

September 1, 2018

Dear Fellow East Siders:

I hope you are enjoying this beautiful Labor Day weekend. This week's letter discusses some issues related to the new school year, and some information I have assembled to answer questions you have asked me about the ongoing campaign to elect a new City Council representative for our ward.

The new school year will open with new challenges. Over the summer, we learned that the United States Department of Justice has investigated the Providence School Department concerning the adequacy of its programs for students learning the English language. The investigation will lead to a consent decree with specific milestones to spur action to solve a problem that has been known for several years. The School Department has allocated approximately \$1 million in the current budget to address this issue, but further commitments will be necessary. The School Department Oversight Committee will meet on September 17 to discuss this and other issues.

A second issue facing the schools is a decision by the Providence Teachers Union to "work to rule" in light of a lack of progress in contract negotiations. Under this decision, teachers refuse to perform any work beyond that specifically spelled out in the contract, which means that the union is urging teachers not to perform other non-contractual work on which students depend, such as writing college recommendations. I believe that the teachers have a right to a contract, but I question whether their decision is fair to students.

Another possible issue is the risk of a strike by bus drivers (who are hired by the School Department's private vendor). The School Department has stated that it is working on contingency plans to address this possibility, and to communicate with parents about this potential disruption.

The campaign for the Ward 2 City Council seat I will be vacating at the end of this year has become very contentious, and many of you have asked me questions about the charges and the counter charges. Some of these issues need to be addressed by the candidates themselves, but I would like to share with you my own analysis and research into the facts to try to clarify the record for your decision as voters.

People have asked me concerning a rumor they have heard that one candidate (Ryan Holt) works at the law firm that represents Jason Fane, the promoter of the Hope Tower Project on the I-195 land. This rumor is not correct. Mr. Fane's attorney is Jeffrey Padwa, who for a while was associated with the Darrow Everett law firm where Ryan works. Several months ago, Mr. Padwa opened his own independent law practice, and neither he nor Mr. Fane has any ties to the Darrow Everett law firm.

People also have asked me about two campaign flyers that Ryan Holt has mailed out in which he makes charges concerning Helen Anthony's service on the Columbia City Council. Based on that review and research, I compiled an [Analysis](#) of the contentions in the flyers. I can summarize my findings as follows:

A controversy has arisen concerning two pieces of mailed literature in which one candidate for the City Council (Ryan Holt) has made accusations concerning the conduct of another candidate (Helen Anthony) while she served on the Columbia, Missouri City Council with regard to a road improvement project. The [first flyer](#) identifies two sources for its factual information, namely an [article](#) from the Columbia Heart Beat blog, and a [report](#) from the Columbia Historic District Commission. The [second flyer](#) cites the same two sources. I have reviewed the two flyers and the two listed sources. I also found two pieces of additional information from

my own research, namely an [article from Columbia Missouri public radio](#) concerning Helen Anthony's plans to resign her Columbia City Council seat, and an [article from the Columbia Missourian](#) concerning the eventual construction of the project.

The front of the [first flyer](#) states that Ms. Anthony was "implicated" in the Historic District Commission report of "violating City ordinances meant to prevent corruption." The report identifies two violations of City ordinances, namely failing to hold a stakeholder meeting (called an "interested parties" meeting) prior to voting on public improvement plans, and scheduling the public hearing before the City Council authorized the hearing to take place. In both cases, the report identifies Mr. Glascock, the City Director of Public Works, as the official whose decisions violated these ordinances. (See [report](#), pages 5-16). The report includes statements by Ms. Anthony to both stakeholders and the press that the "interested parties" meeting should take place, in compliance with the ordinance. See Report, p. 7. For that reason, I believe the use of the word "implicated" is misleading.

On the back of the flyer, there are two quotations from the Columbia Heart Beat article, the first being that Ms. Anthony was "deeply involved," immediately followed by one describing "the alleged legal and ethical lapses." A review of the article shows that, consistent with the report, the "ethical lapses [which] were part of an effort by the city's executive branch" were committed by Mr. Glascock, who was a member of the City government's executive branch, not Ms. Anthony. Instead, the article refers later to Ms. Anthony's being "deeply involved in the planning" of the road project, not in Mr. Glascock's decision to avoid the "interested parties" meeting she identified as being required. In other words, the quotations were presented out of order and out of context to imply a misleading conclusion.

The back of the flyer also states the following: "Soon after the controversy began, Helen Anthony resigned and moved to Providence." (emphasis in original) This statement implies that the controversy led to Ms. Anthony's decision to resign and leave. It is misleading because the key event that led to the controversy was Mr. Glascock's October 21, 2012 decision to proceed with a hearing without a prior stakeholder meeting and/or City Council approval (see [report](#), p. 9), which came after Ms. Anthony's October 16, 2012 announcement (as reported in the [article from Columbia Missouri public radio](#)) that, effective November 30, she was leaving the Columbia City Council to move to Providence with her husband.

The [second flyer](#), which features a picture of a backhoe tearing down a building, asserts that Ms. Anthony was responsible for "demolished historic properties" (as stated on its front side), and "the destruction of several historic homes" (as stated on its back side). In fact, according to the [article from the Columbia Missourian](#), the project was completed several years later without the demolition of any buildings. In other words, the central charge of the second flyer is false.

I leave it to the candidates to debate the details of these issues beyond the specific statements contained in the flyers we received.

I hope you find this information useful as you develop your own thoughts about the candidates for the City Council.

Sincerely,


