



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER #106464 101405

INTERPRETATION OF DEVELOPMENT CODE

CODE SECTION: 20.70.470

20.70.470 Undergrounding of electric and communication facilities – When required.

A. Undergrounding of electrical and telecommunication facilities defined in SMC [13.20.030](#) shall be required with new development as follows unless the facility is exempt under SMC [13.20.030](#):

1. All new nonresidential construction, including remodels and additions where the total value of the project exceeds 50 percent of the assessed valuation of the site at the time of application and involves the relocation of service.
2. All new residential construction and new accessory structures, the creation of new residential lots, and residential remodels and additions where the total value of the project exceeds 50 percent of the assessed valuation of the site at the time of application and involves the relocation of service. Residential projects may be exempted from some or all of the undergrounding provisions at the request of the applicant if the project involves the construction, remodel, or addition to only one new house or accessory structure and a street crossing would be necessary.

FINDINGS:

- Project calculated valuation was over 50% of the assessed value of the property.
- Project will involve relocation of service.
- The closest power pole is located on NE. 175th St. There is a large retaining wall between the pole and the house, which is at least partly built in the right-of-way. Undergrounding from this pole would involve digging under the wall. Mature vegetation mostly obscures the existing overhead wires leading to the house.

- There is a pole on the corner of NE 175th and 8th NE, however, it is a transformer pole and cannot be used to hook up power for residential use.
- The next nearest pole is down the street on 8th NE. Undergrounding from this location would involve obtaining an easement from the neighbors as well as digging up the neighbor's yard.

DECISION:

The code allows for an exception to the undergrounding requirement when the situation would involve a street crossing. In this instance, the practical difficulty of undergrounding from a pole under a retaining wall built in the right-of-way is practically tantamount to a street crossing. Obtaining an easement and undergrounding through a neighbor's yard would negatively impact a neighboring property owner and is not a desirable option. Therefore, this project may be exempt under S.M.C. 20.70. 470.A.2.

original signed by Jeff Forry 10/04/05

Director's Signature

Date