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## BART Expands Plan for Solar Shades

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West parking lot at Orinda Bart station Photo Andy Scheck

park beneath them; existing lamp poles would be removed in favor of lights hung under the shades. During construction, station parking spaces would be made unavailable on a rolling basis.

Though BART has not yet conducted a lighting impact study, it plans to do so before the Board's decision, said Schultz.

According to City Attorney Osa Wolff, BART has an exemption from area land-use regulations and is not required to obtain Orinda's permission before proceeding with construction, nor is it compelled to conduct an environmental impact report (EIR) using Orinda's usual standards. While a challenge to BART's authority is technically possible, "other cities have tried and failed," she said.

Addressing the Council's concerns about environmental review, Lightbeam representative Jim Lavelle said, "A parking lot is not necessarily considered to be an environmentally-sensitive area."

Orinda Vision's Peter Hasselman and Ian Baird were among only a handful of residents in attendance at this meeting, and both expressed concerns about the proposed installation. Hasselman said the installation would be neither good for the downtown area nor aesthetically successful. Baird suggested the contract allow for the panels to be moved and reintegrated into future building developments.

BART Director Gail Murray, who represents District 1 (including Orinda), indicated a community forum could be organized to solicit input from the public.

The proposed solar installation would cover the West parking lot. Asked why BART did not plan to blanket all station spaces, Schultz replied that Pacific Gas and Electric Company restricts "distributed generation" projects to 1000 kilowatts per site, to protect its proprietary interests. He noted that BART is considering a solar deployment at other locations as well, including the Lafayette station.

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