



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 REGION 1
 JOHN F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02203-0001

*EPA copy Perry Jeff C.
 Providence File*

May 19, 1999

Mr. Juan Lopez
 195 Enfield Avenue
 Providence, RI 02908



RECEIVED
 R I D E M
 JUN X 2 1999
 MAY 26 1999 Deputy Bureau Chief
 Environmental Protection
 Bureau of
 Environmental Protection

Dear Mr. Lopez:

This letter is in response to your letter dated April 27, 1999, that EPA-New England received by facsimile on April 29, 1999, regarding the proposed Elementary and Middle School Site on Springfield Avenue in the City of Providence, Rhode Island.

EPA-New England greatly appreciates the information provided in your letter specifically related to concerns from community residents regarding the siting and proposed construction of an elementary and middle school on a piece of property that formerly served as a landfill. In addition to your letter, it is my understanding that you have had a conversation with one of my staff, Kristi Rea of our Rhode Island State Unit and Providence City Program Manager for the Urban Environmental Initiative, to discuss your concerns in more detail. As a member of the School Board that must approve the site and construction plans prior to moving forward, I would like to commend your efforts to engage and respond to public concerns related to this specific piece of property.

Any time that a new facility must be constructed, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) must issue permits to approve and guide the process. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) also plays a large role in identifying, addressing, and resolving health and public safety concerns that impact local residents. These two state departments exercise control in designing, approving, or rejecting construction permits for new facilities. As a federal agency, EPA-New England works very closely with both departments (RIDEM and RIDOH) on a wide range of environmental issues but does not directly lead the design or issuance of state construction permits. I urge you to work directly with the RIDEM and RIDOH staff members that are designing and approving the permits for the proposed elementary and middle schools, convey the requests and concerns of the community and interested constituents, and work with the staff to resolve any concerns that the community has related to the proposed site location.

You, your constituencies, parents, and local residents deserve answers to your questions and concerns. Sampling must be conducted on the proposed site, results must be communicated to the public, and solutions must be identified and approved prior to commencing work on a