



# CITY OF PORTSMOUTH

Community Development Department  
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Planning Department  
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## Memo

TO: Conservation Commission Members  
FROM: Peter Britz, Environmental Planner  
DATE: September 10, 2021  
SUBJ: September 15, 2021 Conservation Commission Meeting

### 910 Sagamore Avenue

The applicant is proposing to expand an enclosed 10'x15' living space to a 16'x32' or an increase of 362 square feet of living space in the inland wetland buffer. The living space is supported by piles over an area of crushed stone to allow infiltration of stormwater. The roof runoff will be captured in gutters which will be directed to stone infiltration trenches with 4'x4' stone outlet area for any stormwater that does not infiltrate. The applicant is disconnecting the existing septic system and will connect to a new City sewer line. The mowing of the wetland at the rear of the property will be discontinued and the area will be planted with wildflowers and other buffer plantings.

*1. The land is reasonably suited to the use activity or alteration.*

The proposed addition is expanding an existing addition which is being constructed without a foundation so stormwater will be allowed to infiltrate. Given the current configuration of the house this is a reasonable request.

*2. There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.*

The entire property is within the 100' wetland buffer therefore there is no location outside of the buffer that is feasible for this work.

*3. There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.*

While the applicant is proposing an expansion of the building the plans to stop mowing and removal of the septic system will likely be a net benefit to the wetland area.

*4. Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.*

The applicant is proposing to stop mowing the lawn area which has been delineated as wetland and plans to install wildflowers and other plants. They also plan to remove the invasive Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) to protect the native plants at the rear of the site.

*5. The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.*

While the new addition does expand the size of the structure the applicant has proposed significant improvements in the wetland and wetland buffer to offset the impact. Given the improvements proposed this application has the least adverse impact for this location.

6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.*  
The applicant is proposing to return a wetland area to a more natural state through plantings and management of the site by stopping the mowing of this area.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of this project as presented.