

who have overdosed, and dozens more die; 50 babies out of every 1,000 births are born dependent on drugs. # But even amid struggles to address the problem, city officials are facing allegations of discrimination against addicted people, because they blocked a proposal to build a new treatment facility. # The addiction-treatment program SSTAR, a fixture in this city of 88,000 for more than four decades, has sued the city's building inspector and zoning board for denying a permit to build a 60-bed treatment center with outpatient offices at the site of a burned-down mill. # Advertisement # Separately, US Attorney Andrew

Lelling is investigating whether the city violated the Americans with Disabilities Act when it denied the permit, according to a letter from Lelling obtained by the Globe. # Get Metro Headlines in your inbox: # The 10 top local news stories from metro Boston and around New England delivered daily. # The city's lawyer, Joseph Macy, said the permit denial reflects a straightforward application of the law: Zoning rules don't allow such a facility at that site, he said. # But Nancy E. Paull, SSTAR's longtime CEO, calls it yet another example of how bias against people with addiction stymies efforts to help them. " It defies any rational understanding of addiction, " Paull said. # SSTAR and city officials will meet Thursday in Superior Court in New Bedford. SSTAR is asking the court to order the city to issue the building permit immediately, saying that failing to do so by next month could prevent the project from obtaining needed tax credits. # The Fall River dispute is happening amid a statewide effort to increase access to addiction treatment, as deadly fentanyl in the illicit drug supply