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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMMISSION ADVISORY
AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION
Energy Branch

RESOLUTION E-3204
November 9, 1990

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION E-3204. REQUEST BY PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY TO INSTALL TWO ABOVE GROUND VOLTAGE REGULATORS ON NEW AND EXISTING POLES IN WOODSIDE, NEAR SKYLINE BOULEVARD, A SCENIC HIGHWAY.

REQUEST MADE BY LETTER DATED APRIL 24, 1990

SUMMARY

1. Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) requests Commission authorization to install two above ground voltage regulators on one existing and one new pole near Skyline Boulevard in Woodside, San Mateo County.

2. This resolution grants PG&E's request.

BACKGROUND

1. State policy is to achieve undergrounding of electric facilities near scenic highways, when feasible and consistent with sound environmental planning (P.U. Code Section 320). This Commission is designated as the State's agency for implementing the undergrounding policy.

2. The Commission's decision[1] regarding this policy allows for overhead installations as follows:

> "In order to facilitate administration, letter requests for deviations will be accepted, reviewed by the Commission staff and, where appropriate, approved by Commission resolution. Local governments' participation in the review process is set forth hereinafter under the heading 'Coordination with Local Government'."

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1 Decision 80864 in Case 9364, dated December 19, 1972.

"Clear-cut cases of reasonable deviations are granted by resolution following letter requests or by ex-parte order following formal application. Potentially controversial formal applications for deviations are heard and appropriate decisions rendered in each case."

NOTICE

1. The applicable governmental authorities in this case are the California Department of Transportation, the City of Woodside, the Woodside Fire Prevention District and the County of San Mateo. All of these agencies have been notified of this request in accordance with the provisions of G.O. 96-A and all have had the opportunity to respond.

PROTESTS

1. No protests have been received.

DISCUSSION

1. The installation is within the "Scenic Highway Corridor" and consists of: (a) one 45 ft. wood pole approximately 30 ft. east of an existing pole which is located east of Skyline Boulevard in Woodside; and (b)installing two voltage regulators, one on each pole.

2. PG&E contends that the two regulators are needed to maintain voltage, to increase reliability during emergency situations and to bring primary voltage on the circuit up to allowable limits. The total cost of this project is estimated to be $30,000. PG&E also contends that the regulators cannot be mounted on existing poles on either side of the location in question due to existing equipment on these poles. The new pole is necessary to avoid tree cutting but will be shielded from view from the highway by tree growth.

3. The existing 12 kV line that crosses the highway at this point will remain and no new highway crossing will result from this project. The installation can be completed with minimum visual impact. The location of the installation will be at the end of a dead-end street near the highway. There are no houses on either side of the street at this point and property on either side of the street is currently owned by the Woodside Fire Prevention District, which has not objected to PG&E's plans.

4. The two regulators are each Seimens pole mounted 5/8% Step-Voltage Regulators, Single Phase Type JFR, 60 Hz, 207 kVA, 13800 volt. Each regulator is slightly less than 30 inches in diameter and is approximately 58 inches in height and weighs 3,240 pounds.

5. PG&E has been unable to locate any vendor that manufactures subsurface or pad-mounted distribution line regulators. PG&E has, at times, mounted "pole-type" regulators on pads. This type of installation has large space requirements (16 ft x 16 ft) and produces a greater visual impact than regular pole mounting.

6. The Commission Advisory and Compliance Division (CACD) has reviewed this matter, and made a field investigation of the proposed job site. CACD concludes that the proposed project will, for the most part, be screened from the highway by tree growth, and that the proposed installation is reasonable.

FINDINGS

1. PG&E needs two pole mounted voltage regulators to maintain voltage, to increase reliability during emergency situations and to bring primary voltage on the circuit up to allowable limits.

2. The regulators will be shielded from view from the highway by tree growth. No new highway crossing will result from this project and visual impact will be minimal.

3. No manufacturers of underground regulators have been found by PG&E.

4. Applicable governmental agencies have had the opportunity to comment on this project and did not object.

5. Section 320 stipulates that undergrounding will take place "whenever feasible." Since no manufacturer of underground transformers can be found, it is not feasible to consider placing the transformers underground.

6. This deviation, if granted, would apply only to this specific case and in no way should be construed as a precedent or a blanket endorsement for deviations in similar cases. Any further requests for deviations will have to be considered on a case by case basis.

7. PG&E's request to install these two pole-mounted regulators is reasonable and should be granted.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Authority is granted for Pacific Gas & Electric Company to install two pole mounted regulators on one new and one existing pole within the scenic highway corridor of Skyline Boulevard in Woodside, San Mateo County.

2. This Resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on November 9, 1990. The following Commissioners approved it:

G. MITCHELL WILK
President
FREDERICK R. DUDA
JOHN B. OHANIAN
PATRICIA M. ECKERT
Commissioners

Commissioner Stanley W. Hulett, being necessarily absent, did not participate.

Neal J. Shulman
Executive Director