we should keep on building buggy whips is
18 stupid. That's not to say that your engineering ideas
19 are stupid, but there are other ideas. That's one
20 comment.

21 The other comment is I heard a number of people
22 saying that they want to secede and pull out of this
23 thing. I'm also one of those people that is very much
24 in favor of this. And I think that if done properly,
25 our property values will go up, not down, and our homes

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 will look better, not worse.

2 So I hope that before we find out exactly what the
3 arborist comes back with with his impact, hopefully you
4 folks will revisit some engineering issues. I hope
5 we'll all hang in on this thing instead of backing out
6 of it because we think maybe we can't do it.

7 MR. PATTERSON: I'm Fred Patterson. 1020 Fair
8 Oaks. I wanted to echo what you said. I'm still in
9 favor of it, even with the problems that we talked
10 about. But if I had a big transformer in front of my
11 house, I'd be as pissed off as they were.

12 I think it's shortsighted to use the cheap ugly
13 solution if there are other solutions. So if it's
14 going to impact property values -- we're doing this for
15 aesthetics mostly -- I think there's issues of safety
16 also, earthquakes and that kind of thing.

17 But it's mostly an aesthetics issue. So don't do
18 the cheap ugly solution. If there is some alternate
19 funding mechanism, if we could have an assessment
20 district pay for a more expensive solution, I would be
21 for that.

22 MS. SHEEHAN: Renee Sheehan, 1236 Bay. I
23 know you said you have to put trenches underneath the
24 sidewalks. How deep and big are those trenches? I'm
25 concerned about the trees.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. TING: Yes. Depending on the number of
2 conduits that we have, it could be as deep as
3 four feet. If we encounter a root, we have to go down
4 below that to install our conduits. So typically it
5 would probably be about four feet deep to accommodate
6 all the conduits as we stack them up in the trench. If
7 we encounter a root mass where digging our trench, we
8 would try to go underneath that.

9 MS. SHEEHAN: So you're trying to preserve
10 the roots as you go along is what your aim is?

11 MR. TING: Yes. Our arborist will try to
12 identify with where we think roots will be that we
13 would encounter as we do our trench. We would note
14 that in our bid specification. Our contractor would be
15 aware of that as he's digging. We would try to avoid
16 that. I don't think we want to just go and trench and
17 cut all the roots. We would try to avoid them as much
18 as possible.

19 MR. MEDLEY: I'm Eric Medley, 1321 St.
20 Charles. I'd just like to echo that this is a really
21 important project for me personally and my neighbors
22 generally to get these wires down, these poles down, to
23 get some historic lighting. It is a very important
24 thing, at least from my perspective.

25 There are issues that need to be worked out, and

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 I'm only hoping that you're going to spend as much time
2 as necessary and plan this thing appropriately so it is
3 done in a way that reflects our values, the things
4 we're trying to protect.

5 I mean, the people on Bay Street have an amazing
6 district taking care of their trees, getting their own
7 arborist, doing a lot of things to make that happen.
8 And if it takes when you're going down that sidewalk to
9 hand-dig the trench -- I don't know how something like
10 that would be. Their concerns are real. And those
11 trees are something I think the city in general
12 cherishes. I know anybody who comes to town wants to
13 go check out Bay Street.

14 These are not things to be taken lightly. Whether
15 it's transformers -- we've had some great comments
16 there. We should really look at this and if it takes a
17 little citizens' committee to work with you to
18 understand the issue and find a way around them, I
19 think we should do it, and not just say, "Well --"
20 Thank you.

21 MR. BOWL: Gene Bowl, 1106 Bay. I'm
22 wondering why are you going down the sidewalk when
23 you've got all that street out there and you can
24 lateral all those lines in from the street. Everything
25 else is lateral in the street.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. TING: On the street, as I discussed,
2 there are other utilities out in the street. There is
3 East Bay MUD and then a sewer line for the city. We
4 also want to avoid putting our structure, as Bob
5 indicated, out in the street, mainly for the safety of
6 our electrical workers and also for access to those
7 boxes. If we're in a parking area and a car's parked
8 on it, then we won't be able to gain access to that.

9 MR. BOWL: Well, you have the same problem
10 with water, the same problem with anything that you put
11 lateral out there. So why don't you not come from the
12 street and put your box in. We connect there,
13 underground.

14 It's done every place else. Why go down the
15 sidewalk, this little narrow sidewalk, and cut up all
16 the roots or go around the roots or whatever you have
17 to do?

18 MR. TING: Basically the routing of the
19 conduit is a little different than the routing of the
20 pipes of the water company or the sewer company.

21 MR. BOWL: Well, you can bend wire but you
22 can't bend those pipes.

23 MR. TING: You can bend wire to an extent
24 before you have trouble trying to pull them into
25 conduit.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. DESARD: Peter Desard, 1520 St. Charles.
2 I also want to say that I'm one of those people who
3 thinks that if done right, this is a good thing for our
4 neighborhood. But I don't think those of us who have
5 wanted to move forward who have made the case for our
6 being up at the top of the list for this project
7 believe that it should be done in a way that
8 jeopardizes the trees, the aesthetics of the
9 neighborhood, the historic character of the
10 neighborhood.

11 I think it's worth noting that there are competing
12 requirements here. APT has a set of requirements.
13 Your requirements include access and maintenance and
14 safety of workers and so forth. And the neighborhood's
15 requirements include preserving the trees, keeping the
16 aesthetics of -- I mean, I think a lot of us see this
17 project, the goal of undergrounding as returning this
18 neighborhood to a vista that it had historically many
19 years ago, before poles went up. That's not
20 accomplished by having large transformers on people's
21 lawns.

22 Similarly the trees are an invaluable resource.
23 The objective again of really beautifying this historic
24 neighborhood is not met if the trees suffer.

25 So I mean I'd like to see us arrive at something.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 You've said a number of times that there have been
2 meetings and discussions in an attempt by APT to work
3 with the residents. I'm certainly aware that that's
4 happened. We hosted some of those meetings.

5 But what I haven't heard here tonight is that any
6 of these concerns resulted in any changes to the
7 recommendations whatsoever. In other words, the
8 recommendations went right down the line of "our
9 standard practice is to put the pedestal-mounted
10 transformers; our standard choice of lighting are these
11 off-the-shelf lights," whether or not these are
12 replicas of something historic to Alameda or whether
13 they are merely a generic attempt at creating a light
14 that has a look that hearkens back to some other time.

15 Going down the street was discussed, and again the
16 recommendation comes in go down the sidewalk regardless
17 of the fact that that poses a lot of difficulties with
18 the trees.

19 So to continue to say, "Well, we're trying to work
20 with the residents," we just haven't seen anything
21 change. We haven't seen any of the feedback come in.
22 And I think some really significant points have been
23 made about the fact that this -- if APT maintains a
24 single set of standards across the board for Alameda,
25 which is a diverse community and has a number of

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 different neighborhoods. It has residential
2 neighborhoods, new build, mixed use, commercial. If
3 you try to have one standard across the board I think
4 every time you go into an older residential
5 neighborhood like this you're going to run up against
6 the same kinds of things.

7 MR. ORBETA: Thank you for your comments.
8 There has been some things where I believe we've moved,
9 such as the street lights. We hear you. I can assure
10 you that we will take all the comments under
11 consideration. And we will go from there. Nothing is
12 set in stone here right now.

13 MR. SPANS: David Spans 1330 Bay Street. I'm
14 also hoping that the members of the Board who are here
15 tonight are also listening to all these comments and
16 taking them in. Because I agree with the others who
17 have said that this is an important project for our
18 neighborhood. I support it so long as it doesn't do
19 things that detract from the neighborhood like the
20 plants.

21 I just have a simple question. At far as our
22 responsibilities for running utilities from the box to
23 our homes, if we don't use the service like Cable TV or
24 Comcast, are we still required to run conduit and all
25 that?

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. TING: No, no.

2 MR. JONES: Ashley Jones, 1040 Fair Oaks. I
3 appreciated getting your letter about the meeting. I
4 would appreciate getting another letter telling us what
5 has transpired after you've had your meetings and
6 you've made some decisions so that we don't come up
7 against, "Too late, you weren't there." And then it's
8 all done. So that we stay in the process and stay as
9 part of the decision making process by being here, and
10 then you let us know, and then we may have to have
11 another meeting. But not to have it just kind of
12 dumped into the Council and having some serious
13 problems there.

14 MR. ORBETA: Thank you. We will try to keep
15 everyone as informed as possible.

16 MS. WERNER: Peggy Werner again. First, I do
17 think that putting the wires underground is a good
18 thing in general. I personally don't approve of the
19 plans so far. And in listening to others I really do
20 see that it's not just about my street, my
21 neighborhood, my house. Although my house is very
22 personal to me.

23 I moved to Alameda 18 years ago. I had two small
24 kids, and one of the main decisions was where can we go
25 and live where it's a good, great safe place for kids?

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 And the transformers are not safe, in my opinion.

2 I used to be a school health clerk at London
3 Miller (PHONETIC). I know all about injuries kids
4 have. I would not want to live in my house if a child
5 hurt themselves or died running into one of those
6 things. And kids run into things all the time. And if
7 Alameda is filled with those on every block, this will
8 no longer be a safe place for kids.

9 You guys have talked about, "Well, we're doing it
10 this way because it's a safety issue." It's also a
11 safety issue to put those big transformers above
12 ground.

13 MR. LEIFER: Hank Leifer. 1338 St Charles.
14 Can I get your name again and title? And then also
15 another question is where will the minutes of this
16 meeting be posted where we can all access them? And
17 can we get a copy of your slides as well? That would
18 be a great thing.

19 MR. ORBETA: You can get a copy of the
20 slides, yes. We were planning to include the
21 transcription as part of the packet for the June
22 meeting which is available to the public.

23 MR. LEIFER: That's where, on the city's
24 website?

25 MR. ORBETA: It will be in the -- I don't

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 know. Matt, can it be the APT website? We could post
2 it on our website, yes.

3 MR. LEIFER: It's a transcript of a public
4 meeting. It has to be open to the public. It needs to
5 be accessible to the public.

6 MR. ORBETA: Sure. We can put it out on the
7 website.

8 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: What if you
9 don't have a website?

10 MR. ORBETA: We can send you a copy --

11 MR. LEIFER: You name again Bob?

12 MR. ORBETA: Bob Orbeta, O-R-B-E-T-A.
13 Administrative Services Manager.

14 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's a matter
15 of timing. We should find out how long it would take
16 to get the transcripts to be available.

17 THE REPORTER: Yes. It really depends on how
18 quickly you want it. We can do overnight, five days.
19 Standard turnaround time is --

20 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: If we could
21 have it in a timely manner, basically.

22 THE REPORTER: Yes.

23 MR. ORBETA: We will post it. Everything
24 here is public, and it will also be included in the
25 Board packet for the June meeting.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. KARLSRUD: Steve Karlsrud. 31122 Bay
2 street. I was asked to come down and speak for two
3 other homeowners who wanted me to say, "Transformers on
4 my front lawn? Over my dead body." I think that
5 roughly sums up what they wanted to say.

6 I wanted to say I sat in on a lot of these
7 meetings. I am very much pro undergrounding, but I
8 would like to see a different set of operational
9 standards developed for this.

10 I think too much of the planning has been directed
11 from the beginning -- the planning existed, and we've
12 only been guided along and informed about that plan. I
13 think comments here tonight have been the same ones
14 that we had in the neighborhood meetings, and yet not
15 much has really changed. I'd like to see, as people
16 say, a little thinking outside the box on this.

17 And I'd like to see that we don't roll over and
18 let this go to another neighborhood because it will set
19 a precedent that we will wind up having to live with
20 later on. I'd like to see more time spent to find a
21 better way to get this done and get the undergrounding
22 done. If we have to trench in the streets and go
23 around to the utilities, I think that's the way it
24 should be done. We've got to set a high standard.
25 That's my comment.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 MR. GASKILL: John Gaskill. 1251 Bay Street
2 again. I take it that there is a report that you folks
3 have filed with the Board that contains the study and
4 your recommendations, right?

5 MR. ORBETA: Yes, sir.

6 MR. GASKILL: And that report will be acted
7 on by the Board when?

8 MR. ORBETA: In June at the June meeting. Or
9 it could be continued for further --

10 MR. GASKILL: Is that report currently on a
11 website that we could have access to?

12 MR. McCABE: It is not currently. We can
13 post it.

14 MR. GASKILL: My real question, what I'm
15 getting to, is this. Fellows, you go back. You have
16 your staff meeting after this meeting and you say, "You
17 know, they made some pretty good points. Maybe we
18 ought to change some of these recommendations."

19 If we were to get that report and with your
20 changes, would we be able visually to see the report
21 with the changes made? In other words, would they
22 stand out as changes or would we not know whether
23 something is a change or has always been there without
24 comparing the two documents line by line? In other
25 words, could you strike through and put the changes in

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 red?

2 MR. ORBETA: I don't believe we do that,
3 normally strike out. There will be a new report. The
4 changes will be pretty evident.

5 MR. GASKILL: How so?

6 MR. ORBETA: The recommendation, whether it's
7 above ground or below ground, it will be pretty evident
8 what it is. The report isn't that long.

9 MR. LEWIS: Sy Lewis, 1128 Bay Street. I
10 moved to Bay Street nine years ago. Prior to that I
11 lived on Burbank Street which is a short little street
12 parallel to Eighth, part of Eighth across from
13 Washington Park. And along Eighth Street they did
14 undergrounding and there was -- like Burbank Street,
15 Eighth Street had a number of palm trees that dated
16 back 50, 60 years. Quite tall, majestic.

17 When they did the undergrounding by trenching
18 along the sidewalk, every single one of those palm
19 trees died on Eighth Street. When it was suggested
20 that we do undergrounding on Burbank Street, it was no
21 surprise that we asked them to move on to the next
22 district. And that's my concern on the streets and Bay
23 Street, St. Charles, and so on is that historically the
24 trees die and that's the result.

25 MR. MITCHELL: Alan Mitchell, 1270 St.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Charles. It is possible for you all to bury the
2 transformers?

3 MR. TING: Technically, it's possible, not
4 necessarily to bury them but to put them in an
5 underground vault with a cover over it so it's not
6 actually buried in the ground but it's in a vault.

7 MR. ORBETA: Would that be still on
8 somebody's property if that was the case?

9 MR. TING: It would depend. I think most
10 likely we would be able to put those out in the park
11 strip area which is basically where the trees are. So
12 we would have to locate them somewhere between the
13 trees. Unless someone is willing to give up space on
14 their property for a box, we would look at installing
15 that partially on the sidewalk, partially on the Park
16 strip area located between the trees. Not necessarily
17 right where a tree is, but try to locate them away from
18 the trees.

19 MR. BUCKLEY: Chris Buckley, 1017 San Antonio
20 Avenue. When is the Steve Batchelder's arborist's
21 report supposed to be finished?

22 MR. TING: He just started his inventory
23 yesterday. I know he's met some of the homeowners out
24 there during that time. He's working on getting that
25 inventory and trying to -- developing a matrix of the

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 trees that are out there. He still needs to complete
2 the portion of Bay Street from San Antonio to Central
3 Avenue. So the actual completion of all his database
4 and all his report, at this time I'm not sure.

5 MR. BUCKLEY: Can you find that out and get
6 back to us?

7 MR. TING: Okay.

8 MR. SHEEHAN: William Sheehan, 1236 Bay
9 Street. Just so you know, our block of Bay Street, the
10 1200 block down to the lagoon is a Special Assessment
11 District. We assess ourselves a portion of maintaining
12 the elm trees which have been kind of a hallmark of the
13 neighborhood.

14 When I moved onto the street we had the Special
15 Assessment District not only to maintain the trees but
16 also to put beautify them. And one of the concepts at
17 that time was to underground the utilities, and to stop
18 the slingshot trimming of the elm trees on the east
19 side of Bay street.

20 So we have put our resources and attention and
21 effort to keep the street beautiful, to have the elms
22 replaced with appropriate trees. I think probably
23 we're in a dilemma now where we were seeking to
24 underground the utilities to beautify the street. The
25 end result may be the underground of the utilities not

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 only would create eyesores in the form of above-ground
2 transformers but also kill the elms which we have tried
3 for so many years to save and preserve.

4 So I think probably that should be in the mix of
5 your solutions to how this is going to be done. And I
6 think if you gave us the solution of undergrounding the
7 utilities to stop the slingshotting, the cutting of
8 these trees, but to kill the trees in the process and
9 put up above-ground transformers, the answer from our
10 block of Bay Street would be pretty obvious. Thank
11 you.

12 MR. ORBETA: We probably have time for a
13 couple of more comments and questions from anyone. You
14 can always provide written comments to us. You can do
15 it through the website. You can send it to me. We're
16 at 2000 Grand.

17 I want to thank everybody for coming tonight and
18 providing the comments. We will consider all the
19 comments tonight and hopefully in the June meeting
20 you'll see the Board report and recommendations. And
21 we will post the transcription as well as the Board
22 packet from the April meeting.

23 MS. AU: Lena Au, 1338 Bay Street. For those
24 of us who could think of questions after this meeting,
25 will you also post them so that we can see what else

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 there is coming after this meeting?

2 MR. ORBETA: Yes. Absolutely.

3 MR. COYLE: Steve Coil, 1049 Fair Oaks again.
4 So if the Board on June 30th adopts whatever resolution
5 that people will agree to, what's the best timeline
6 that this could happen?

7 MR. ORBETA: I think that it's going to
8 have to -- I don't know how long it will take to
9 finalize the design. We will have to work with the
10 other utilities also. It's not just Alameda Power &
11 Telecom. There's the other utilities that are involved
12 to finalize the design.

13 MR. TING: I guess part of that depends on
14 how the Board finds. If we need to go out with
15 subsurface transformers, if they feel that we should
16 look at that option, then we have to prepare
17 construction standards and go out for specifications
18 for the actual transformers, things like that.

19 If they decide to go with pad-mounted
20 transformers, then we have to look at procuring
21 easements for those transformers; meeting with
22 homeowners who may or may not be receptive to having
23 transformers. Obviously we kind of know the answer to
24 that one.

25 MR. LEIFER: Hank Leifer, 1338 St. Charles.

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Given what you just said, does that mean that you're
2 not going to consider underground transformers any
3 further until the 19th of June? Your recommendations
4 are done and you're not going to consider anything else
5 based on the feedback of the people here?

6 MR. ORBETA: No. The current recommendation
7 from April was to put the pad-mounted transformers.
8 We're going to consider all the comments from this
9 evening.

10 MR. LEIFER: So by June 19th perhaps the
11 Utilities Board may be looking at a different option
12 for transformers; is that accurate?

13 MR. ORBETA: Correct.

14 MR. LEIFER: When would we know that you've
15 made that change?

16 MR. ORBETA: It will be part of the Board
17 packet. We can put several options in the Board
18 packet, above ground or submersible. It will probably
19 be sometime in early June or mid-June when the Board
20 packet -- I don't know when the Board packet is
21 published in June. But it is a public document once
22 it's published, so it will be out.

23 MR. LEIFER: On your website. This Alameda PT

24 --

25 MR. ORBETA: We can put it on the website,

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 yes.

2 MR. LEIFER: Will it be on the website?

3 MR. ORBETA: Yes.

4 MR. STRAND: David Strand, 1338 Bay Street.

5 You mentioned the other utilities, yet we haven't heard
6 anything about what their plans are; is that right? I
7 realize you're acting as project coordinator, but it
8 would have been nice to have someone from AT&T and
9 Comcast.

10 MR. ORBETA: They were both invited a couple
11 of times. So they were invited.

12 MR. STRAND: Well, given that level of
13 interest in our opinions, how do we determine what
14 their plans are for this project and how do we have any
15 influence over that? For example, will they be running
16 copper? Will they be running fiber optics for
17 telecommunications? What are their plans?

18 MR. ORBETA: We can contact them again and
19 try to get as much information from them.

20 MR. STRAND: When the Board makes their
21 decision, maybe June 19th, what input will they have?
22 What input from these other utilities will be provided
23 to them? Is it just a fait accompli that they're going
24 to do what they say they're going to do and that's it?

25 MR. ORBETA: We don't have -- at Alameda

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 Power & Telecom, we don't have any control as to the
2 construction standards or what the other utilities --
3 and the Public Utilities Board doesn't have authority
4 over the other utilities. We can talk to the Public
5 Works department and find out from them, and we can let
6 you know.

7 MR. STRAND: Who does have authority of what
8 their plans are? Is it the CPUC?

9 MR. ORBETA: For AT&T I believe it's the
10 CPUC. I don't know about Comcast frankly.

11 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: On that same
12 topic. Are their plans, as you understand them,
13 reflected in these maps? You show cable pedestals, but
14 is that just APT's cable service or is Comcast
15 included, for example?

16 MR. TING: These drawings up here include all
17 the substructures for all the utilities, including
18 Comcast and AT&T. It's color-coded by utility.

19 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: But you
20 know -- you must know, because they're depicted in
21 these photographs, that this is what they intend to do.
22 When that little -- looks like a gravestone and the
23 other one looks like a green box.

24 MR. ORBETA: We know that the box is there,
25 but the gentleman's question was about the copper and

CLARK REPORTING (510) 486-0700

1 fiber optics. We don't know what they're planning to
2 do on that level.

3 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: And you
4 already know that the two devices that they plan to put
5 above ground are depicted in those photographs?

6 MR. TING: Yes. The devices actually shown
7 in this photograph, one is the Alameda Power & Telecom
8 Cable TV amplifier, and the other is a Comcast
9 amplifier.

10 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pretty ugly.

11 MR. ORBETA: Again, thank you very much for
12 this evening. We appreciate all the comments and for
13 you taking the time out.

14 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at
15 8:00 p.m.)

16 ---oOo---

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

