

# Memo



TO: Conservation Commission Members  
FROM: Kate Homet, Environmental Planner; Peter Britz, Director of Planning & Sustainability  
DATE: December 5, 2025  
SUBJ: December 10, 2025 Conservation Commission Meeting

---

**65 Onyx Lane  
Mariya Kontsepolskaya & Ralph Minderhoud, Owners  
Assessor's Map 220 Lot 35**

This application is for the addition of structural supports to a home's existing foundation. This project proposes the excavation of a limited amount of soils from within the 100' wetland buffer to install push piers along the foundation underground.

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

This lot is already a residential use within the wetland buffer and it is proposing only temporary impacts to the wetland buffer through soil excavation.

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

This lot is entirely within the wetland buffer and there is no alternative location for this work.

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

The proposed work involves only temporary impacts which includes soil disturbance. To limit impacts to the wetland, the applicant should consider the use of erosion controls to prevent sediment from entering the wetland on site during construction.

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

This project does not propose any impacts to existing vegetation, only existing lawn immediately surrounding the home's foundation.

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

This project proposes temporary impacts to achieve construction goals and further protect the existing home.

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

The vegetated buffer strip is not being impacted as part of this project.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends **approval** of this application to the Planning Board with the following condition:

1. In accordance with Section 10.1018.40 of the Zoning Ordinance, applicant shall permanently install wetland boundary markers, which may be purchased through the City of Portsmouth Planning & Sustainability Department. It is recommended that markers be placed along the 25' vegetative buffer at 50-foot intervals.

**2299 Lafayette Road  
Rye Port Properties LLC, Owner  
Assessor's Map 272 Lot 4**

This application is for the demolition of an existing 1-story concrete block building and various site infrastructure and for the construction of a new car wash facility to include a new 1-story building, a new and reconfigured parking lot and drive aisle, utility work, a retaining wall, a stormwater detention pond, landscaping and other associated site improvements. The wetlands on this property have been delineated by an out of state Certified Wetland Scientist and will need to be reconfirmed by a NH Certified Wetland Scientist. The proposed project will create a reported permanent wetland buffer impact of 5,600 s.f. and temporary impacts for site clearing, grading and landscaping.

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

This lot is a previously disturbed lot but all areas within the 100' wetland buffer have previously been undisturbed. This application notes a proposed 5,600 s.f. of permanent impact to accommodate a portion of pervious pavement, a new retaining wall and a new detention pond.

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

Applicant should demonstrate why this project cannot be pulled further towards the front of the lot to minimize/avoid buffer impacts.

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

The jurisdictional wetland is at the rear of this property and the impacts to the wetland buffer include regrading, clearing of vegetation, the installation of a new retaining wall, addition of pervious pavement and the installation of a stormwater detention pond. This will cause impacts to the wetland buffer's ability to protect the on site wetland but applicant is proposing the addition of densely planted trees in this area and should further consider limiting the mowing that occurs in the buffer area.

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

It appears as though clearing will occur in an existing heavily wooded area along with regrading and stormwater infrastructure construction. To avoid these impacts, the applicant should consider pulling the project closer to the front lot line or moving the location of the stormwater infrastructure.

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

Applicant should demonstrate why this project cannot be pulled further towards the front of the lot to minimize/avoid buffer impacts. In addition, they should provide alternative locations for the stormwater infrastructure that is not within the wetland buffer.

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

It appears as though the vegetated buffer strip is not being impacted as part of this project. Applicant should include the wetland delineation and 25, 50 and 100' wetland buffer demarcations on the landscaping plan (L-1.0).

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends **postponement** of this application to give the applicant time to address alternatives that require less impact within the 100' wetland buffer.