

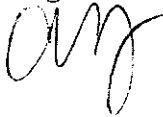
Dear Members of the Planning Board,

The SSMH application was submitted in August 2020. In the past months this board has had an opportunity to consider the merits of the application. Requests for information were answered with authoritative documentation and good faith.

Emotional interests on all sides have made a decision difficult. We ask this committee to reject negative characterizations of the SSMH LGBTQ and minority, home-owning members of the Readfield community. Opposition groups have advised the Planning Board to deny the SSMH permit application. They speak of fears of disruptive SSMH member activities, violation of local laws, vandalism and possible violence. These fears are unfounded.

The SSMH community center will be a welcoming place for new residents, older residents. It is with warmth and an invitation to communion in the spirit of generosity and hope that we begin this endeavor. We anticipate working with the community to meet all concerns as we develop ties and communication. Thank you for your attention.

Alex Twarog



Leah Hayes



SSMH Rationale for PB approval

- SSMH is a legal non-profit entity. It was incorporated in 2020 and as a Maine corporation is entitled to the full protection of equal rights under the constitution.
- SSMH has no legal affiliation with any other organization or individual. It has no prior history.
- SSMH is an organization whose mission is clearly aligned with LGBTQ community issues. We are dedicated to pursue this mission here in Readfield.
- The SSMH tenant lease at 26 Mill Stream Road is favorable to our organization mission. The public long-standing landlord-family interest in LGBTQ and minority issues are renown and well documented in a general search of the internet.
- SSMH has a lease to occupy 26 Mill Stream Road which is in the Rural Residential Zone. That zone is designated by the LUO as a valid location for LGBTQ community center activities. The site is an ideal setting for our community center. It has unparalleled facility advantages which will support our mission.
- SSMH proposals for use are similar to outreach activities approved for other community center organizations which served the Readfield community.
- 26 Mill Stream resources (parking, water resources, sewage, as well as an observance of the town concern for historic and resource protection) meet town requirements.