



Regina O'Connell <roconnell@cityofplacerville.org>

Private Sewer Service Ordinance

Mark <markacuna1@mindspring.com>

Fri, Dec 8, 2023 at 11:41 AM

To: Michael Saragosa <msaragosa@cityofplacerville.org>, Jackie Neau <jneau@cityofplacerville.org>, Nicole Gotberg <ngotberg@cityofplacerville.org>, David Yarbrough <dyarbrough@cityofplacerville.org>, John Clerici <jclerici@cityofplacerville.org>
Cc: Cleve Morris <cmorris@cityofplacerville.org>, regina oconnell <roconnell@cityofplacerville.org>, pierre rivas <privas@cityofplacerville.org>

Honorable Mayor and Council,

I have been watching the sewer service ordinance move forward for many months. In 2015, I was involved with the failure of a substantial private sewer system in the Coleman Street area. I was pleased to see the work by the Ad Hoc committee contained wording that would begin addressing private sewer systems, both on, and off, private property. I felt no need to attend your November meeting.

The Coleman Street project ultimately replaced the private sewer system serving 7 homes. At the projects outset, it was believed the failed sewer service served 2 homes on Coleman. Those property owners had paid decades of maintenance costs, with regular plumbing visits to snake a 4" clay line and clean up spilled sewage.

During an attempt to clear and video the "service" in 2015, sewage was found flowing in the line from unknown locations. Placerville Public Works was called, they water jetted and took video of the line. This action led to many discoveries. The line went 300' east to Clay Street, underneath an un-permitted home addition on Clay St. (The line was crushed under the foundation.) Homes on Coleman, Benson Court, Clay Street and Lincoln Street were ultimately discovered to be connected to the "service".

Working with city staff, property owners, Vicini Construction and plumbing contractors a new 6" PVC system was installed and connected. Each property owner paid approximately \$8K to Vicini for the new line. It crosses numerous inaccessible yards, driveways and two City Streets. Inspected by the City but with no recorded easements for the lines. The property owners could not afford the additional cost of a surveyed easement and document preparation. Homes on the project have sold multiple time since 2015 with no disclosure.

With this first hand knowledge I am concerned with the Council's modifications to the ordinance. Comments by Council and the public are correct, private sewer systems usually contain many unknowns. These systems are a part of Placerville's history and utility legacy, mostly designed to reduce costs and impacts in their day. Unfortunately, it is only a matter of time before another private system fails.

I respectfully request the Council consider wording that allows staff to begin preparing for the next failure. Use Coleman Street as a guide to develop the roles of property owners, Staff and private contractors. Perhaps an outreach effort in the older neighborhoods known to contain these systems.

I will gladly take any Council member on a walking tour of the Coleman/Lincoln/ Benson/Clay project. Your comments and questions are be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time and service to Placerville.

Cordially yours,

Mark Acuna
530-622-8922