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PG&E Prunes Plans for Undergrounding

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By Laurie Snyder

which residents and elected officials Miner Road where the undergroundmulled Miner Road's potential utility ing is occurring would be closed to all undergrounding. Interest in the issue traffic (except school buses and resispiked after council members directed dents living within the construction staff and Pacific Gas & Electric reprearea) from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on sentatives to find a way to get the proj- weekdays at the time that segment is ect back on track following the under construction. During the projunexpected notice from PG&E in April that it "could not proceed due to escalated construction costs."

Where You Car Expect The Exceptions

According to the staff report, the ent times. city has \$2.2 million available in Rule dergrounding "and can borrow up to five years of future allocations estimated at \$350,000 for a total of \$2.55 million." In addition, "PG&E has been coordinating with Contra Costa County to secure a loan of \$150,000 (up to a maximum of \$500,000) of on some restoration and traffic issues." this project."

\$1.7 million from the \$4.7 million tab originally projected by allowing that those utility poles would remain." PG&E to reduce the area to be under-Camino Sobrante rather than Lombardy Lane – and to cut traffic control

Yew faces turned out for the July expenses. Instead of keeping one lane have some options on closing the road 2 Orinda City Council meeting at open with flaggers, each segment of ect's estimated eight to 10 month completion, five segments of Miner Road are projected to be impacted at differ-

"The first order of business was to 20A credits to help fund the cost of unreally take a look at this project and see how we could build the project for the community with the funds that were available," said PG&E's project manager, Linda Swartz. "We did come up with some engineering changes, and also worked in partnership with the city their Rule 20A credits to supplement In addition to eliminating a segment of Miner Road from the plan, PG&E So the latest plan would scythe would cut out the related mainline trenching there as well, "which means Additionally, 11 service recipients grounded - from Camino Pablo to would not receive the underground service as originally planned.

"In working with the city, we do

– doing the construction in sections to minimize the impact to residents as much as we can." PG&E also changed the mainline trenching requirements to restore the street while using less paving. "We did look really long and hard at this project and we think that the revised scope is the most feasible scope – and the scope that's going to give you the most poles removed with the money that you have."

Council members noted that they had received a number of calls and emails from residents concerned about the initiative. Eight residents also expressed their opposition, in person, to aspects of the project ranging from the potential removal of trees and other danger posed to drivers and walkers by rerouting the 6,000 trips made daily by drivers from Miner Road onto Camino Sobrante.

The undergrounding item was agendized for discussion purposes only. No action was taken. As of press time, council members planned to conduct another public discussion of the matter Aug. 5.

(See the May 7 article, "From On vegetation by PG&E to the potential to Off Track," in our online archive at www.lamorindaweekly.com for a review of how PG&E and the city reached this point.)





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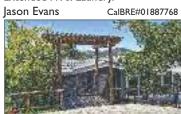


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