



October 13, 2013

Dear Fellow East Siders:

This Tuesday night (October 15) at Nathan Bishop Middle School, the Mayor will come to discuss City issues with the community and answer questions. You are welcome to come to the cafeteria at 6:30 p.m. for refreshments. The Mayor is scheduled to arrive at 7:00, and we will meet with him either in the cafeteria or in the auditorium, depending on the number of people in attendance. If you are not able to attend but have a question you would like the Mayor to answer, please send me an email at samforcouncil@verizon.net and we will ask it if time permits.

On Wednesday, October 9, 2013, the School Department described its strategic plan to the Education Committee. As part of its report, the School Department provided a [Pamphlet](#) describing the Department's overall goals and a [Power Point Presentation](#) describing planned actions over the next 12-24 months. At page 9 of the [Pamphlet](#), the School Department confirms in writing its commitment to advance the education of every child by at least one grade level each year, which has important programming implications for advanced and gifted students.

Also on October 9, the Zoning Board of Review adopted rules and procedures you can read by clicking here: [Rules and Procedures](#). Pages 10-11 of the Rules codify a new right for members of the public to comment at Zoning Board hearing when the applicant seeks a continuance. The Zoning Board included this provision after the City Council gave initial passage to an ordinance I sponsored (and Councilman Yurdin co-sponsored) which would include this provision in the Zoning Ordinance. With the adoption of the new rules, the ordinance may no longer be necessary. If you have the time, please review these rules and let me know whether you believe further changes are necessary.

Last week, I met with Chief Clements of the Providence Police Department to review the problems people in the Grotto Avenue neighborhood faced gaining access to the rest of the City during the road race that took place two weeks ago. I learned the police made extensive efforts to notify people in advance, and that there was one access point (Old Tannery Road) where cars could get through with police supervision. With that said, this was different from the mailing most residents received which identified several "meter stations" for access. The police force was not large enough to execute the plan, which was especially complex because the race was a half-marathon (13.1 miles) rather than the more common five or ten kilometers (3.1 or 6.2 miles), thus creating the need for more checkpoints and more police. The situation was made worse because the race course essentially drew a loop around the East Side, again a consequence of its larger-than-usual length. Finally, the race drew 4,000 participants, which extended the time that race organizers prevented cars from crossing the street. In short, almost all of the problems we experienced two weeks ago relate to the unusual length and popularity of this single race, which completed its three-year term and whose future in Providence is unclear. Based on this information, I will now meet with the City's Arts and Tourism officials to determine whether it makes sense to limit future road races to distances of ten kilometers or less. This would appear to keep all of the beneficial aspects of road races (tourism, interest in Providence, etc.) while avoiding the negative impacts felt by this neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Samuel D. Zurier'.