

Dear City of Portsmouth —

We are looking to obtain a variance from the city of Portsmouth to allow for up to 6 hens (initially 5 hens) to be housed outside on our property as family pets (no roosters). Our three elementary school-aged children are allergic to all inside pets such as dogs and cats and so our family is unable to have more “traditional” animals.

As you might imagine, they are very much looking forward to learning about and caring for the hens. As we have a large property for Portsmouth, covering 0.35 acres, we do not anticipate any negative impact to our surrounding neighbors and direct abutters. As we do care very much about their opinion, we have solicited the attached letters confirming their support and favor for the variance. Having been members of the Crick neighborhood for nearly 10 years, we are committed to keeping the property within the spirit of the neighborhood, and continuing the upkeep of our property to benefit the whole community.

We intend put a small wooden hen coop in the middle of the property, set back 25’ from the northern back edge of the property, far from that neighbor’s house, given the size of our properties. To the east, the coop would be set back approximately 45’ from the east and 50’ from the west and in both directions behind a number of trees and bushes. Further reducing impact to neighbors is our 8’ high solid cedar fence, which surrounds the property. We have also included a property map and pictures of the proposed coop location. Thank you for your time and consideration of our hens!

We are looking for an Variance Request from section 10.440.17.20 with the following specific criteria for a variance listed in section 10.223.20 of the Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance

- *The variance will not be contrary to the public interest (10.233.21)* as we have a large, 0.35 acre, completely fenced in property and the hens will be contained within all setbacks in a small non-permanent coop structure, and will be kept as family pets with no impact to any direct abutters or members of the community in general, nor go against public interest of the neighborhood or the city of Portsmouth and will not pose any threat to the community with regard to health, safety, or other public rights.
- *The spirit of the ordinance will be observed (10.233.22)* as we will be keeping the property as is appropriate for our neighborhood and for the entire city and the hens will be pets for our children to care for and learn about/from, and not with intention of farming or changing the property in any way and will be purely for pleasure and family pets.
- *Substantial justice will be done (10.233.23)* as the benefit of our family having chickens and our children enjoying them and learning from them as pets, far outweighs any potential proposed harm to the public by our family acquiring chickens as personal pets.
- *The value of surrounding properties will not be diminished (10.233.24)* as the hens will be fully enclosed on our 0.36 acre property that has significant space for them to live and not be of consequence to any surrounding property, and there will be no impact on neighboring properties. We also have acquired letters of support for the request from neighbors.
- *Literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance (10.233.25)* would result in an unnecessary hardship to us, as we have a large property that can absorb six hens and it is a reasonable use of the large property that has no impact on our neighbors or the city, and will create great pleasure and a learning experience for our three school aged children.

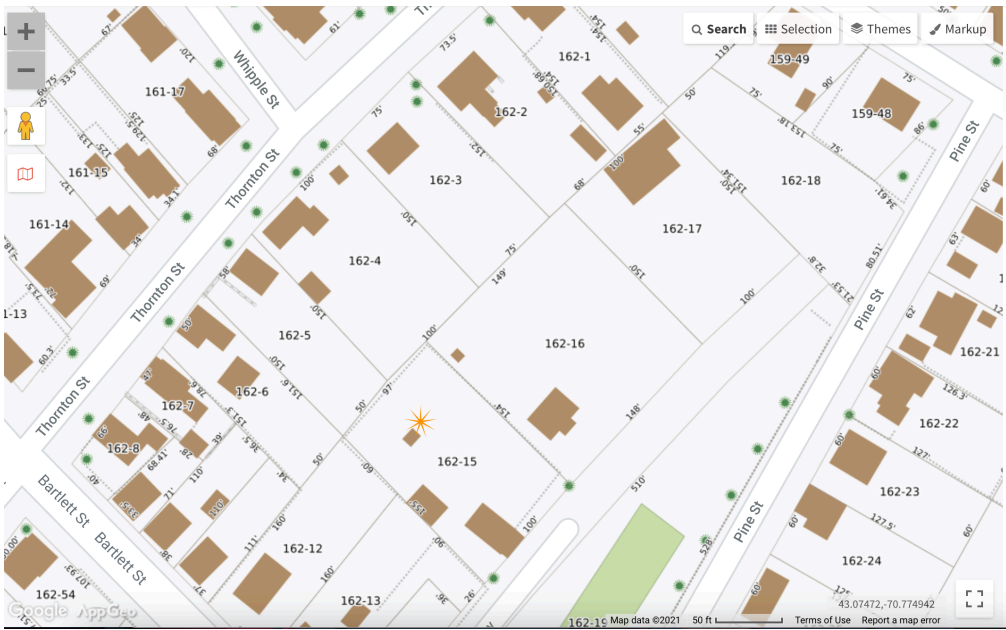


View from back door of home, with the star indicating proposed chicken location

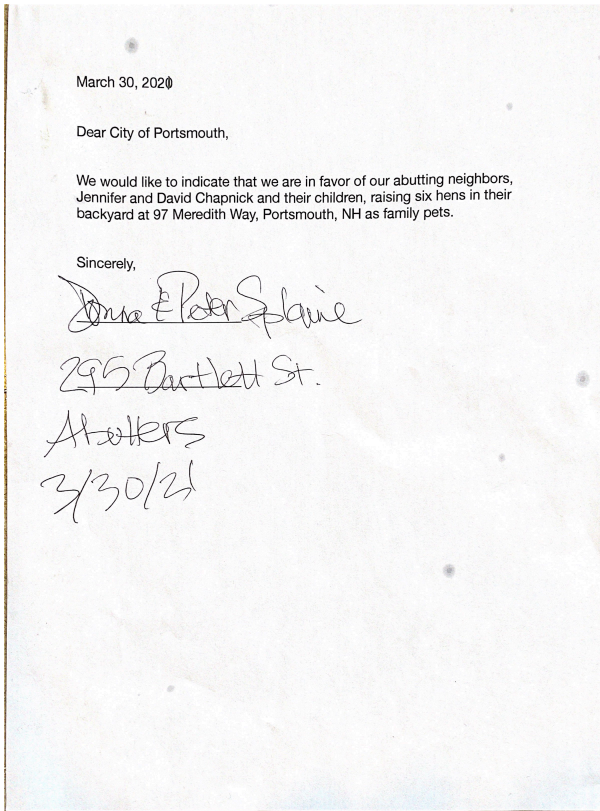


Closer view of proposed chicken location

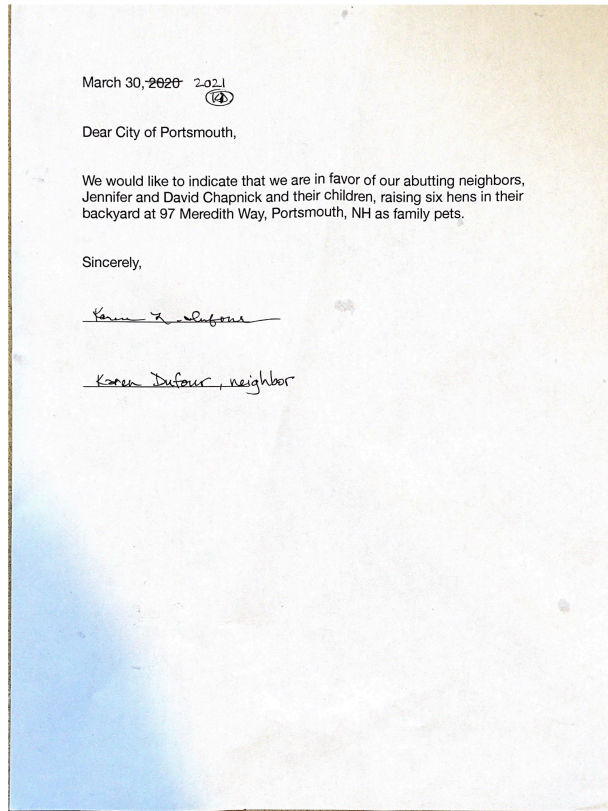




97 Meredith Way, lot 162-15, orange star indicating proposed location of chickens



Letter in support from abutter



Letter in support from abutter

Sincerely,  
 Jennifer and David Chapnick  
 Owners of 97 Meredith Way