



Memo

TO: Conservation Commission Members
FROM: Peter Britz, Environmental Planner
DATE: June 3, 2022
SUBJ: June 8, 2022 Conservation Commission Meeting

2255 Lafayette Road

This application proposes to convert an existing fast food restaurant site into a retail fueling station and a convenience store/sandwich shop with drive-through window and five fuel dispenser island and associated paving parking and stormwater system upgrades for the entire site. The overall disturbance in the wetland buffer is 33,555 square feet which consists primarily of previously disturbed paved site areas.

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

Given that the site is currently paved and has a structure on it this project seeks to upgrade the site. The site is not seeking to expand the impact in the buffer so the land is reasonably suited to the use.

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

The site as it exists is paved within and close to the edge of wetland. There is no location on this property where the project could be completed outside of the buffer.

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

The applicant is proposing to reduce the amount of impervious surface 9,124 square feet on this previously developed site. This reduction in impervious surface combined with the addition of enhanced stormwater treatment reduces the overall site impacts for this site and surrounding properties.

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

This project is proposing an extensive landscape plan for the interior of the site. The area at the rear of the site which is being converted from pavement to proposed loam and seed could be enhanced further with the addition of wetland buffer plantings and/or a wetland seed mix. Additionally, the applicant should be clear in their application to adhere to the City's regulations for fertilizer use according to section 10.1018.24.

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

This site proposes reductions in impervious surfaces and enhanced stormwater treatment as a less impacting alternative than what is existing.

6. Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.

As stated above the buffer planting stating loam and seed should be revisited to include more appropriate wetland buffer plantings. The plantings could be mowable but staff recommends they look towards a reduced mowing cycle, i.e. annual or twice annual to enhance buffer function. Additionally, the buffer could be enhanced with specific plantings of shrubs which work for this site.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the project with three stipulations:

1. That the plans match the City's fertilizer standards per section 10.1018.24.
2. That the applicant provide a wetland buffer seed mix and reduced mowing frequency for the areas labelled for loam and seed on the plan.
3. That the applicant consider some type of wetland edge signage as appropriate for this site.

70 Pleasant Point Drive

This is an application to replace an existing home with a new home on the same lot. The proposed structure is still in the buffer but the plan calls for it to be pulled back from the shoreline along with a new driveway configured to be made of pervious pavers also further from the edge of the shoreline.

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

The site has an existing single family home on it currently. The applicant proposes to move the home further back from the edge of wetland but the size of the patio has expanded. While there is a table showing a 96 square foot reduction of impervious surface on the property it is not clear what the overall change in buffer impact is. Clearly moving the house back further from the buffer is a reduction of structure impact but the application does not appear to show the size of the buffer impact for all surfaces in the buffer. The removal of invasive species and planting plan are definitely an enhancement to the project and appropriate for this site.

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

The site as it exists is a single family lot and the applicant has worked to move the house further back from the wetland buffer. The new location of the house does appear appropriate. It is hard to determine the size of the other impacts in the buffer. Additionally, there is a dock proposed on the site with no details about how the stairs connect to the dock through the saltmarsh. Similarly the plan shows a bioretention basin in the buffer. It is not clear whether this could be located outside of the buffer and what the impact of the outfall will be flowing on tidal waters.

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

The applicant is proposing to reduce the amount of impervious surface 96 square feet and enhance the vegetation on the site with a thoughtful invasive species removal plan and planting plan. While it does not appear that this project will create an adverse impact on the site it is not clear how large the patio areas are and whether they are, as designed an enhancement to the site overall. A more detailed buffer impact plan describing all of the impacts in the buffer would be helpful to better understand the project.

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

This project is proposing an extensive landscape plan and invasive species removal plan. The overall landscaping for the site shows some beneficial plantings. More information about the existing lawn area versus the proposed would be helpful to evaluate the overall site. For instance is there a 25' vegetated buffer provided throughout the site?

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

The applicant proposes to provide an invasive species management plan, new pervious areas and move the house further from the edge of wetland which are all positive steps. More detail is needed to better understand the impacts overall.

6. Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.

The invasive species removal plan and native planting plan seeks to accomplish this. It would be helpful to see whether the 25' vegetated buffer is provided throughout the site and get more details on the impacts in the buffer as shown on the plans.

Recommendation: Staff believes there are more questions for the applicant, addressed above, which will help the Commission get a better understanding of the project. In addition, a site walk would be helpful to see the

site and understand the proposed changes. Further, the Commission will be asked to comment on the State Wetland Permit and the Commission would benefit from reviewing the NHDES application along with the Wetland Conditional Use Permit. For these reasons staff recommends the applicant proceed with a work session or postpone the application in anticipation of more information and a site walk.

81 Taft Road

This is an application to add an addition to an existing home on Taft Road. This is very minor addition in the front yard of this home.

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

Given the small size of the addition and the fact that it is in an existing lawn area on the opposite side of the street from the wetland in question 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.

There is not an alternative location for the addition given the home exists, this is a reasonable request.

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

There will be no adverse effect from the proposed addition.

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

This project is proposing an addition 17 of square feet of which are in the buffer. It is not clear whether the maple tree shown will be able to be saved when this addition is complete.

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

This is a very small impact in the buffer in an area of lawn.

6. Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.

The lawn area will be lost to the addition but it will have little effect on the wetland across the street.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval as presented.

11 Fletcher Street

This is an application to construct a new single family home on a residential lot.

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

The applicant has worked to keep the house including the site grading outside of the wetland buffer making the site reasonable for this project.

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

In consideration of the nearby adjacent home and site topography the applicant has proposed the drainage to move to the rear corner of the site to avoid impacts to the neighboring property. The stormwater design does not anticipate regular flow but needs this swale for large rain events.

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

The way the project is designed the majority of the stormwater will be infiltrated onsite. This swale outlet will accommodate large rain events and will not have an adverse effect on the adjacent wetland.

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

This project is proposing to outlet the stormwater pipe to the wetland buffer. In addition, the applicant is proposing to install some wetland buffer plantings adjacent to the proposed swale.

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

There will be a temporary disturbance from the installation of the drain line and a small disturbance from the swale but no impervious surface is proposed with this project.

6. Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.

The applicant is proposing to install some wetland buffer plantings and to restore the site after the temporary disturbance.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval as presented.

230 Commerce Way

This is an application to construct a new two story building for veterinary care within an existing parking lot. There are modification to the parking lot proposed which require a small impact in the buffer but overall there is a large area of parking lot being removed from the buffer making the site more conforming to the wetland buffer regulations.

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

This project proposes to largely enhance the buffer through the removal of parking areas and plantings in the wetland buffer.

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

This project proposes a net reduction in paving in the wetland buffer and as such is a feasible and reasonable location for the project.

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

The way the project is designed the result will be a net improvement to wetland functional value for this and surrounding properties.

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

This project is proposing to reduce pavement areas and add new wetland buffer plantings which is a net benefit for the site.

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

There will be some temporary disturbances from this project but overall the project should result in a net improvement to the wetland buffer.

6. Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.

The applicant is proposing to expand planted areas in the wetland buffer by 9,250 square feet

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval as presented.