



November 30, 2014

Dear Fellow East Siders:

I hope you had a happy Thanksgiving. This week's letter discusses a community meeting, solar roof panels and the teachers' contract.

On Tuesday night, December 2 at 6:30 p.m. at the Nathan Bishop Middle School Cafeteria, I will join **State Representative Edith Ajello, Senator Gayle Goldin and Representative-Elect Aaron Regunberg** to discuss City and State issues of interest to our neighborhood. The meeting is open to the public, and your attendance would be greatly appreciated. We will spend the first half hour setting up and schmoozing. At around 7:00 the four of us will sit down together to answer your questions. All of us are looking forward to beginning a new term of office in January, and we would appreciate your feedback to help shape our policy agendas.

While Mayor-elect Elorza holds a listening forum tomorrow night, December 1 (also at Nathan Bishop Middle School), I will be attending a public hearing of the Ordinance Committee beginning at 5:30 p.m. The agenda (which was prepared several weeks ago) includes an ordinance I introduced to remove the Historic District Commission's authority to regulate rooftop solar panels. I took this step to respond to the Commission's lack of guidelines, which resulted in its rejection of a project on Jenckes Street. From my questions at the hearing, it appears possible that the guidelines will provide homeowners guidance concerning a path to approval, rather than describing the reasons for rejecting applications. With that in mind, I will ask the Committee to postpone consideration of the ordinance for six months to allow the Commission a window in which to apply the guidelines to determine whether they represent a constructive step forward.

On Wednesday night, December 3 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, the Special Committee on Education will hear a presentation from the School Department concerning the tentative agreement reached in September between the administration and the Providence Teachers Union. The tentative agreement was supported the negotiators for both sides, but rejected by Union membership. The parties then went into mediation; however, the Union leadership subsequently Buddy Cianci for Mayor, essentially ending the prospect of any progress prior to the election. With that said, the tentative agreement provides an example of a possible contract that both sides considered reasonable, and it contains possible initiatives (such as greater school autonomy) that could improve student achievement were the incorporated into the contract. On Wednesday, we will learn more about the tentative agreement's financial and educational impacts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Samuel D. Zurier'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'S' and 'Z'.