

BSI Canal Committee

3/2/22

You might have recently noticed several seawall projects currently in renovations/replacement in our neighborhood. I've gotten several questions about the contractor digging ("tearing up") homeowner installed services (water, irrigation, electrical), and landscaping, and who's responsibility for replacing such. The simplest way to explain this is, since the city is responsible for the maintenance of the seawalls, it has right of way along said seawalls. This is similar to right of ways for roads, power poles, etc. which is defined as 10' from the seawall and supporting structures (i.e. deadman anchors), buried back into your yard, used to anchor the tops of the seawalls.

It is policy of the city to notify homeowners several weeks prior to commencing work, thereby allowing the homeowner time to remove, isolate, or otherwise prepare for the city removing the old seawalls, and for the most part, this practice is followed, but there are occasions when this is not possible. One recent example, is when the seawall was removed in an adjacent property, and the soil exposed from this replacement started to collapse. The city was then forced to remove additional seawall, which includes digging into this property. The homeowner was complaining that they were not notified in time to have water and electrical lines removed prior to seawall removal, but in order to prevent further damage, the city was forced to act (still all within their right of way) by removing additional panels and excavating behind said panels and into the adjoining property. The city (and its contractor) did what they could do to minimize collateral damage but ultimately the homeowner is still responsible for any such items placed in the city's right of way.

If you have any further questions, please refer to this document which has a far better explanation than I can offer-- <https://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/home/showpublisheddocument/3590> .

Lock update—it seems as with most government endeavors; time is a moot point. The project is progressing, albeit, much slower than originally anticipated. The best information I have-- after final review of bid documents by the city engineer, a number of changes needed to be made to the bid documents prior releasing for bid. This additional document revision added (delayed) several months to the schedule. So, my expectation is: documents will be released for bid May, 2 months to bid, 2 months to review, 2 months negotiations, with contract award in the fall. Depending on contract terms, contractor scheduling, supplies, and weather, construction could start after the first of next year. I would expect construction to last through spring of next year.

A question often asked is – “Will the lock be closed during this construction?” The general answer is no—but I expect there will be times when it might be necessary to close the lock for a day or so during this time. Any closures will be well advertised in advanced of closures. Having said that from time to time, there could be a couple of hours when it may be blocked due to unforeseen necessity.

Rick Daugherty, Chairman, BSI Canal Committee