

Maintenance, logistic problems reason.

Dealing with downed power lines during a raging blizzard is not a favorite part of the job for Gothenburg's electric crew.

Nor is trying to squeeze a digger truck between trees in a resident's back yard to fix an electrical problem.

Because of these issues, city officials are looking at going underground.

A proposal under consideration by Gothenburg's City Council would have the crew stringing wire underground throughout town, a little at a time.

The council discussed the matter at a June 7 meeting before deciding to revisit the proposal at a later date.

Members discussed the city contributing up to \$500 or more if a homeowner decides to convert overhead service to underground.

Under the plan, city administrator Bruce Clymer said the homeowner would be responsible for the change which would include the hiring of an electrician, obtaining permits, trenching for the new line and other things.

City may go underground with electric lines

Written by Elizabeth Barrett Thursday, 16 June 2011 13:23 -

City electrical foreman Mike Libich estimated that cost to be \$1,000 to \$1,200 minus what the city would pay.

The service line, which would be owned by the property owner, would be connected to a city-provided meter pedestal.

If a homeowner didn't choose to participate, the city would abandon the pole and it would become the property of the homeowner.

"If the pole falls over, it's the homeowner's responsibility to take care of it," Clymer said.

Council member Gary Fritch wondered if the policy would be explained to homeowners before they are affected.

Libich said it would, noting that cable television wires would be included in the underground wiring as it is now in most overhead lines.

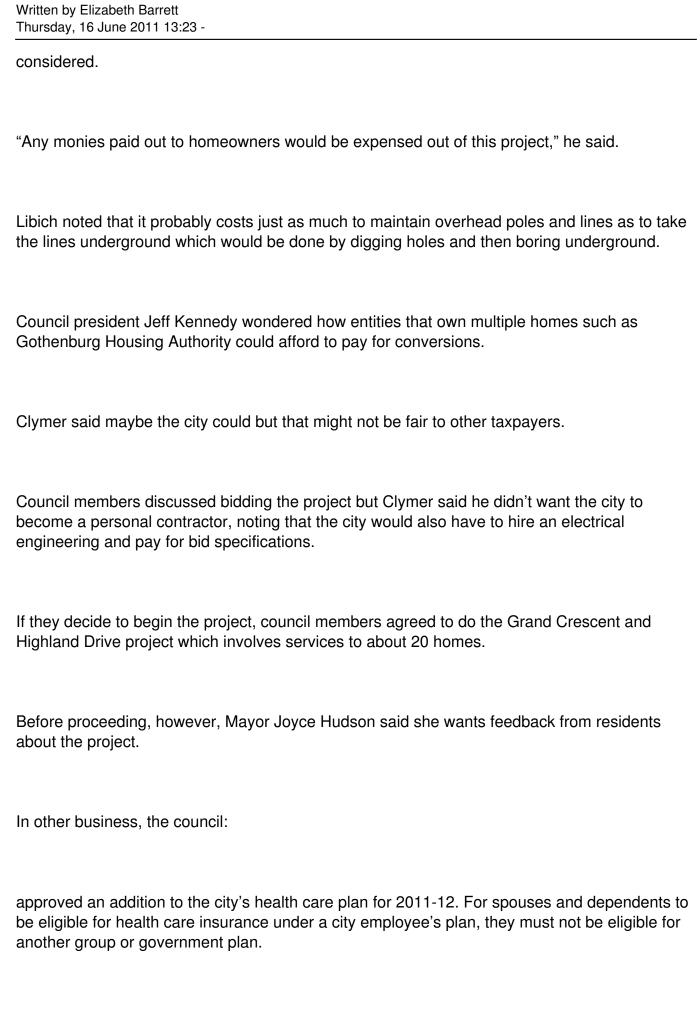
Electrical department employee Kasey Bogus said he liked the idea of underground wires because overhead lines are more difficult to maintain.

Council members looked at two areas where the electrical crew has experienced numerous problems with rotting poles and logistical difficulties—Avenue A to B from 18th to 20th and between Grand Crescent and Highland Drive from Lake Avenue to Avenue F.

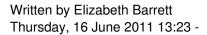
Approximate cost for the first project would be \$28,560 with the second one costing about \$35,080.

Clymer said the city has budgeted \$65,000 this year for upgrades in either of the areas

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Council members renewed the employees' health insurance plan with current carrier Corporate Plan Management at a May meeting.

appointed Randy Burge to the Community Development Authority and John Stuhr to the Gothenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

Burge will fill a vacancy left by Jack Kniss.

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