



April 14th, 2021

On behalf of Stepping Stones Farm and Event Center,

The Planning Board conducted an Informal site visit on January 9th, 2021. That process was stopped because there was no formal application available at that time. It was determined by town counsel, Chris Drescher, that we should seek approval by the ZBA for a Special Exception. Thus, we come before this group.

We are prepared to submit a formal Site Plan Review Application as soon as we are granted permission to move forward.

I would like to let it be known that not granting the Special Exception to Stepping Stones Farm & Event Center will cause a significant hardship. In early 2020, I came in good faith before the Planning Board to request permission to start an event business on my family farm. I received hearty endorsements that 'Temple was lucky to have you and that farm!' After having run a business on the same property since 1972 and having been the property owner since 1975, I was led to believe that the process was going to be straight forward. Armed with such an enthusiastic response, I have gone ahead to develop what is going to be a low impact and successful small business. Stepping Stones is carefully designed to enhance our community, provide employment to local people, increase business for scores of regional vendors, draw visitors to our region, generate Room and Meals tax for the State of NH, and allow me to pay my sizable property taxes of nearly \$40,000 per year to the town of Temple.

I have been a good neighbor. I have employed people of all ages, offering competitive salaries and an affirming employment environment for young people. The Pony Farm, Horse Power and Touchstone businesses which I founded have safely, effectively and compassionately met the needs of our community for those with disabilities and abilities alike since 1972. Through thick and thin, I have never missed a property tax payment since I assumed ownership of the farm in 1975.

It is now my hope to be granted permission to pivot to a new way to serve our town, region and state. With this permission, I can continue to preserve the uniqueness of the property as I work diligently to maintain a historic house that was built in 1754, the largest bank barn this side of the Mississippi River, and the beautiful open space that is home to a wide variety of creatures, all while preserving and caring for the land itself. It is my fervent vision and promise to continue the legacy of hospitality for which I and the property have been known far and wide for the last 55 years. I welcome anyone to schedule an on-site visitation.

Respectfully submitted,

Isabella (Boo) Martin