

ElCerritoPatch

Three-in-One Photo of Kensington Streetlight Imbroglia



By Charles Burress
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We'd like to thank Jennifer Frisch for this photo showing the three types of streetlights playing leading roles in the controversy over PG&E's removal of Kensington's old lantern-style streetlights on wood poles.

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\When PG&E began cutting down Kensington's old lantern-style streetlights on wood poles and replacing them with standard-issue "cobra head" lights on shiny steel poles last month, a number of [upset residents complained](#).

The replacement project was hard to ignore since it involves nearly 60 lights on upscale community's main street, Arlington Avenue.

PG&E and the Contra Costa County Public Works Department, which oversees streets in unincorporated Kensington, explained that the old wood poles had aged and were no longer considered safe and thus needed to be replaced.

No one seemed to dispute the need to replace them. The ensuing controversy centered on what type of replacement pole should be used. It was asked why the new poles couldn't be of the decorative type used on the adjoining segment of Arlington Avenue in Berkeley?

Patch [received disparate answers](#) when it put the question to PG&E and the county public works department.

Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia expressed concern about the issue, and PG&E halted work for the time being. Most of the poles have already been replaced.

A meeting with representatives from PG&E and the county public works staff was scheduled for today, Aug. 27, at Gioia's office.

The attached photo was taken by Jennifer Frisch on her cell phone while jogging. Shot at the Kensington/Berkeley border in front of the Sugar Cone Cafe and Ace Hardware, it shows all three types of streetlights: the old lantern-style light on a wood pole, a double cobra-head new light on a plain, shiny steel pole, and a decorative acorn-top light on a dark green, fluted metal pole.

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