



May 4, 2014

Dear Fellow East Siders:

This week's ward letter discusses campaign finance reform, changes in the zoning ordinance and school autonomy.

On Monday, May 5 at 6:00 p.m. on the third floor of City Hall, the Ways and Means Committee will review an ordinance I introduced to require City vendors to disclose their campaign contributions and ultimately to place limits on the amount of those contributions. For an overview of the ordinance's provisions, click here: [Overview](#). In the first phase (effective January 1, 2015), companies bidding on and receiving major City contracts (of value \$50,000 or greater) will be required to compile a list of campaign contributions by the company and its key personnel as part of the bidding process. In the second phase (effective January 1, 2016), companies would be subject to annual limits (by individual and by aggregate contributions from a given company) in campaign contributions. The purpose of these initiatives is to increase transparency and ultimately to strike a fair balance between the right of individuals and companies to participate in the political process against the City's interest in having a procurement process that selects vendors purely on the merits and without even the appearance of impropriety.

The City of Providence is preparing a new zoning ordinance to adapt to changes in land use practice and policies over the past several decades. For an overview of the broad goals of the zoning change, click here: [Rezoning Overview](#) and for a summary of major use changes by location, click here: [Map Change Summary](#). The Planning Department is holding a meeting to review and discuss the proposed changes for our neighborhood. The meeting is taking place on **Tuesday, May 6 at 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Brown-RISD Hillel House at 80 Brown Street**. The public is invited to attend.

On **Wednesday, May 7 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall (Third Floor)**, the Providence School Board President will meet with the Education Committee to review the School Board's [draft policy](#) to confer greater autonomy to schools within the district. The policy, if enacted, would transfer to school principals and communities the responsibility for one or more types of decisions that currently are made by the central office (such as programming, instruction and/or budgeting) or by the teachers' contract (such as staffing and/or work rules) or a combination of both, depending upon the circumstances of the individual school. The policy is flexible, with the goal of conferring greater autonomy to those schools with stronger communities and cultures. In our community, three schools (King, Gregorian and Bishop) have various strengths (in terms of parents, teachers and/or principals) that could benefit from greater autonomy.

Sincerely,

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