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Cc: [Charlie Parr](#); [Karen Tilton](#)
Subject: IGU Open House
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Charlie and I attended last evening's construction open house at North Pole library. Dave Prusak gave three presentations and we stayed for the first two cycles to hear the questions from the audience. They will have the attendance numbers by sign in sheets but at a glance all of the chairs were filled and the room was at standing room only capacity. My best guess would be 70 people in the room for each of the first two cycles. Each of the three Phase I pipe installation contractors had a representative present with some poster boards of their equipment and background. Several IGU board members were present (Haagenson, Meeks, Butler, Abegg); Keith Hanneman fielded design and ROW questions while HDR was present with at least two of their agents to speak with property owners in another room if they had questions or concerns. There were a few questions regarding when gas can be reasonably be expected to arrive, the price and the cost of conversion. Several people argued that with the conversion costs and the age of their structures, conversion was not economically reasonable. The greatest number and most vocal of the comments concerned the clearing operations, selection of the easements/routing and lack of communication with property owners.

- Clearing was excessively wide
- Clearing removed all of the vegetative buffer/privacy screen
- Routing could have been along GVEA easement along the back of the lots to save screen
- Large trees are being cut and stumps are left in place.
- Clearing is going outside of easement limits
- PUEs should not be used when roadway is available
- When pipe is located within the road ROW it should not be so close to the ROW line
- There has been little to no contact with property owners – no communication
- "35 years in utility business...clearing need not be wider than 10 feet"
- Property value has been destroyed
- Usable wood is being stolen off the property
- IGU is hiring high school students to place notices in mailboxes (a violation of postal regulations)
- Keith mentioned that in at least one case they are running the pipe around large trees in the PUE so they won't have to be removed.

My observations:

- The property owners for the most part don't understand where their property lines are.
- The owners do not understand the differences in the road rights of way, PUE's, specific utility easements (GVEA) or the conditions and allowable uses of each.
- There has been no explanation as to the basis for the width of clearing.
- IGU communication (door hangers/notices) appear to be a reaction to the complaints as opposed to an advance notice.
- Post construction condition of the easements was not well explained (debris/stump removal, seeding, topsoil, etc.)

- The mood of those who asked questions was generally hostile.
- I spoke with the CEI contractor representative who stated that given the depth of burial and installation techniques that he considers the clearing widths to be “tight”
- Dave Prusak noted that under the IGU “tariff”, the \$50 connection fee included the first 100 feet of service line. This is important as we look at the lots for which we need to acquire new easements. If IGU intends to use free service connections as an alternative compensation for easements, if the structure is within 100 feet of the main, then we effectively have no trading stock.

While at DOT we would occasionally get complaints of our M&O crews clearing trees out of the highway ROW, as if the buffer was a vested right in the adjoining property owners. That was usually easy to resolve with an explanation of the public’s right to use the ROW. Use of PUE’s is a more sensitive issue because the PUE’s are generally located within the lot boundaries of the individual owners and particularly if they have gone unused for several decades since the initial dedication. A utilities’ right to use the PUE can be easily explained but it is generally more difficult for the land owner to accept.

It will be interesting to see how or if IGU will have modified its communications with affected property owners by the time we move into the Phase II acquisitions. JohnB

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