

City of Coconut Creek InterOffice Memorandum

To: Planning and Zoning Board

Date: February 12, 2020

From: W. Scott Stoudenmire, AICP
Deputy Director of Sustainable Development

Subject: Chapter 13 Code Amendment –
Sec. 13-142, “Underground
Utilities; Required”

The City desires to amend Chapter 13 of the Code of Ordinances, relating to undergrounding of utilities by amending Section 13-142, “Underground Utilities; Required,” of the City’s Code of Ordinances. Specifically, this amendment addresses recent policy changes over the last several years of key utilities such as FPL, and the impact they have had on implementation of our code provisions of this section. This amendment also recognizes the importance and undeveloped nature of the MainStreet Regional Activity Center (RAC) and the ability to maintain and even strengthen requirements for the undergrounding of overhead utilities in this area.

As a result of technological advances and policy directives from state agencies/commissions relating to FPL infrastructure, there has been significant investment in the hardening and reinforcement of poles along our major roadway corridors. This, for the most part, has made it impractical to implement the City’s requirement to underground utilities with our most recent development projects. In fact, in certain instances the ongoing hardening program has made it impossible to underground utilities. This amendment, taking the above into consideration, discontinues the overhead to underground conversion requirements for any area of the City outside the MainStreet RAC.

The City is currently undertaking the design of the conversion of utilities on Johnson Road from overhead to underground. This corridor has been identified as the last corridor outside of MainStreet that is still feasible for undergrounding and would provide a significant benefit both from a reliability and aesthetic perspective. The cost of the Johnson Road project is anticipated to exhaust the funds in the trust account for this purpose.

The MainStreet RAC, being substantially undeveloped does not have the same type of undergrounding conflicts as the more developed areas of the City. As such, with the City’s strong desire to ensure the benefits of the undergrounding program for this area, the requirement to install all utilities underground in the MainStreet RAC has been specifically identified and maintained in this amendment and the waiver provisions have been removed.

The revisions of this ordinance are proposed to apply to all current development applications in process including those for which utility waiver applications are currently being processed. As such, as drafted, if this ordinance is approved by the City Commission, any current utility waiver applications will be deemed withdrawn as no longer necessary.

At this time, staff is presenting this item to the Planning and Zoning Board for final recommendation to the City Commission.

WSS/ae