

Marathon LRT meeting

By Neil MacKinnon
22 May 2008 01:22

Yet-to-be-laid track was repeatedly ripped up.

An incessant parade of citizens passionately posed their concerns over Calgary's West LRT alignment at a marathon Land Use, Planning and Transportation meeting that lasted at least 12 hours yesterday, lambasting the city for everything from potential noise and safety to a lack of consultation and elevated rail lines.

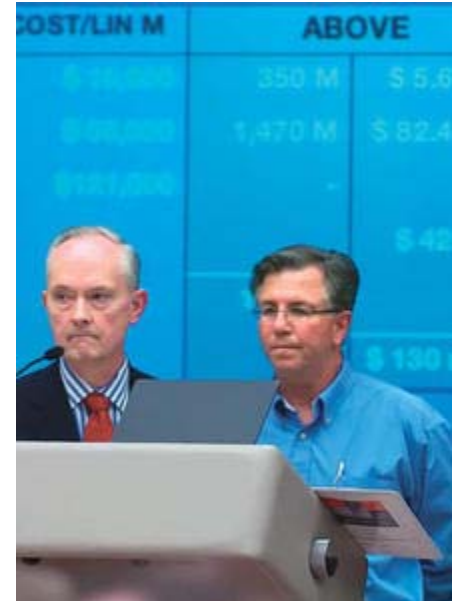
"Human spirit does not thrive under such obstructions, nothing of any value does," said 20-year Westgate/Glendale resident David Boland in his five minutes at the microphone down the backstretch of the public hearing portion, clocked at three hours and 45 minutes, not including questions.

While the final vote hadn't been conducted as of press time, Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart moved to file the fourth recommendation of the motion that would have increased the potential for the west-bound line down the middle of Bow Trail at a cost of \$16 million citing a lack of support.

Best West LRT kicked off the public feeding frenzy indicating a route they've researched, running north and south along existing CP Rail lines, and at or below grade "wherever possible" could save the city up to \$63 million and indicated a new willingness on the part of CPR to negotiate a deal for the land, an assertion confirmed by Ald. John Mar, who said he met with the railway Tuesday.

Calgary fireman Bryan Rose, who lives north of Bow Trail on the edge of Shagnappi Golf Course, speaking as a citizen said safety concerns must be a priority, especially in the downtown core where the fire department has had run-ins with LRT's en route to emergency calls.

"Quite literally," he said, "we've had trucks that have hit LRTs due to inexperienced drivers or whatever, trying to meet response times."
-neil.mackinnon@metronews.ca



ROBIN KUNISKI for Metro Calgary
Ron Goodfellow, left, who drew up an a Stewart, chairman of Best West LRT, R and Peter Rishaug, spokesman of Best case at city hall for alterations to the ci LRT.