

February 13, 2024

To the members of the Bristol Historic District Commission,

I am writing to express my support for the location of the Bristol Santa House to remain on the property of the Bristol State House throughout the year.

My support for this is two-fold. First, the continued moving of the building is damaging it with each move. It was not built to withstand the repeated rigors of lifting and moving from its current location to storage and back again. Each time it is moved, more damage occurs and when it was placed this past November none of the doors were operational and each entailed specialty work to make them operational albeit not to the extent as they were originally. My concern is that if moved again, it may make it impossible for the Bristol Santa House to be operational at all. I would hate to see that happen especially after the positive impact it has had the first two seasons.

Second, the impact that the House has on the local community and beyond is heartwarming to say the least, as it provides an opportunity for those children, and adults, with special needs to take part in something they could not prior to the existence of the Bristol Santa House. Leaving it would open up new opportunities for the James D Rielly Foundation to offer additional programs throughout the year to further enhance the lives of those with special needs as well as those without. Not only for Bristol residents, but well beyond the state from Maine to Alaska.

I hope that the HDC will support this unique and inclusive destination and allow the Bristol Santa House to remain where it now sits.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Ferrick
Board Member, James D Rielly Foundation
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Bristol, RI