



May 21, 2017

Dear Fellow East Siders:

I hope you had a chance to visit to yesterday's block party on Hope Street, a pleasant return to normal life after the chaos that shook City Hall last week. This week's letter will discuss Councilman Aponte's resignation as President, and the suboxone office at 150 Lloyd Ave.

Councilman Aponte resigned from the Council Presidency on Friday after more than a week of turmoil. On Monday, he refused to resign the Presidency after 12 members asked him to do so. On Thursday, the City Council boycotted the meeting, but scheduled a special meeting to approve a rule change that could remove the President from his office. His resignation the next day reminded me of Richard Nixon, who waited until impeachment and conviction were certain and imminent before yielding his grip on power. While I am relieved the Council stood up to Mr. Aponte, he first shredded the public trust for more than a week by treating his felony indictment as "business as usual." He is the second City Council "leader" to damage the institution and the public's trust this term, which the Council must work hard to repair and restore.

To push Mr. Aponte out of office, I joined my colleagues in two difficult decisions. First, I signed onto a proposal to remove Mr. Aponte as President through a change in the City Council rules. The rule can pass with only a majority vote. This is similar to the rules of the United States Senate, which contain the "nuclear option" under which a majority vote can remove the filibuster. I think it would be better to approve an ordinance I proposed last year that would automatically remove all indicted City Council members from officer positions and committee assignments, or to enact an impeachment process in the City Charter, but we were faced with the immediate problem of a City Council President who did not care about the damage he was causing the City Council, did not respect his colleagues' vote of no confidence, and was ready to generate chaos indefinitely unless and until he was involuntarily removed from office (or at least faced the threat of such removal).

It also was difficult for me to boycott last Thursday night's meeting, which I did because we arranged for all of the City Council's business to be heard within the following week following Mr. Aponte's planned removal from office. It is not good for the City Council to cancel meetings due to internal disagreements, but it was important for Mr. Aponte to understand that he could not force the City Council to share his minimalist view of his felony indictment. With this in mind, I calculated that the week's delay of Council business, and the removal of Mr. Aponte from the Presidency, would quiet the honking distractions his continued defiance was producing.

On May 15, Inspection and Standards Bureau Director Lykins sent a [Letter](#) to the owner of 150 Lloyd Avenue concerning the proposed suboxone facility. The letter makes clear that the zoning variance for the property permits the location of two doctors' office where medicine can be prescribed, but not dispensed. Also, the letter makes clear the owner cannot operate a drug rehabilitation facility on the premises. The letter confirms a conversation Mr. Lykins had with the owner previously, and clarifies the issue in a way that residents attending a neighborhood meeting at Hope High School requested. While everyone hopes that the building owner will comply with the zoning laws, the letter provides clear notice which will prevent any misunderstandings.

Sincerely,

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