

David Doherty
55866 Amethyst Drive
Whitewater, CA 92282
ddoherty818@earthlink.net
(760) 322-3677.

September 19, 2015

CPUC / BLM
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
235 Montgomery Street
Suite 935
San Francisco, CA 94104

re: SCE West of Devers plans for Whitewater

To the CPUC,

My name is David Doherty. I live at 55866 Amethyst Drive, White Water, California. I purchased my home free and clear in 2004. I am disabled and living on state disability payments. I am writing to you concerning the plans of Southern California Edison (SCE) to build a transmission tower on the vacant lot next to my home, and to string wires and conductors directly over my home, without mitigation or compensation to me or my neighbors. This will directly and significantly destroy the value of my home, which is my only significant asset. I urge you to reject this plan, and to require SCE to keep their powerlines within the corridor that they presently use approximately 50 feet behind my house.

There has been some confusion as to the geography of the status quo and the proposal, so allow me orient you to the geography of the area.¹ This view from Google Maps illustrates the status quo and the proposed location of Tower 6N38 (Figure 1). My house is at the bottom center of the photograph (marked by the icon). There are no houses to the east of mine or immediately across the street, and there are several houses to the west. There are several large vacant parcels to the north, separating my house from those on San Pierre Road. In between is a service road, used by SCE to tend to the existing transmission towers. My property line ends at the service road north of my house. There are two sets of SCE towers in the immediate neighborhood. They are marked by red ovals in Figure 1. They are both a considerable distance from my home, and the cables that are strung between them (represented by the red lines) are 50 feet or more behind my house and hang over empty land. Compare this to the red square near my house. This is where SCE proposes to locate Tower 6N38. Placing a tower there represents a radical departure from the status quo. There is a large corridor of desert scrub between

¹ This discussion parallels the questions raised in ALT-15 and ALT-16 of the CPUC's Data Request #7 on September 3, 2014.

dwellings through which SCE could string its cables without locating a tower next to my home, but it prefers to locate it next to my home.



Figure 1. Status Quo Location of Towers and Power Lines and proposed location of Tower 6N38.

A closer view of the location of my house with respect to the proposed Tower 38 is visible in Figure 2. This figure is a composite of the Google Maps satellite image overlaid with a document provided to my neighbor Corinne Slusser (Exhibit Map APN 517-211-015_Slusser_Property.pdf). My house and the fence around my backyard are clearly visible. As anyone can see, the new tower and the fencing surrounding it will occupy roughly one-half of my neighbor's property and render it unbuildable. It will tower over my house destroying the view I currently enjoy of the local mountains and desert from my backyard. The cables strung between the towers will dangle and sway over my roof and backyard whenever the wind picks up, which is often since this is located in the San Gorgonio Pass. The noise will make my backyard unusable, and the transmission towers and the cables will be an eyesore.



Figure 2. 55866 Amethyst Drive and proposed location of Tower 38.

SCE has stated that it does not intend to compensate me or my neighbors for locating this tower on or next to our properties.² It argues that the existing easement, granted in 1945 before the land was subdivided, allows it to proceed without purchasing the property or mitigating any potential damage to property values.

“The ROW exists currently via grants of easement over the subject parcels. If additional rights are necessary for the this [sic] Project, SCE would acquire those rights via additional or modified grants of easement, not via fee-owned purchases. The additional or modified easements would not require that SCE acquire the entire parcel just those portions of the parcel where additional rights may be necessary.”

Response to Question ALT-16b, September 5, 2014.

This is a wholly inequitable and inadequate response. As illustrated above, there is significant open space within the right of way to build towers and hang transmission cables without encroaching onto residential parcels. By choosing to not locate within that corridor, SCE is choosing to harm me and my neighbors.

Locating a tower next to my backyard will diminish the value of my property in two ways. It will eliminate the charm due to its relative isolation and unimpeded views, which are significant

² Response to Question ALT-16b, September 5, 2014.

considerations to me as an artist and to potential buyers who desire that aesthetic. In order to demonstrate the effect it will have, I have simulated it photographically (Figure 3).



Figure 3. The view from my backyard and what it would look like with Tower 6N38.

In addition to destroying the aesthetic value of my house, the tower will reduce demand for my home, should I choose to sell it, by eliminating from the housing market those who for whatever reason are afraid of the health effects of living under power lines. Reducing demand is equivalent to reducing prices, as any undergrad economist knows. SCE has argued that there is no danger from powerline radiation, but that isn't the issue. It isn't enough to demonstrate that living under powerlines is harmless, just as demonstrating that vaccines do not cause autism has had no impact on anti-vaxxers. It is not rational, but it still drives the market. By hanging power lines directly over my home, SCE will destroy the value of my only significant asset, my home.

I began this process of objecting to SCE's placement of Tower 6N38 in May 2014. I have been on television, organized my neighbors, attended meetings, and written letters. SCE, when they have responded, have never acknowledged that their decision will destroy the value of my home. I suppose that by acknowledging harm they would be admitting that it needs to be mitigated, but their lack of acknowledgment does not mean that their actions will not have a direct and significant effect on my home. It is my hope that you will direct SCE to use an alternative site for the tower that is similar to the existing towers, one that uses the existing corridor for transmission lines, and that will not further diminish the already stressed property values along Amethyst Drive in Whitewater.

If you have any questions, please contact me at ddoherty818@earthlink.net or by telephone at (760) 322-3677.

Very truly yours,

David Doherty
55866 Amethyst Drive
Whitewater, CA 92282