



December 16, 2012

Dear Fellow East Siders:

Last Thursday, the Providence Fraternal Order of Police voted to accept the compromise version of pension reform that was negotiated to resolve the litigation challenging the Providence retirement ordinance. The settlement agreement will now go to the City Council for review. The administration has calculated that the settlement will save the City \$18.5 million in annual cost, as opposed to the \$22 million projected from the original reform ordinance before the compromise. In other words, the settlement delivers the City around 85 cents for each dollar of savings anticipated by the ordinance. If we validate these figures, I will vote to approve, because the expense, ordeal and uncertainty of litigation exceed the cost of compromise. With that said, the current budget assumes savings based on the pre-compromise ordinance; therefore, if the City Council approves the agreement, it will ask the administration to present a revised budget.

On Tuesday, December 18 at 4:45 p.m., the City Planning Commission will review the preliminary plan of the 257 Thayer Street proposal. The meeting will take place at the Commission's office at 444 Westminster Street. The developer submitted the plans four weeks ago, but has not yet submitted a scale model. The developer states that the model will be available to view at the hearing. The developer had agreed previously to produce the model before the hearing for the public to inspect, and I believe the City Plan Commission should extend its review to allow this to happen. In the meantime, the developer's tax agreement remains pending before the Ways and Means Committee. When the Committee last discussed the proposed agreement, the City Council raised two issues. I raised the issue of whether the project was properly valued, and other members raised the issue of whether the developer would adopt an apprenticeship program as required by City policy for tax agreements. The parties are having discussions about possible compromises, but there is no significant movement yet. Once there is a new proposal to consider, the Ways and Means Committee will revisit the issue.

On Wednesday night, December 19 at 5:45 p.m., the Education Committee will interview two nominees for the School Board. They are Nicholas Hemond, who seeks to return to the School Board, and Phanida Phivilay, who wishes to serve on the School Board for the first time. I have heard that these two were selected from a group of five finalists. There is more work to do, however, because three members of the School Board turn over each year, and we have only two nominees. I do not know what plans the administration has to fill the last vacancy, but I would like to recruit possible candidates for this important position. I enjoyed my own service on the School Board ten years ago, and I would be happy to discuss this with anyone who might consider applying for this responsibility. Please send me an email if you would like to discuss serving on the School Board, and we can discuss it further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,