



November 5, 2017

Dear Fellow East Siders:

I hope you enjoyed an extra hour of sleep last night. This week's letter discusses the upcoming neighborhood meeting on infrastructure repairs, the Penthouse night club and the renaming of Magee Street.

On **Wednesday, November 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Nathan Bishop Middle School**, we will have a neighborhood meeting with Michael Borg, Director of Public Works, Melissa Malone, Chief Operating Officer and Andrew Jacques, the Director of the City's PVD 311 program for city services. The City is currently assessing the condition of all the City's streets and sidewalks to determine priorities so that work can begin next year. The bond will support approximately \$23 million of work on streets and sidewalks across the City. Mr. Borg will be able to discuss operational issues, while Ms. Malone can discuss financial ones. The PVD 311 program is now entering its third year and offers residents new ways to request services and track the City's response. All three will be available to answer your questions, so please consider coming.

In its first month of operation, the Penthouse night club (located on the former location of the Barnsider restaurant) has generated controversy and chaos. The club has flouted the ordinances governing its closing time. Also, the night club has chosen to walk up to the line of racy entertainment, featuring "pole dancers" who wear scanty clothing, but do not remove it. More recently, there was a shooting outside the night club. On Thursday, the Board of Licenses voted to revoke the license. The revocation decision resulted from strong engagement by neighborhood groups (including the College Hill and Fox Point Neighborhood Associations) and by my colleague Councilman Seth Yurdin from the First Ward. I thank all of them for their beneficial public service. The Chair of the Board of Licenses resigned in the wake of these events, thus providing the Mayor the opportunity to appoint new leadership to this important board. If any of you have a recommendation for a candidate, please let me know. The club owner has appealed the City's decision to the State Department of Business Regulation. We will have to see how the DBR handles this as it has restored licenses in the past that the City revoked.

This past Monday night, the Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning (URRP) will hear a proposal to change the name of Magee Street to Bannister Street. This is a small street, and Magee was a relatively small-time slave trader, but it is also true that the street was not named after him for his accomplishments, but only because he owned property in the area. On the other hand, the Bannisters made many contributions to the City and the greater community, but their recognition in the past was suppressed at times due to prejudice. In his novel *1984*, George Orwell wrote: "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." The resolution takes a modest step in redressing some of these past injustices. The resolution will go before the entire City Council for a vote at its next meeting on November 16.

Sincerely,

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