

March 25, 1999

## An Open Letter to the People of Johnston

As you know and as has been reported, the Town of Johnston is still in financial difficulty and needs to reorganize its thinking and planning — looking to the future. One of the ways that we can plan for a stabilization of our financial woes is to broaden the tax base of the Town. It is imperative that we raise revenues without any burden to the homeowner.

In March 1996, the Town entered into a Community Host Agreement with the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation which, among other things, required cooperation between the Town and the Corporation to work in concert to establish and develop an industrial/business park in Johnston. The parties also agreed in part to cooperate both politically and legislatively to achieve a reconfiguration of ramps off Rt. 295 so that direct access may be achieved from that interstate highway.

The benefits to the Town are more than self-evident, since creation of the industrial park will broaden our tax base by over \$1,000,000 annually. In addition, our quality of life will be enhanced and public safety advanced by having new ramps constructed so that vehicular truck traffic will be taken off the town streets. If, in the past, a Planner had been part of Town government, this request for a zone change may not have even been an issue. The Town is in desperate need of a certified planner who will 1) assist us in completing the Town Comprehensive Plan and have it certified by the State of Rhode Island which, among other things, will enable us to secure more grant funding; and 2) to avoid problems like this happening in the future.

There is currently before the Town Council an ordinance which requests a zone change from residential to industrial in order that the corporation be able to develop this land and bring more tax revenue into the Town. At the present time, the corporation pays no taxes on this land because it is a tax-exempt agency.

If you are in favor of receiving over a million dollars in additional tax revenue at *no cost to the taxpayer*; and if you want most of the truck traffic off Plainfield Pike, then I urge you to contact your council person and ask them to help all Johnstonians by enacting legislatively those matters which will insure the increase in tax revenue and enhancement to the public safety of its citizens. It is *your* Town, I encourage you to make your voice heard.

Thank you.

William R. Macera  
Mayor