

From: [Lucy R. Maddock](#)
To: [Thompson, Alexis](#)
Cc: [Steve Phillips](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zoning Variance Objection: 100 Randall St.
Date: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 3:50:19 PM

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I am writing to express the American Mathematical Society's objection to the zoning variance application submitted by the Rhode Island Department of Health regarding the screening requirements at 100 Randall Street. Such a variance would have detrimental effects on the safety and overall well-being of residents and employees in the nearby area.

The American Mathematical Society (AMS) is the largest professional association of mathematicians in the world. With 30,000 members, it was founded in 1888 and has been headquartered in Providence since 1951. The AMS has over 230 employees of whom the majority work in Providence headquarters at 201 Charles Street.

After carefully reviewing the details of the proposed variance, we have significant concerns. Applicant is required to demonstrate that the proposed special use will not substantially injure the use and enjoyment of neighboring property. The AMS does not object to the use of 100 Randall Street as transitional housing. However, we are very concerned about the request to waive fencing requirements. In the past year, the AMS has seen a dramatic increase in unwanted incursions onto the property by drug users. Just last week, two men, who were conducting a drug transaction, had to be escorted off the property. At 2:30 in the afternoon. Staff have come into work and found men urinating against the building and found people passed out who needed to be transported to the hospital. Staff complaints about safety were the single driver in a **227% increase in security expenses. In 2022, we spent \$41,000 on security. In 2023, we spent \$93,000.** The discarded needles are also deeply problematic. We can not ask our facilities team or housekeeping staff to remove used needles. Instead, we hire Bio-One to provide biohazard removal services.

Fencing serves as a vital safety measure, providing a barrier between properties and the surrounding environment. The applicant has requested relief from screening along the interior side and REAR lot lines. The rear portion of the property abuts the American Mathematical Society. Applicant states that fencing "would restrict movement across campus, access to adjacent building and vehicular and pedestrian circulation." That may be true of interior screening requirements between the three properties. It is patently false as it applies to the rear section of the property. At no point does the applicant explain why they want or need a variance to the screening requirements at the rear of the building. There is no hardship stated and the variance should not be granted.

In light of these concerns, I urge the zoning board to carefully consider the implications of granting the requested variance and to prioritize the safety and well-being of longstanding community neighbors. We respectfully request that the zoning variance for screening be denied and that existing screening requirements be upheld.

Thank you for considering our objection.

Sincerely,

Lucy R. Maddock

Lucy R. Maddock, MA, MBA, CMA

Interim Executive Director & Chief Financial Officer

+1 401.455.4000 (t) +1 401.499.6811 (m)

Pronouns: she, her, hers



201 Charles Street | Providence, RI 02904-2213 USA



Lucy R. Maddock, MA, MBA, CMA

Interim Executive Director

+1 401.455.4150 (t)



201 Charles Street | Providence, RI 02904-2213 USA



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