

Council to air proposal for utility undergrounding

A public hearing on the proposal to underground utility lines in Capitola Village will be held Thursday evening by the City Council.

The city is proposing to spend \$210,119 in PG&E-allocated undergrounding funds and similar amounts from Pacific Bell and Sonic Cable TV to bury the wires along Capitola Avenue, Monterey Avenue, El Camino Medio and portions of Stockton, California and Fanmar Avenues.

Work would begin Sept. 10 if the City Council gives the go-ahead.

City Public Works Director Craig French said current plans are to complete the trenching and laying of conduit by Nov. 19 and then break for the Thanksgiving-Christmas

shopping season. Work would be resumed on Jan. 7 with utility crews pulling cable, converting services and removing poles.

The existing utility pole-mounted street lights would be replaced with the same kind of high pressure sodium vapor street lights on laminated wood poles as on the Esplanade.

While the utility companies will pay most of the costs, property owners will have to hire an electrician to modify electrical service panels to accept an underground feed.

The cost ranges from \$400 to \$1,000, French said, depending on the size of the service, access, distance from the street, etc.

The average cost when the city did the Cliff Drive —

Wharf Road area, French said, was \$500.

Some buildings are already fed from underground connections and they would not be required to pay anything extra.

The Council will also hold a public hearing Thursday night on an appeal by Burger King restaurant owner Arnold J. Hyatt on the City Planning Commission's denial of an outdoor eating area for the facility at 2001 41st Ave. The Planning Commission said Hyatt could open the outdoor eating area only if he closed the drive-up window — a move Hyatt says will cut his business by 50 percent. "In other words, I would not only be sacrificing my own profitability but the jobs of approximately 35 employees," Hyatt said.