

May 19, 2021

To the Members of the Temple Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Stepping Stones Farm & Event Center and to share the impact that Boo Martin and the farm are having on my life and the community I am lucky to have become a part of.

I was connected with Boo Martin through two farmers at the Groh Farm who were aware of my long standing but unfulfilled desire to become a part of the Temple-Wilton community. With zero prospects on my radar for affordable housing or job opportunities, I was doubting the possibility of my move from Maine to New Hampshire. When my partner Graham Taber - an apprentice at Temple-Wilton Community Farm - and I were introduced to Boo and the farm, we were instantly overwhelmed with appreciation for the land and Boo's vision for the farm as a space of gathering and connectivity. Boo quickly welcomed us into the Stepping Stones community with warmth and generosity, introducing us to everyone she knows, and offered us both housing and employment. We felt valued and deeply supported within true hospitality, a testament to Stepping Stones upholding its historic legacy in this new phase of the property's evolution.

If it were not for Stepping Stones, I don't know that it would be feasible for me to move to New Hampshire at all. Since then, I have seen Stepping Stones continue to rapidly welcome other young farmers, gardeners, creatives, artists, and community-builders into the space. It has quickly become a safe haven and collaborative hub for all of us - a place of belonging, creative abundance, and celebration. New Hampshire needs young, energetic, hard-working people to carry forth the invaluable work of the older generations. My enthusiasm for this place has now enticed many of my transient, village-seeking friends across the country who cannot wait to visit me at Stepping Stones and consider the Monadnock region for their home.

Stepping Stones Farm & Event Center is a gateway into sustainable connection in the present and boundless possibility for the future. It simultaneously upholds the rural and historical nature of the town while enhancing the sense of tangible community and progression in the region. Few gathering places exist in the area that can accomplish so much for the local community while luring in and serving visitors from other places.

Boo Martin, her team, and the totality of the Stepping Stones Farm not only have my fullest support, they also have my deepest gratitude. After wandering the country post-college for ten years, wondering why the sense of community I craved was nowhere to be found, because of Stepping Stones Farm, I can come home.

I urge you to help make this vision possible. Our whole world needs more sacred spaces for gathering, honoring the land, and the passing down of inter-generational wisdom.

Thank you for your time,  
Noël Ruth  
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