

Planning Board PH for Scott & Heather Payne
and Meeting Minutes

MEETING WAS RECORDED

May 2nd, 2023

7:00 PM

9:00 PM

Members Present: Dustin Batchelder, Keisha Garnett, John Bonanno, Guy Lehouillier, Carol Goode, and Myles Heard

Others Present: 14 in audience

Keisha opened the Public Hearing for Scott and Heather Payne's request for a CUP to own and operate an AG-tourism farm at their property on Map R14 Lot 28 located at 1912 Pequawket Trail at 7:00 PM, reading the opening statement and reminding everybody that the meeting was being recorded.

Scott Payne opened by introducing himself and explaining a little about their proposal. They have owned a hobby farm in Ossipee NH since 2007 and bought the old family farm in Hiram about a year ago. He stated that his family and himself are very passionate about what they do, and they would love to bring this to the townspeople. They would love to have kids disconnect from electronics more and experience the true farming experience at their farm.

Heather Payne handed out a flyer and a brochure of their farm, Foxx Run Farm, giving everyone a little more information about their farm. She explained that their biggest focus is homestead and educational farming. She feels that this would be an asset for this town and explained that they already work with students that are homeschooled and churches as well. Heather went on to explain that she homeschools their two kids and they are very involved in the farm as well, and they all love it, as well as the kids that have already visited the farm.

A board member asked if this would be open year-round, Scott and Heather stated that yes, this was a four-season farm.

Sally Williams stated that she loves that there is a family in town that wants to do something like this and keep a farmhouse built in 1792, functioning as a farm, and she fully supports it. She asked about the Airbnb portion of the proposal, wanting a little more information on that. Scott stated that it is more of a farm-stay. Heather and Scott would both be there on the property when people are staying in the Airbnb and will be able to partake in the activities going on in the farm. Heather explained that the building that the store was previously in, was now converted back to a residential unit. It does not have a kitchen, it has a kitchenette, so there is no stove, no sink, just a microwave and small fridge.

Carol stated that the comment in her flyer said "her daughter has spent a week at their farm in NH" and asked if the Airbnb portion of this farm will be similar to that, and asked if they stay overnight. Heather stated that it is similar, but people who are visiting the farm for events are not spending the night. Only

the people who rent the Airbnb will be overnight and will be able to partake in the activities if they wanted to.

A gentleman from the audience stated that his family and him have known the Payne's from Ossipee. They had tried different things for years to get their kids to disconnect from electronics, and they now do horseback riding with the Payne's and think that this is a great idea for this town and other kids, and they fully support.

Justine Fearman stated that she is a nurse practitioner by trade, and she always wanted to learn about homesteading. She met Heather and Scott Payne and offered her time to shovel stalls. She stated that the Payne's have been great to her and are always teaching her about all sorts of things on the farm. She said they are an incredible group of people, and she fully supports this.

Guy asked if they could go through the list of activities that are listed on their CUP application and briefly describe them so that everyone has the same understanding of what will take place, as the owners do.

- **Farm events: These will be open to the public. Things such as pony day events, or a state-wide event that is going on that the farm chooses to partake in**
- **Farm photoshoots: Mini photoshoots done by a photographer, with the animals**
- **Farm stay & Airbnb: People have the chance to get the hands-on approach of staying at the farm. Heather and Scott will be in the other part of the house while they have guests in the Airbnb**
- **Goat hikes: People can take goats on a small walk in the pasture or they could take them on the trails that are on the property. Scott or Heather would be with them at all times, so no one is alone**
- **Birthday parties: They have been doing them in NH and they love them. The guests would bring their own food, drinks, etc. Take in, take out type of scenario, the farm will not provide anything**
- **Farm programs: Daycares come in for the petting zoo and learn something educational, for like a field trip**
- **Farm tour: Similar to the farm programs, but geared more towards bigger classrooms, and older kids**

A board member asked if there would be any employees and what the hours would be. Heather stated that there would be no employees, just the two of them. They don't want this to be a big commercial thing, and they are not in it for the money, they just want to be able to bring the farming experience to the town. They do not have "open hours", everything is by appointment only. They are open during daylight hours, so there will be no walk-ins or anything going on at night.

Someone asked how many people there would be at a time. Heather stated that they don't plan on having any more than 12 kids at a time.

A board member asked about insurance. Heather stated that they did a lot of research into insurance and looked at many different options. They chose one and feel very comfortable with it. They purchased it in full, last year and said that they are very committed to this.

A board member asked if they would participate in farm day. The Payne's stated that they have already signed up for it through the state. It is on July 23rd, and they are more than happy to be able to host at their farm. It is open to the public, and they will also have a booth at the Ossipee Valley Fair.

Keisha read two letters that we received in the mail. One from the Hannaford's, in support of this idea, and Mr. Courtois in support, as well.

PH was closed at 7:35PM

The board discussed and pointed out that it would be a very timely process to put together the newly formatted Finding of Facts tonight.

A motion was made to postpone voting on the CUP and schedule a workshop so that the board can focus on putting together Finding of Facts. Motion was seconded and voted yes.

The workshop was scheduled for Monday, May 15th, at 7:00PM.

Meeting minutes from April 18th were approved by the board as is.

Keisha signed Kevin Hamlin's amended CUP. It will be emailed to Kevin Wednesday.

The Planning Board moved onto the next agenda item, which was to discuss to Schnell's court judgement to remand back to the Planning Board. Terry will send Myles and Carol previous information about this, as they were not on the board at the time, so they are not familiar with it. Keisha explained the email that was sent out to all members of the board earlier in the day from the town attorney and explained the three options that the board had for writing the Finding of Facts.

John made a motion to have the Town Attorney, Leah, draft the finding of facts and have the board receive them prior to the May 23rd meeting, to review and edit with the attorney on May 23rd. Motion was seconded and voted yes by the board.

Keisha reminded the board that we will be meeting with the attorney on the 23rd. Keisha and Dustin will not be able to make it until 7:30, so they asked if the meeting could be moved to 7:30. The other board members said that would work for them, Terry said she would reach out to Leah to see if that would work for her.

Board moved on to looking at the new CUP application. The Fagerland's want to use their property on Map R14 Lot 4, located at 287 King Street as a wedding venue. The application is missing site plans. Keisha feels that the application is not complete without those. The board came up with many questions for the Fagerland's to answer. Questions are as follows:

1. Due to age of barn – is inspection needed for capacity on floor
2. Is it a multiple floor barn – using them all if more than one
3. Is it handicap accessible
4. Is the electrical up to current code
5. Water supply – is there lead pipes
6. Security for events

A motion was made to accept the CUP application as complete, contingent on receiving the site plans from the Fagerland's. Motion was seconded and voted yes by board. Guy will reach out to them on Thursday about it. The board set a date for a Public Hearing on June 6th at 7:30PM.

A motion was made to push off working on the Marijuana Ordinance until the Schnell business is over with, so that they can focus more on that. Motion was seconded and voted yes by board.

The board looked over a sample template for Finding of Facts that Guy found. Terry will email the board a copy of it.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00PM

**Respectfully Submitted
Emma Ouellette**