



January 10, 2014

Today, Councilmember Sabra Briere, who recently won re-election from the First Ward, announced that she is running for mayor. “I made this decision after many discussions with my family, community members and, especially, with constituents.”

“Our community needs a mayor who is innovative, pragmatic and responsive to the community: one who can develop a realistic vision of what can be done, has demonstrated an ability to work with others, and maintains a positive attitude toward achieving community goals,” she said. “I listen to all viewpoints, work with every member of Council toward solving problems, and focus on improving our community’s quality of life.”

Briere’s well-known commitment to listening to and working with people of varying perspectives makes her an especially effective problem-solver and a strong advocate for her constituents.

“When residents complained about the cost of repairing sidewalks, and how arbitrary that felt, I began talking with staff about offering a millage to cover sidewalk maintenance. This discussion grew to include a variety of sidewalk-related issues, from sidewalk gaps to cross-lot walks to safe routes to school and the lack of adequate street lighting in some parts of our community. I continue to work toward solving each problem, recognizing that many problems are complex and need a coherent plan.”

Last summer Briere learned that the State might be reconsidering the allowable concentration of 1,4 dioxane in ground water. She contacted City and County staff for a series of briefings on the current situation. Working with City and County staff, she drafted a resolution for Council. She then met with members of the County Board and other Council members to get support. After seeking feedback from others who had been involved in the issue, Briere worked with State Representatives Irwin and Zemke to bring the issue successfully to the Council table and ultimately to Lansing. That ability to work with a broad group of officials and concerned residents toward a common goal is one of Briere’s hallmarks.

“Change isn’t always easy — and it isn’t always pretty. I value community involvement in the development process. My first major act on Council was to gain approval for an ordinance that requires citizen participation at the beginning of any major new development project. I was also the first to recognize that the changes in zoning downtown were not resulting in appropriate building design and placement, which is especially important when considering the impact of new construction on existing residential neighborhoods. The review of D1 zoning is nearly complete; this was the most extensive review using significant public input that I have witnessed.”

In addition to serving on Planning Commission, Briere serves on a broad range of boards and commissions and has taken a lead role on several task forces, from completely rewriting the public art ordinance to helping define a vision for the North Main / Huron River Corridor.

“Being elected confers no special wisdom. I’ve always been a generalist — able to learn many things, but not focused on only one possible set of solutions. Government is supposed to work for the community, and our community has always been eager to help the government work. I look forward to an expanded role with City Council and the ultimate authority in city government — the residents — as we move the City forward.”