

Decision No. 87116

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of EDWARD N. DABRITZ for overhead electric and telephone service connection to his residence in Downieville, Sierra County, California, where all parcels are presently served by existing overhead lines.

Application No. 56992
(Filed January 10, 1977)

O P I N I O N

Applicant Edward N. Dabritz seeks authority to deviate from mandatory undergrounding requirements, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Rule No. 15.1 and Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company (PT&T), Rule No. 15.1, in Downieville, Sierra County, California.

Applicant has petitioned the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California for a permit to construct overhead electric and telephone service to his residence in the Southeast corner of the town of Downieville, which is located on Lot 6 (8 acres), Block 142, Tax Area Code 52-07 3-14, Town of Downieville, T 20 N, R 10 E, MDB&M.

The entire area being considered is both within the town of Downieville and the 1,000-foot Scenic Highway Corridor.

Except for old Caledonia Mine location, part of which was selected for a building site, this entire area now being considered is heavily wooded, steep terrain on the south wall of the North Fork of the Yuba River Canyon.

There are at the present time in this immediate two-block area, (between the eastern border of the townsite and the Downie River), sixty-two (62) wires (electric, telephone and TV) crossing Commercial Street, which is now being used as Highway 49. The proposed wires would be high enough that they would have no visual impact.

Applicant states that undergrounding of wires in the granite rock under the North Fork of the Yuba River would be prohibitive in cost and also undesirable due to the steep terrain and the erosion which would be inevitable on the steep slope.

All other approaches available would be through heavily wooded area on steep terrain and create an undesirable situation within the Scenic Highway Corridor.

This property was deeded to the Courts on August 3, 1864, and was purchased by applicant at public auction in the Sierra County Courthouse, August 17, 1964.

With a permit from the U.S. Forest Service one-half mile of the old mining road to building site from Galloway Road was reconstructed in 1965-1966.

With permits from the U.S. Forest Service and the Water Resources Board of the State of California, 3,700 feet of 2-inch galvanized steel pipe water line was constructed from the old dam in Hungry Mouth Canyon along the old Peckwith Ditch to the building site on Lot 6 in the Southeast corner of the Downieville townsite.

In 1966-1967 twenty-eight cabins of the old Brandy City Cal-Ida abandoned sawmill camp were purchased, dismantled and part of these building materials and supplies were transported to this site.

The Scenic Highway Advisory Committee concurs in this, and endorses a deviation from the requirements of paragraph 1 of the Order implementing Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code.

The Sierra County Board of Supervisors, on recommendation of the Sierra County Planning Commission, authorized the request for exception.

The District Manager of Pacific Gas and Electric Company has estimated the cost for an overhead pole line and stated that the extreme cost of trenching would not warrant a complete engineering study to determine the actual cost.

Applicant requests that this application be processed on an ex parte basis for the reason that it does not involve matters which would necessitate a public hearing and any delays in the processing hereof increases the hardship to applicant.

There are no other utilities planned.

Neither PG&E nor PT&T object to providing overhead service subject to a deviation from the mandatory undergrounding requirement being authorized.

Findings

1. Significant overhead lines exist throughout the highway right-of-way in the town of Downieville.
2. The lot is in the southeast corner of the town of Downieville.
3. Costs for undergrounding the basic electric and telephone distribution system compared to overhead is more than three to one or higher, due to the granite rock in the river, steep terrain and the erosion that this would cause on the south bank of the river.
4. The Sierra County Board of Supervisors, on recommendation of the Sierra County Planning Commission, has approved the overhead lines across Highway 49 and the Yuba River.
5. The Scenic Highway Committee of the State Department of Transportation concurs in authorizing a deviation from underground requirements.
6. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.
7. PG&E and PT&T should be authorized to deviate from the mandatory undergrounding requirement of their Rule 15.1 so as to provide overhead electric and telephone service to the Edward N. Dabritz residence on Lot 6, Block 142, Tax Area Code 52-07 3-14, in the Town of Downieville, Sierra County, California.
8. A public hearing is not required.

The Commission concludes that the application should be granted as provided in the order which follows.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. PG&E is authorized to deviate from the mandatory undergrounding requirement of its electric line extension (Rule 15.1) of its tariff so as to provide overhead electric service to the Edward N. Dabritz residence on Lot 6, Block 142, Tax Area Code 52-07 3-14, in the Town of Downieville, Sierra County, California.

2. PT&T is authorized to deviate from the mandatory undergrounding requirement of its telephone line extension (Rule 15.1) of its tariff so as to provide overhead telephone service to the Edward N. Dabritz residence on Lot 6, Block 142, Tax Area Code 52-07 3-14, in the Town of Downieville, Sierra County, California.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 22nd day of MARCH, 1977.

Robert B. Baker
President
William J. Lynam
James L. Sturgeon
Richard D. Chavall
Commissioners