

GOVERNMENT

Architects want representation on 195 panel

Some insist Governor Chafee made an error by failing to nominate an architect

By KATE BRAMSON
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As the state Senate prepares this week to weigh Governor Chafee's nominations for the Route 195 Redevelopment Commission, concerns have arisen in the architectural and design communities that the governor hasn't selected an architect to serve on the seven-member panel.

Friedrich St. Florian —

the project architect of the Providence Place mall and design architect of the World War II Memorial in Washington — said he believes the people selected by Governor Chafee to serve on the commission are "highly ethical" and don't need to be told what to do, but he worries there's no architect among them.

"The fact there is no architect — there is a major voice missing to assist in the development," St. Florian said in an interview over the weekend at a symposium co-hosted by the Providence Preservation Society and the

American Institute of Architects Rhode Island.

Before the governor announced his selections for the commission in August, St. Florian wrote to Chafee, he said on Monday, urging him to consider selecting an architect. And St. Florian is not alone.

"We're talking about it nonstop," said architect Christine Malecki West, a principal with William Kite Architects in Providence and chapter president of the American Institute of Architects Rhode Island. "We feel very strongly that architects have a vision and design per-

spective that is unique, and our fundamental goal is to engage the public in a discussion. But that's a two-way discussion and, without an architect on the panel, I think we're missing an important voice."

Chafee's chief of staff, Patrick A. Rogers, said the kind of skills and experience the governor could tap was limited because the commission is just seven members. However, he said, Chafee believes the commission will be able to tap into whatever talent it may seek, regardless of whether that particular profession is re-

presented on the panel.

"The commission has the authority to engage a wide range of professionals, whether they be architects, those with real-estate experience, legal experience or other types of planning experience," Rogers said Monday.

The nominees' experience includes: development work by Colin P. Kane, principal of Peregrine Group LLC, selected by Chafee to be the chairman; a lawyer in corporate and real estate law, John M. Kelly, has been president and CEO of Meeting Street School for 14 years, where he oversaw development of the school's \$25-million South Providence campus; past banking work by Diana L. Johnson, who is now a self-employed art consultant; and community work and business development by Michael S. Van Leesten, CEO of the nonprofit community development organization OIC of Rhode Island,

Also: lawyer Mark T. Ryan, principal at Moses and Afonso Ltd., who was executive vice president and general manager of The Providence Journal Co.; Dr. Barrett Bready, who has a business and medical background as president and

TIMELINE

Advice and consent

The Route 195 Redevelopment Commission members nominated by Governor Chafee must be approved by the Senate.

Senate Corporations Committee:

Public hearing, Tuesday, 3 p.m., in Room 313 on the third floor of the State House.

Full Senate: Convenes to act on committee's recommendations, Thursday, 4 p.m., Senate chamber.

Both sessions will be televised live on Capitol TV — Channel 15 for Cox and Full Channel; Channel 34 for Verizon.

CEO of NABsys Inc., a startup DNA-sequencing technology company; and Barbara A. Hunger, a labor-and-delivery nurse at Women and Infants Hospital who held a leadership post with the Service Employees International Union.

Chafee's nominees must be approved by the state Senate.