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*In memory of Philip Davis
1908 - 1998*

*In memory of James E. Mitchell
1941 - 2016*

June 1, 2021

Town of Readfield
Planning Board

Re: Application of Safe Space Meeting House, Inc.

Ladies & Gentlemen:

The Town of Readfield's Land Use Ordinance defines a commercial establishment as one that renders goods or services primarily on a retail basis which are customarily carried on in a building specifically for that purpose.

The LUO defines a community center/club as a building that houses any voluntary association of persons organized for social, religious, benevolent, literary, scientific or political purposes; whose facilities, especially a clubhouse, are open to members and guests only, and not the general public; and are not engaged in activities customarily carried on by a business or for pecuniary gain.

The issue before the Board is SSMH's request to create a voluntary, nonprofit, non-commercial community center for social and recreational activities for its members and their guests which may include music, art, cultural, educational, informational and other type of nonprofit events. Although nonprofit in nature, some of those events may include SSMH's receipt of money donations by its members and guests to pay expenses for the property and their activities.

Community centers can be found in all areas of the state in many different types of buildings; some being commercial in nature and others residential. Many community centers occupy residential buildings – especially multi-unit buildings – for the purpose of using the units as office space and community meeting rooms.

Other community centers can be found in large open buildings that do not conform to structural requirements for a single, or a multi-family home, but is not necessarily considered a commercial establishment when the community center's activities are not of a commercial nature.

SSMH's application meets all of the requirements under the LUO because:

1. SSMH is a voluntary association of people for social purposes.
2. It is a nonprofit corporation registered with the Secretary of State Charter No. 20210133ND.
3. It has a valid lease with the property owner, Robert Bittar.
4. Its facilities will be open only to invited members and their guests.
5. Its permit application clarifies that it will not engage in activities customarily carried on by a business or for pecuniary gain.

Sincerely yours,



Jed Davis