



**OAKMORE
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Summer 2005 Newsletter

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Oakmore Homes Association

since 1926

Mission Statement

"The Oakmore Homes Association is a community of Oakmore neighbors committed to promoting and enhancing safety, beautification, community, and property values in our neighborhood."

Utility Undergrounding Update

The topic of utility undergrounding has been receiving quite a bit of attention recently. Sue Piper, policy analyst from Councilmember Jean Quan's office, alerted us that the Public Works Agency would be presenting a status report and recommendation to the Public Works Committee on March 22, 2005. The Public Works Committee is comprised of four councilmembers: Jean Quan, District 4 (Oakmore's representative); Henry Chang, Councilmember-at-large; Desley Brooks, District 6; and Nancy Nadel, District 3, Chair of the Committee.

This report provided: 1) a list of all completed underground utility districts to date; 2) a list of petitioned streets (Exhibit D), with preliminary staff evaluation on Rule 20A qualifying and non-qualifying streets; and 3) a list of business corridors for undergrounding consideration identified by CEDA (4 out of the 5 listed are already undergrounded). Exhibit D showed 2 projects have already been approved: 1) the work on MacArthur Blvd from 73rd Ave. to the San Leandro border is now under way; and 2) Piedmont Pines is ready to start their community meetings to form 5 assessment districts. (Their project is being divided into 5 phases.) On the proposed list, Lakeshore Phase 5 is first in line. (Lakeshore Phases 1-4 are already completed.) Oakmore is next on the waiting list. (Piedmont Pines put in their application a couple of months ahead of Oakmore back in 1987.)

We were informed of this agenda item only a few days before the meeting and were

warned that there might be a challenge to Piedmont Pines' project and to Lakeshore's and Oakmore's status on the waiting list. The challenge did occur and several people in the audience spoke to protest the unfairness to the communities who have waited 18 years to date if the current system were to be abandoned. (Virginia Lew spoke on behalf of Oakmore.) Nevertheless, the staff report was not accepted by the Committee. PWA staff was instructed to make some stipulated corrections to their report, including providing a more comprehensive list of business corridors with overhead lines. Staff was also instructed to look into possible funds for safety projects and to research funding under Rule 20B.

The streets identified for Oakmore as qualifying for undergrounding under Rule 20A contained two errors. Bridgeview and Hoover, which were on the original application, were now deemed non-qualifying. Virginia worked with the PWA staff to reverse this situation. At this writing, Bridgeview is back on the qualifying streets. Hoover is still considered non-qualifying. A traffic study was conducted in 1987, but since the results are not readily available, we will request another traffic study to bolster our position that Hoover acts as a collector street.

On May 18, 2005, the Oakmore Homes Association led a neighborhood meeting. More than 60 people were present. When

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Holiday Barbecue: July 3, 2005

* Come one, come all * You're invited to a party celebrating the Fourth of July. No, that's not a typographical error above. We believe that there is no such thing as too many parties. So whatever else you're planning to do over the long weekend, plan on making our party one of your stops.

Host: Oakmore Homes Association

Date: July 3, 2005

Time: Noon – 3:00

Place: Rocky's parking lot (thanks, Gabe!)

There will be hot dogs from Niman Ranch, and hamburgers handmade by Dan R Meats (see the interview with Dan on

page 3), plus all the fixings, including fruit, snacks, and drinks.

Entertainment will include juggling, demonstrations of unicycle riding, and balloon art for the kids (there's a kid inside each of us – right?). There will also be raffling of baskets of goodies provided by our district's merchants.

This event is free to all OHA members. Bring this newsletter with you so that we can verify your ID and greet you by name. If you are not a member of OHA, your newsletter label says 'Resident'. We want to say 'hi' to you too. There is a nominal charge for non-OHA members of \$3.00 for adults and \$2.00 for kids under 12. This is a community event and we want to see each and every one of you .

Spring Garden Tour – May 7, 2006

A Spring Garden Tour of Oakmore is being planned for next year. It will be held on Sunday, May 7, 2006. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Joaquin Miller School Garden Project. The school is quite excited and will be publicizing it. Consequently, we expect a good turnout. And naturally,, in order to

make it a success, we will need lots of volunteers, first to plan and then to conduct this tour. For more information on volunteering, call and leave a message at 530-4719.

Utility Undergrounding Update (cont. from page 1)

the attendees heard the PWA staff estimate that Oakmore would still have to wait another **20 years** before the City Council even starts the approval process (and that is assuming that we hold onto our current place in line), several people asked about alternatives. One alternative would be to use Rule 20B for undergrounding the utilities. This would allow other streets not now on the list to join the project; it would also speed up the process since the limiting factor is how fast we can fund the project. Instead of the utilities paying approximately 80-90% of the project, PG&E would pay only about 20%, SBC 35%, and Comcast 0%, with the property owners paying the balance. Another option might be to contract privately for the project, with minimal interfacing with the utility companies. This would cost even more, but the waiting for undergrounding would at least be over.

Whether undergrounding occurs under Rule 20A, 20B, or independently, one (or more) assessment district must be formed. This means that a vote among the property owners in the proposed assessment district(s) must pass with a substantial majority. Besides the obvious costs of the trenching, there are costs for new service panels and new street lights. Typically, property owners would share equally in the costs. The Oakmore Homes Association is forming a committee to investigate these other options. The committee will also research

means for reducing that 20-year wait, as well as financing options for the property owners. We will keep you informed.

In the meantime, on May 24, 2005, the PWA staff presented an amended report to the Public Works Committee. There were a dozen Oakmore neighbors in attendance at this meeting, along with a similar number from Piedmont Pines. Virginia Lew, Terry Kulka, and David Levine spoke on behalf of Oakmore, urging the Committee to accept the report and to honor the promises made in the past. Dick Spees and half a dozen other Piedmont Pines residents also spoke. The staff report was accepted this time around and now stands "as submitted", thus requiring no further Council approval.

However, a word of caution: 1) A task force may yet be formed with the goal of examining how other areas of Oakland which are not on the waiting list might get a chance to participate in undergrounding. 2) The list of business corridors with overhead lines qualifying for Rule 20A undergrounding now numbers 34. Commercial districts *have* preempted residential districts in the past, and that 20-year waiting-time estimate did not factor this in.

~ Virginia Lew ~

Meet the Meat Man

If you're looking for the perfect toy, you might try Toys R Us. But if you're looking for the perfect cut of beef or lamb, an organic chicken or that beautifully marbled steak, try Dan R Meats in Rocky's Market.



Dan Rogovoy, owner of the new butcher counter inside Rocky's Market, has been a "meat man" since he was 16 years old. A high school girlfriend introduced Dan to her father, who was a butcher, and Dan began his career in the business by making meat deliveries to customers in the mid-1950's. He has been a journeyman butcher for 46 years, recently retiring from Piedmont Grocery Company's meat counter. Dan considers Rocky's his "retirement business."

"I was looking for an old fashioned butcher shop," he says when recalling his search for a new business site. When he first looked into Rocky's Market, he didn't think the space was suitable. But then the walk-in box freezer and the hefty red hanging rail at the back of the store caught his eye, and he knew he had found what he had been looking for.

Dan purchases whole beef, lamb, pork, and veal from well-known sources such as Niman Ranch, and stores them in the big walk-in freezer where they are dry-aged to tenderize for 16-21 days. Then he bones the meat himself and cuts it into steaks, roasts, and chops, or for special orders placed by customers. Only prime or choice cuts are sold at Dan's counter, and each piece is individually heat sealed and wrapped in freezer paper so that it can be stored directly in a home freezer. From his long experience as a butcher, Dan is able to

grade meat like a jeweler is able to grade diamonds. Hefting a piece of meat, he can tell by its marbling and color whether it is prime or choice or a lesser grade. "Niman Ranch buys grass fed beef and then feeds the cattle a diet of grain for 90-120 days which produces a higher grade of beef," Dan reports. He also sells poultry from such high quality sources as Rocky's 100% Natural Fryers (the organic brand), Rosie, and Willie Bird Turkeys. Fresh, wild salmon also makes an appearance when it's available.

How has Mad Cow Disease affected his meat business? Dan contends that "a lot of good has come out of the Mad Cow Disease scare. It is directly responsible for California's having the most stringent regulation of federal inspections anywhere in the world." And all poultry dealers in the state must be "100% natural" as well. That means poultry must be pen-raised and fed on grains free from insecticides and hormones.

As for cooking meat, Dan claims that the most common cooking mistake people make with meat is overcooking, which could make any cut dry and tough. When asked about his own favorite recipes, Dan replies, "Anything using good quality olive oil, chopped garlic (never crushed – a tip he learned from Julia Child), and rosemary." His professional tip: "cook it hot and cook it fast."

So, the next time you're looking for a great piece of meat or a tender chicken, be sure to stop by and see Dan the Meat Man at Rocky's Market. Or call him at 482-2519 and arrange for delivery. You won't be sorry.

~ interview by Nona Smith; photo by Terry Kulka ~

Other Community Notes:

Highway 13 update:

From June until November, CalTrans will be resurfacing the northbound stretch between Moraga and Broadway Terrace. This work will occur at night between 10 PM and 5:30 AM. The highway will remain open during those hours, but one lane will be closed. A shoulder will be created on the right side of the road and drainage will be improved during this project.

The median work is almost done. Good news for those who have been dismayed by the loss of vegetation – the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has approved \$500,000 for landscaping the median.

Lastly, the State Senate has approved the designation of "Scenic Route" for Highway 13. The Assembly now must vote on this (it is expected to pass) before it goes to the Governor.

ALERT: On April 15, in the dead of night, thieves stole a

wheel from a car parked on Leimert in front of the owners' house. When the car hit the street, the loud crash woke them. On June 7, a homeowner around the corner on Hoover lost 2 wheels under similar circumstances. The thieves appear to be professional. At least 1 car had an alarm which did not go off. The lug nuts were left behind both times.

The first homeowners were told by the dealership that it was likely a "custom order" job. Two incidents in such a short time could imply a network is looking out for sources for special parts orders. While the police have been notified, it is not clear how we can stop the "Midnight Auto Supply" from striking again, other than using wheel locks. Our thanks to Art Kuhn and Carol Van Steenberg for reporting these incidents to OHA.



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Can We Talk ? . . . (about all those recycling containers . . .)

OK, so now we all have a large gray container for recycling, a large green one for vegetation, either a larger maroon one or a small blue one for trash, and the "little green buddy". We all want to do our part to help Oakland reach its commitment to reduce landfill by 75% of the 1990 levels by year 2010. But where the dickens do we park all these bins??? And what about the old blue and yellow bins?

This last question is the easiest to answer. If you do not wish to use them for other purposes around the house or garage, you can recycle the yellow and blue bins by placing them inside the gray container for pick-up (or set them next to the gray can if it's too full to hold the blue and yellow). Some neighbors have reported seeing dozens of blue and yellow bins littering ravines and other open areas. Please report this to Illegal Dumping at 434-5101 or 615-5566.

The City has a blight ordinance that stipulates that trash and recycling containers can only remain on the street from noon the day before pick-up until noon the day after. Cans left on the street outside of this 48-hour window are irritating to neighbors and passersby alike, and can be reported to the City by calling 238-3381. The owners of the offending con-

tainers will receive a "Notice of Violation".

The trash and recycling cans can be stored in side yards or back yards. You will have to build some sort of screen if the only location available to you is in your front yard. If you are physically unable to move the containers to the street for pick-up, you may be eligible for backyard service at no extra charge. Call Waste Management at 613-8710 for an application for this service.

If you want a smaller gray bin, or perhaps a little green buddy with a better closing lid, call the Oakland Recycling hotline: 238-7283.

Speaking of the little green buddy, once it is full, empty it into the green can. Food waste can now be mixed with green waste, which adds extra nutrients during the composting process.

A word about recycling plastics: Only those plastics numbered 1 or 2, and that have necks narrower than the body (includes jugs) should be placed in the gray can. All other plastics, including styrofoam, margarine containers, etc., should go into the trash.
