

# North Shore residents voice no above ground power lines for new substation

Posted on March 23, 2017 by GoLakeChelan in News



**Robin Vogel addressed City Council on March 14, 2017 to ask that Chelan PUD place new power lines for the Northshore underground rather than above ground. (Photo by Christine Eagar)**

Robin Vogel spoke on behalf of a group of individuals, during the public comment period at the Chelan City Council Meeting held on March 14, 2017 and at the City's Comprehensive Plan Update hearing on March 15. Vogel addressed Council and city representatives regarding the upsizing of the power lines which Chelan PUD has planned as part of the new North Shore Substation.

"This is a huge blight on the view corridors," Vogel stated. "There is no doubt in my mind that there are a lot of people who don't even know this is coming to a neighborhood near them. A group of us are imploring the PUD to abandon the archaic technology of the above ground power lines and these massive poles and instead to underground the new lines for the new substation."

Vogel continued to explain that in her conversations with the PUD, she was told that undergrounding the lines this would be prohibitively expensive to underground. Vogel claimed that nobody had obtained any bids from a contractor that does this sort of work. She said that the only number they have is one from Commissioner Gary Arsenault, who gave a number of \$3 million at the March 6 Commissioners meeting.

Through further research she surmised that the cost would be approximately \$5.55 per month per metered north shore customer with about 9,000 meters splitting a \$3 million cost for a five-year payout plan. "If you want to push that term to 10 years, you're looking at \$2.77 per month. You can't even get a cup of coffee for that anymore," Vogel added.



**North Shore Chelan Substation last proposed sites. Courtesy of Chelan County PUD)**

“Growth needs to pay for growth,” Vogel said. “My understanding is that this hasn’t happened. Crystal View Estates, Legacy, Reserve and Lookout apparently were not required to do mitigation for under-grounding, or if they did it wasn’t enough. They have no lines whatsoever down there. Frankly I was a little ticked off they have no lines and my view is going to be completely decimated.”

Vogel also expressed the benefits of under-grounding lines would save on costs for wildland fire repairs to overhead lines. Vogel and those she represents said that infrastructure should be placed behind potential development not in the view corridors to protect the entire Chelan area.

### **Chelan County PUD Board of Commissioners heard more about the new Chelan-area substation (From a PUD press release)**

On Monday, March 20, Chelan County PUD Board of Commissioners heard more about the new Chelan-area substation. Board members agreed with recommendations from staff and a customer advisory group to remove three possible locations from further consideration due to cost and aesthetic issues. The focus will shift to finding a suitable location in an area with fewer impacts on neighbors and closer to where the load is located.

John Stoll, Customer Utilities managing director, requested, and the Board affirmed, narrowing the search for a substation location to serve future demand on Lake Chelan’s north shore. Commissioners affirmed staff’s plan to take time for another look at areas with less impact on neighbors from necessary high-and low-voltage power lines following comments made at the March 6 board meeting and at a meeting of the community focus group last week. This group has been meeting for about 18 months to help guide the PUD on its site selection efforts.

Several Chelan community members at Monday’s board meeting agreed with the Commission’s decision to take another look at a location that is closer to where the load currently is located is the best path forward.

—

*(By Jillian Foster)*