

SAM  
ZURIER

April 2, 2012

Dear Fellow East Siders:

This week, the Education Subcommittee will hold two hearings on the application by the Meeting Street School to open a mayoral academy charter school for grades K-8. On Tuesday night, the Grace Academy's representatives will describe the proposed new school, and if time permits, the Auditor General will present concerning the proposed school's financial impact on the Providence Public Schools. On Wednesday night, School Department representatives will discuss "full inclusion" programs currently available, and the Inspector General will present on Wednesday if he did not on Tuesday. Both hearings will take place at 5:30 p.m. on the third floor of City Hall.

After a bruising series of hearings and City Council votes, the Mayor signed a new ward boundaries plan for Providence on Friday. It will take effect for the 2014 election. For the balance of the current term, however, the existing boundaries will remain in place and I will continue to serve all of you to the best of my ability. Although the City's current redistricting procedures are fairly typical, the recent experience in Providence suggests we consider improving them. For example, the current procedures permitted changes in the map without 48 hours' prior notice. Also, other states (such as California) arrange for citizens, rather than elected officials, serve on the redistricting committee. This Wednesday afternoon at 3:00, I will be joining Common Cause Rhode Island to present a joint proposal for the Charter Review Commission's consideration. You can view a memo explaining our proposal here [Memo](#) and the draft language of the proposal here [Proposal](#). I would appreciate any comments or suggestions you can pass along.

Next week, there will be two opportunities for dialogue concerning the Gilbane Development Company's proposal to build student apartments at 257 Thayer Street. The first will be next Monday, April 9 at 7:00 p.m. at Hope High School. It will be facilitated by Sam Shamoan, an East Sider advising me about the issue who formerly worked in the Planning Department. Robert Azar of the Planning Department will attend, and I am working on other invitations as well. By that time, the Planning Department will have received an initial application, and Mr. Azar will share his office's perspective. On Tuesday, April 10 at the Governor Henry Lippitt House (199 Hope Street), the College Hill Neighborhood Association will host a presentation from the developer and a neighborhood discussion forum. If you are interested in the issue and have time, please consider attending both events.

Last week, the search committee forwarded four finalists for the position of Superintendent of Providence Public Schools. The School Board will interview the finalists and forward a name to the Mayor. I am sending a letter today in support of Acting Superintendent Susan Lusi. You can read the letter by clicking on this link: [Letter](#)

Many of us will be observing Passover, or Good Friday and Easter, in the coming week. If you are, I hope you find renewal and fulfillment.

Sincerely,

