



**TOWN OF RAYMOND  
APPLICATION TO THE  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Staff Use Only:		Received Date
Application Fee	\$ _____	<div>RECEIVED DEC 03 2024</div>
Notice Fee \$8.00/abutter	\$ _____	
Publishing Fee	\$ _____	
Escrow	_____	
<b>TOTAL</b>	_____	
<i>Fees will be calculated after application is submitted prior to being scheduled for Hearing</i>		

Name of Applicant Todd Roma  
Mailing Address 141 Raymond Hill Road Raymond Maine 04071  
Primary Phone 1-207-232-7384 C ☒ H ☐ W ☐ email todddroma@gmail.com  
Date property acquired: (month and year) 01/2001  
Name of Owner (if different than applicant) \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ C ☐ H ☐ W ☐ email \_\_\_\_\_  
Property Address (street number and name): 141 Raymond Hill Road  
Town of Raymond Map 0013 Lot 0029 Zone RR  
Deed Reference Book B35846 Page 278

**The undersigned applies for the following:**

- ☒ 1. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL. Applicant requests relief from the decision, or lack of decision, of the Code Enforcement Officer. The undersigned believes that (check one)  
\_\_\_\_ An error was made in the denial of the permit  
\_\_\_\_ Denial of the permit was based on the misinterpretation of the ordinance  
\_\_\_\_ The permit was not approved or denied within a reasonable period of time  
☒ Other: Appeal to Notice of Violation. See attached documentation.  
\_\_\_\_ 2. VARIANCE (the information listed on page 3 must be submitted)  
\_\_\_\_ 3. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT For \_\_\_\_\_ (use) in \_\_\_\_\_ Zone  
\_\_\_\_ 4. VARIANCE PROVISION(S) FOR NON-CONFORMING Lot ☐ Structure ☐ Use ☐

I have read, understand and agree to the above instructions and conditions. I also authorize any Board Member or other Town Officials to enter onto the site. I certify that the information contained in this application and its supplement is true and correct.

Date: 11/26/24

Appellant: Todd Roma

Date: 11/26/24

Property Owner: Todd Roma *Todd Roma*

**TOWN OF RAYMOND**  
**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**  
Please read these instructions carefully before filling out the application.

1. EIGHT (8) copies must be submitted of **all** materials, including the application form, sketch plan of the property showing dimensions and shape of the lot, the size, set backs and location of all existing buildings, plans, location and dimensions of proposed buildings or alterations, the location of any buildings within 100 feet of the lot, and any natural or topographic peculiarities of the lot in question.
2. Explain, in detail, the facts surrounding this appeal (please attach a separate piece of paper). You should be as specific as possible so that the Board of Appeals can give full consideration to your case.
3. All materials and application fee the correct must be submitted to the Code Enforcement Officer no later than 3:00 pm on the Friday at least **30 days** prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Appeals Board. All other fees will be calculated and invoiced after receipt of the application. If all information is not submitted by the deadline, the appeal **will not** be considered. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.** The final decision of the completeness of an application rests with the Board.
4. All materials submitted must be typed or printed. Illegible applications (including signatures) will not be accepted.
5. If the applicant is not the appellant (property owner), the appellant must submit a signed and notarized statement that the applicant has the authority to represent the appellant at the meeting.
6. If the Appeals Board requests additional information at the meeting, or schedules a site walk, you will be continued to a later meeting at the discretion of the Board.
7. Any variance granted shall expire if the work or change permitted under the variance is not begun within six (6) months and substantially completed within one (1) year of the date of the vote by the Board. Any extension of this time must be requested at the time of the application.
8. A Certificate of Variance must be recorded at the expense of the applicant in the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds within 90 days of the Board's decision or the variance shall be null and void. A building permit must be obtained after the variance is properly recorded and before work is started. If work is started without the variance being recorded and a building permit issued, a penalty of \$100.00 per day may be imposed.

Alex Sirois, CEO  
655-4742 ext. 161  
Sandy Fredricks, Administrative Assistant ZBA  
655-4742 ext. 134



## VARIANCE CRITERIA

- a. Nature of variance: Describe the nature of the variance.

Please see attached documentation

---

---

---

---

**NOTE:** Eight (8) copies of a sketch plan of the property **must** accompany this application showing the dimensions and shape of the lot, the size, setbacks and location of **existing** buildings, the location and dimensions of proposed buildings or alterations, the location of any buildings within 100 feet of the lot, and any natural or topographic peculiarities of the lot in question.

- b. Justification of variance: In order to be granted, the Appellant **MUST DEMONSTRATE** to the Board of Appeals that the strict application of the zoning ordinance would cause **UNDUE HARDSHIP**. **MAINE STATE LAW REQUIRES FOUR CRITERIA, WHICH MUST BE MET** before the Board of Appeals can find that the hardship exists. Please explain how your situation meets **EACH** of these criteria listed below: (If these are not answered, the appeal will not be scheduled.)

1. The land in question cannot yield a reasonable return unless the variance is granted.

Please see attached documentation

---

---

---

2. The need for a variance is due to the unique circumstances of the property and not to the general conditions of the neighborhood.

Please see attached documentation

---

---

---

3. The granting of the variance will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Please see attached documentation

---

---

---

4. The hardship is not the result of action taken by the appellant or a prior owner.

Please see attached documentation

---

---

---

This letter is to appeal the Notice of Violation from the Town of Raymond dated 10/29/2024. My appeal is based upon the following facts.

I, Todd Roma, do not have a digital presence that advertizes strictly for a wedding venue.

I question the timing of this Letter of Violation and its intent and am asking the Town of Raymond for clarification. The letter was received on 10/29/2024 for a suspected land use violation dating back to 08/29/24 and 08/30/24, yet the letter arrived almost two months after the alleged violation date.

I was present on my property on the date of 8/29/24 and 8/30/24. This violation notice states that Chris Hanson, our town CEO, drove by my property on both of those dates and took drive by pictures of what he claims to be a violation of town land use ordinance, yet he, at no point on either day, stopped his vehicle to talk with me and tell me we could not have a tent or a porta potty on our property. We recieved no notice of violation at any point within a 30 day window. This violation notice came to me 61 days after the alleged violation. It was not until my wife and children had a recorded confrontation with our neighbor, Kathy Plummer, on 10/25/24 as they were decorating for our 17th annual Halloween party. Kathy Plummer had been stalking our children as they and their friends were playing in the back woods on our property earlier that day and the day before. The children ran inside our home to say that Kathy was standing on the property line watching them set up for our haunted walk through and they tried several times to say "Hi" to her. She would stand there and just stare at them. They recorded the encounter and showed me what she was doing. I told them to just try to ignore her. Later that same day when I had left the property to get propane for our heaters, Kathy Plummer yelled at my wife and children when they were outside on our property cutting down branches off a sapling to use for decorations. Kathy told my wife in this recorded confrontation that my wife is doing illegal things on our property and the town also says we are doing illegal things on our property. She told my wife we are not allowed to have private functions or ever rent our property. This was at 4:00 pm on Friday 10/25/24. Tuesday late afternoon on 10/29/24, I recieved this certified letter of violation, clearly not a coincidence. Exactly one business day after this encounter with Kathy Plummer.

I question the violation itself. The notice includes drive by pictures of temporary "event" parking signs, a porta potty and tent, none of which are violations in our town. To make sure we were clear in reading our town ordinances we consulted friends that work in code enforcement in a local city and the county. One of the people we engaged is the County Manager of Cumberland County, Jim Gailey. In his and other's reviews of Raymond Land Use ordinances, we are not violating any.

Let me give the board a background on why we are receiving this violation notice for those of you who may not be aware of who we are and our situation.

We purchased the land in the town of Raymond at 141 Raymond Hill in 2001. We spent 6 years renovating our farmhouse and barn before hosting our first wedding on our property. This was August 11, 2007. This wedding included a tent and two porta potties. We never received any violation of town land use ordinance at the time. We have since hosted multiple private events on our property, many that have included tents, porta potties and parking signs. Yet for the dozens of events we have hosted, we have never recieved a violation notice. In 2017, we purchased the abutting property which allows



us ample off street parking. We have plenty of documentation to support that The Roma Farm has been a gathering place for private functions in the town of Raymond for 18 years. We have never received a police report of a noise disturbance or any incident that would show that our property is disruptive to neighbors or community members. Nor have we ever received a violation notice for renting our property.

Why haven't we received any letters of violation until now? The answer is simple; our actions are not violating land use ordinances in the town of Raymond. let me point you to a petition that our neighbor, Kathy Plummer, sponsor of the Raymond Short Term Rental Initiative, recently hosted in our town polling sation,on November 5th 2024. The picture in exhibit A shows Kathy Plummer standing at our polling center with posters boards behind her stating the following:

"Did you know Raymond does not have any rules or regulations on STR."

"Did you know that STRs do not need to pay a fee like other businesses in Raymond."

"Many of these are out of state companies residing in residential nieghborhoods"

"Some of these are used for wedding venues and large parties"

"No body knows how many exist"

This clearly shows that there is no ordinace for short term property rental or as she states, weddding venues in Raymond. She states that this has been reviewed by the town CEO and her lawyer. The Short Term Rental Initiative website Kathy sponsored on the internet in January of 2024 tells the tale of how she, along with our current CEO, have been working together on writing this initiative. There is a direct corrolation to this violation notice and her connection to Chris Hanson.

So why again are we recieving a violation notice if there is nothing we have violated? The answer stems from small town politics and that the CEOs in the town of Raymond have a record of doing as they wish and not playing by the rules. We cannot be fined for somthing that others in the town are allowed to do. That would be targeting us and that constitutes harrasment.

The town of Raymond has no Land use ordinance against renting your property or having private functions. There are no noise ordinances in the town of Raymond, no ordinance banning weddings or temporary structures such as a tents or porta potties. let's get to what led to this violation being sent to me.

Back in 2017 the land behind our property was sold. This is a landlocked parcel of land. The land purchase came with a deed to a residential easement through our property for ingress and egress. I established a deed with the former land owner for a residential easement. The town of Raymond issued a permit to install the residential easement in 2001. It was built and established within the timeframe of this permit. The easement had been used and maintained by the former owned for 16 years. It was a clear, unobstructed gravel road leading to the land behind us.

This new landowners were the son in law and daughter of a contractor. Their plan was to build a home for themselves and a storage facility for their family contracting business. The problem they faced was that they wanted to make a second entrance on our already established easement. They needed a second entrance to bring their heavy commercial equipment through. We were quickly made aware of the situation after they purchased the property. This contractor and his family started threatening us when we explained we did not want the easement changed. We were told by them that they had ties to the town and we should agree with them. You may recognize his name because the town hires this same contractor to do work for them even after we were harassed on our own land. His name is Floyd Brown Jr.

On 10/23/17, the same contractor tore up our yard without our permission or a valid permit from the town. On that same day, my wife was violently attacked by the daughter of this contractor while I was at work. What our family endured during this time is something no land owner should ever suffer. The town was made aware of the situation the day following this violation on our land and the assault on my wife. The only thing I was told by the new CEO, Scott Dvorak, was they had no permit and they would be told to stop. When they continued to tear up our property, my wife asked for a meeting with the CEO to address what we were going through. His advice then changed to that we should get out of their way and just let them do what they are going to do, adding they know how to "work the system".

We initially went to the town during this awful time in our lives, first in 2017 and then again in 2018 to ask if we could get something in writing or on the books to rent our barn for weddings and our property for other events. We were told in our first two recorded meetings that we were not violating any land use ordinances and they couldn't find anything on the books prohibiting what we were already doing on our property. They stated no one had ever come to them to ask us for this and they couldn't find anything prohibiting wedding venues. They told us this was a seasonal town and they do not monitor property rentals nor could they see them ever doing that in Raymond.

We had a follow up email with the CEO and Jim Seymour a few months later. During this meeting Scott Dvorack mentioned, "well if you insist on getting something on the books what about a conditional use permit?" We were unaware and he explained that we technically didn't fall under it for use but he could ask the town to consider quazi use. We asked what we would need to do to get this and he told us we needed to pay a fee to them and then write a letter to the board and to abutting neighbors about what we were asking for. He reiterated that we are not violating any town ordinance by doing what we are already doing but it would be a good way to get something on the books and good for the town to be able to put conditions on us. We would be like a templet in case anyone else ever asks for this. Scott knew exactly why we were asking for this. He assured us it was a good idea and we left the meeting handing him a check for a conditional use permit application. We left there knowing we were allowing a town that had proven to us to bend the laws for contractors to have a chance to put conditons on us that we didn't even have to be asking for but were scared and drained from the mental and physical abuse we had suffered. At the time it seemed like our best option.

The day of the site walk only Joanna and Len came to the property with Scott Dvorak. We had already had the town fire and safety come to the property and inspect. We had Scott himself inspect to make



sure everything was to code as well as a state electrical inspector. We had passed all inspections. The other two members of the zoning board never came to the property or even drove by. During this site walk Joann mentioned how wonderful it was to see an old barn restored and how much land we had and space to not be bothersome to any neighbors. We asked Joanna as she walked our property point blank what if our neighbor with whom we are in a lawsuit writes a letter of opposition? Would we not get this permit? She told us, "Honestly, you are not violating any land use ordinances doing what you are already doing. Unless they can prove you are violating a land use ordinance, I do not see any problem with this going through. You are asking for us to put conditions on you that you don't even need to ask for. I would think your neighbor would be happy about that." We went on to ask how this worked, would it be a yearly fee that we pay? She said, "No, this is a one time fee. we would just be deciding what conditions we would put on you if you are issued the permit. We left the site walk meeting confident we had done the right thing for ourselves and the town. We had asked Scott if we should fill the room with all the people who supported us. We were told no, this will just be a formality.

During that recorded town meeting you can see how blindsided we were. Our neighbor, Kathy Plummer, who for years had no complaints against us was all of a sudden at this meeting in opposition of our renting our barn for weddings. You can clearly see our confusion and my wife's tears as we were blindsided by this. The people we considered friends were now siding with these people with whom we were in a legal dispute. We have past emails between Kathy who had been supporting us up to that point. The outcome was that our application for a conditional use permit was denied over the meaning of the word "quasi". What was made clear during that meeting was that we, as well as any other member of the town, are able to continue to rent their properties and could hold private functions. The point is made by a town official, attended by the town attorney.

Shortly after that meeting, we received a letter from the same CEO who convinced us to apply for this conditional use permit. He is now stating that we could not host weddings in general, which was outside of the scope of the town meeting. We then inquired into the intent of his letter for clarification, which was sent to multiple town officials, with no response. See attached exhibit B.

Since that date, we have rented our property on multiple occasions. We have hosted many private functions including, family birthdays, high school senior pictures, anniversary parties, bridal showers, graduation parties, wedding showers, weddings and Halloween parties. We have had tents and porta potties on our property many times before and since that meeting. All of these rentals and private functions were without any neighbor ever contacting law enforcement for disruptive behavior or noise complaints or any report of any violation of anyone's rights. This is all within the past 17 years, showing that our property rental and private functions have never been a nuisance to anyone. We have received zero violation notices until now, 61 days post alleged violation date, yet one business day post confrontation with a neighbor, the same neighbor who is the sponsor of the secretive Short Term Rental Initiative.

This same neighbor, just one week prior to the suspected infraction, allowed her other neighbors use her land to park cars for an event of their own, when there was no room left on the busy road. Yet a week later, she is calling the town CEO to issue a violation, with no documentation other than photos of

our having a private event. We have off street parking away from the busy road.

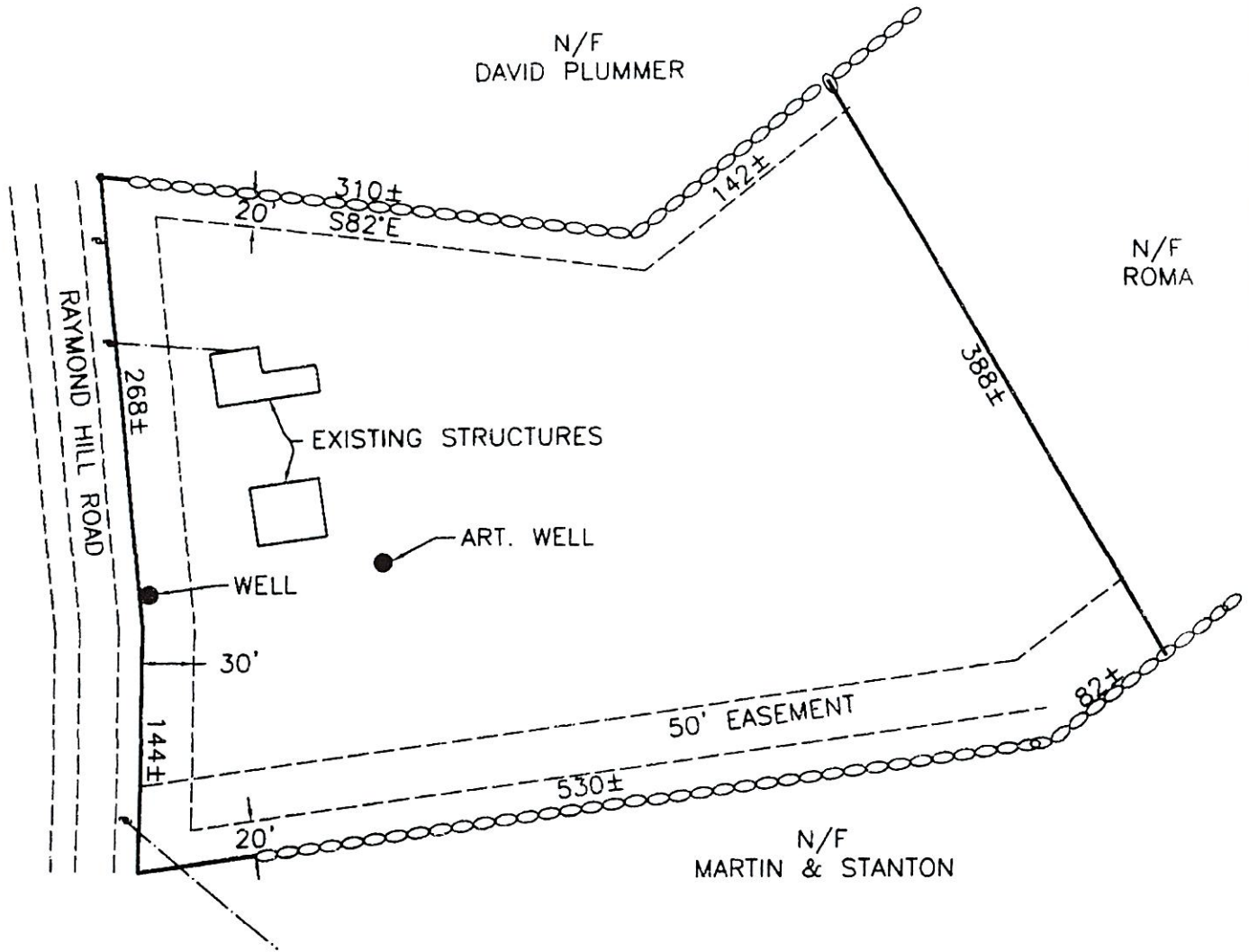
I especially question that if weddings are not allowed in Raymond, that the town make this clear to all members of the town. There are multiple locations in Raymond which rent out for weddings, so we expect that that all are receiving the same letter, or letters of violation. One farm up the road from us has held three events this past year, and even advertized this on a sign right below the town hall. We should expect that the notice of violation is being extended to all and has been properly communicated throughout Raymond. If you are not doing this, then this situation is an example of nothing more than town sanctioned harassment of one neighbor to another, aided by the CEO.

Lastly, I have concerns that this incidence is going to be indiciative of the town if we are to proceed with a Short Term Rental initiative. In this instance, we are not violating any town ordinance but have been brought to a town meeting due to the pressure of a particular neighbor, aided by the town CEO. Is the Town going to allow this type of oversight to go unchecked so that neighbor have to spend time and money to defend why they want to pursue life, liberty, and happiness in Raymond?

Additional supporting information from our legal representation will follow shortly.



# MORTGAGE LOAN INSPECTION



TAX MAP 13, LOT 29A

CERTIFICATION TO: GORHAM SAVINGS BANK

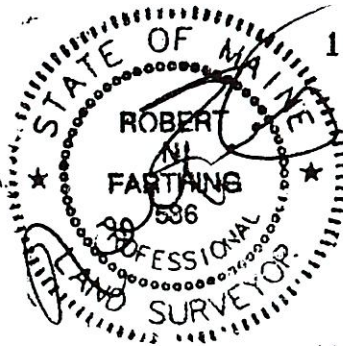
PREPARED FOR:

1) THIS PLAN WAS NOT MADE FROM AN INSTRUMENT SURVEY AND IS NOT FOR RECORDING PURPOSES. THE PLAN SHOWS CONDITIONS EXISTING AS OF THE DATE INSPECTED. CERTIFICATION IS FOR MORTGAGE PURPOSES ONLY. PROPERTY LINES AS SHOWN ARE APPARENT ONLY. THIS IS NOT A BOUNDARY SURVEY.

2) I HAVE CONSULTED THE HUD-FIA FLOOD HAZARD BOUNDARY MAP AND THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PROPERTY IS NOT X IS \_\_\_\_\_ IN A DESIGNATED FLOOD HAZARD AREA.

3) I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE BUILDING SHOWN ON THIS PLAN IS LOCATED ON THE GROUND AS SHOWN, AND CONFORMS TO THE ZONING LAWS OF THE TOWN OF RAYMOND AT THE TIME OF CONSTRUCTION.

4) I HEREBY CERTIFY TO GORHAM SAVINGS BANK THAT THIS PLAN DEPICTS THE RESULTS OF A CURRENT EXAMINATION OF THE PREMISES DESCRIBED IN BOOK 17627, PAGE 333 RECORDED IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS AND THAT ALL EASEMENTS, ENCROACHMENTS AND BUILDINGS ARE LOCATED ON THE GROUND AS SHOWN HEREON.



**TODD ROMA**  
141 RAYMOND HILL  
ROAD  
RAYMOND, MAINE

**SURVEY, INC.**  
P.O. BOX 210  
WINDHAM, MAINE

JOB NO. 2003-29

SCALE: 1"=100'

DATE: 05/12/03





elp us bring  
e on Short  
properties  
ters!  
and that  
DO NOT  
regulations.  
want to  
the way  
act now.

**Don't lose!**  
If you are not a  
member of the  
city, you will  
lose your right to  
vote in the  
elections.  
If you are not a  
member of the  
city, you will  
lose your right to  
vote in the  
elections.

**This Ordinance would:**  
This would **ONLY** affect Short Term  
Rentals (15 days or less),  
Not Long-Term Rentals  
Create a registration process so the  
city can monitor and limit the amount  
of STRs  
Require registration fees to pay for the  
services and infrastructure they use.  
Allow the City to create a fee structure  
as the additional effort is self-funded.  
Limit how many rentals can stay at a  
property  
Shows these properties are inspected for  
safety, similar to other overnight services  
Provide some guidance on noise,  
traffic and environmental issues

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
CONTACT  
CITY CLERK  
AT (503) 251-1234

**PLEASE help us bring  
an Ordinance on Short  
Term Rental properties  
to the voters!**  
We understand that  
many people **DO NOT**  
like more regulations.  
But... if you want to  
keep Raymond the way  
it is...  
we need to act now.





Town Office Phone 207-655-4742 Ext 161  
Town Office Fax 207-655-3024  
[www.raymondmaine.org](http://www.raymondmaine.org)

401 Webbs Mills RD  
Raymond, ME 04071

Scott Dvorak  
Code Enforcement Officer  
[ceo@raymondmaine.org](mailto:ceo@raymondmaine.org)

January 8, 2020

Dear Todd Roma & Jessica Dobson,

It has been brought to my attention that your website [www.theromafarm.business.site](http://www.theromafarm.business.site) appears to be advertising your property at 141 Raymond Hill Road (Mblu:013/029/000) as a wedding venue available for rent between mid-July and September. As I'm sure you are aware this matter was the subject of a hearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals on July 29, 2019 in which the Board denied your application for a conditional use approval for a seasonal wedding venue at the Property. In its decision, the Board determined that that a wedding venue was not a conditional or permitted use in the Rural Residential District and was therefore prohibited (see ZBA Decision attached).

This letter is meant to only inform you of a possible issue and is not a notice of violation, but please be aware that the use of your property as a wedding venue is prohibited under the Town's Land Use Ordinance and as determined by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Any such use will be a land use violation and subject to fines according to Article 5 Section K of the Ordinance.

Best Regards,

Scott Dvorak  
Code Enforcement Officer  
Raymond, Maine 04071



Todd Roma <todddroma@gmail.com>

## The Roma Farm

Todd Roma <todddroma@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 5, 2020 at 9:54 AM

To: Jessica Dobson <jessica\_dobson@hotmail.com>

Scott,

I am writing to follow up on your certified letter dated January 8, 2020 and ask for clarification.

In your email, you reference the July 29, 2019 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting to review our application for a conditional use permit but further state in the second paragraph that the use of our property as a wedding venue is prohibited under the town's land use ordinance. It is this latter statement which needs further clarification. Through that same Zoning Board of Appeals meeting what was confirmed for us was A). There is no ordinance in Raymond prohibiting wedding venues B.). Todd Roma and Jess Dobson did not need to come to the Zoning Board of Appeals to continue their current use of hosting private functions (including weddings) for friends and family, and C). Mr Roma and Mrs Dobson are trying to do right by the town and neighbors by taking this proposal through the proper channels. The result of this recorded meeting was that the ZBA decided that they could not accept our permit application because there was disagreement on the definition of Quasi Use, not that they were explicitly prohibiting wedding venues.

We held our first meeting with you on February 8, 2018, which was also attended by Jim Seymour, the town planner, and David Mains, then Town Safety Officer. In that recorded meeting, the town was in agreement that there is nothing on the books which prohibits wedding venues, private functions, or property rental.

We held another meeting with you and Jim Seymour in 2019 when we heard that the town was planning to review food truck stations and barn venues, and their impact on the town. In that meeting, Jim Seymour noted that he had reviewed the ordinances relative to wedding venues from local towns. Many neighboring towns had no references to wedding venues. Jim brought a copy of the Cumberland town ordinance, which was conservative in its approach. From that meeting, you decided that in the interest of saving the town time and money to pass an ordinance, we should move in the direction of approaching the ZBA with our proposal but you also stated that since we are the first to request this, we would be a test subject for this moving forward and were told that we would be grandfathered.

We are complying with the results of the July ZBA meeting. However, it should be reiterated that renting our property out to others is not prohibited in Raymond. We confirmed this in our initial meeting. In fact, hundreds of Raymond camps and homes are rented out each year. In doing so, some advertise their property as a venue for family events, such as reunions and weddings. It does not take much time to find such offers on the internet. So if someone were to rent out their property and the renters choose to use it for a family function, such as a wedding, are the owners in violation of town ordinance? Based upon the meetings that we have held with you and Jim Seymour, the answer has been no. If so, please confirm when the town will be sending certified letters to those other Raymond property owners with notice of corresponding fines.

We would also like clarification on the fine process itself. In the future event that someone is assessed a fine, does the town base its judgement solely on the word of a single disgruntled neighbor? Please detail how many fines the town has issued over the past five years for an infraction similar to what you have referenced.

We appreciate your attention to this clarification and ask that you share this letter with members of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Your statement that weddings are prohibited is too broad and we need to know that we can continue to host such events for our family and friends, or if the town is unilaterally taking away a right which all Raymond residents have enjoyed.

Sincerely,

Todd Roma and Jessica Dobson