

Cherryhomes: SWLRT route doesn't meet standards, values

Written by
Monday, 05 August 2013 14:56



Mayoral Candidate Jackie Cherryhomes is asking the Metropolitan Council to reexamine the route for the Southwest Light Rail transit (SWLRT).

"The current SWLRT alignment has numerous unresolved issues, including cost and neighborhood impacts, and is a plan that does not meet the standards and values we share in Minneapolis," said Cherryhomes.

The candidate finds many other problems with the project. According to Cherryhomes, the route runs through urban greenways with very limited transit oriented development opportunities; and it could potentially destroy highly valued green-space by co-locating freight, light rail and bike trails into a narrow right-of-way.

Cherryhomes has been involved with the SWLRT project for the past five years, working with neighborhoods affected by the SWLRT to advance alternative routes for the project. Though her suggested routes were determined to be too costly, Cherryhomes believes that the costs for resolving the light rail's current issues should make the city reexamine alternative routes.

"Since this project was conceived, the federal framework for the definition of success has

Cherryhomes: SWLRT route doesn't meet standards, values

Written by

Monday, 05 August 2013 14:56

shifted," said Cherryhomes. "Systems are now not judged by their on-time accuracy, but instead on their number of passengers. The project should be focused in an area of density." The mayoral candidate believes that the City Council should withhold municipal consent until all the issues of the neighborhoods are addressed.

Cherryhomes also opposes efforts by the city to take over utility services such as electricity and gas.

"Leadership is focusing time and money on the issues that matter most to residents of Minneapolis," said Cherryhomes. "The debate over the Municipalization of utilities is an example of politics over logic. Buying the Xcel and CenterPoint infrastructure would cost us billions of dollars."

Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy currently own the electricity and natural gas utilities within Minneapolis, and are subject to the regulatory control of the Public Utilities Commission. The companies' contracts to serve the city are expected to expire in 2014. The City Council is considering whether to place a ballot initiative before voters asking them whether the City should run its own gas and electric utilities when the contracts expire.

In other Cherryhomes news, former Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton has officially endorsed Jackie Cherryhomes for Mayor.

"I've been mayor and I know Jackie has the ability and the will to make the toughest decisions and unite our city," Sayles Belton told Cherryhomes supporters in a June 5 email sent out to by the campaign.

During her eight years in the city's top spot, Sayles Belton worked closely with Cherryhomes, who served as Minneapolis City Council president during the same time.

"We fought a lot of battles together," Cherryhomes said of Sayles Belton. "She's a remarkable leader and I learned a great deal from her. I am honored to have her endorsement in this race."

Sayles Belton was elected Council President in 1990 and served as the city's first African-American mayor from 1994 to 2001.