

9/11/2025

**PROJECT and
CRITERIA
COMPLIANCE
NARRATIVE**

Project Narrative – 7445 W Mercer Way

Project Description:

The proposed project involves the after-the-fact review of a wood retaining wall constructed beneath the existing deck to create a level surface for safe access and maintenance. The retaining wall is small in scale, located entirely on private property, and does not extend into easements or off-site areas. The work provides stability for the graded area and supports continued safe use of the deck and yard space.

The project site is developed with a single-family residence that includes a deck and stairs. No new structures beyond the existing wood wall are proposed, and no trees or vegetation removal is required as part of this review request.

Critical Areas:

The subject property is adjacent to a mapped steep slope area, which triggers a Critical Area Review (Category 2) under Mercer Island City Code (MICC Title 19). The wall is limited in scale, designed only to level the area immediately under the deck, and does not contribute to further encroachment on sensitive areas.

Compliance Justification:

The retaining wall is necessary for safe and practical use of the existing residence, and it does not result in significant adverse impacts to critical areas. The scope is limited to minor grading and structural stabilization directly beneath the deck. The work is consistent with the intent of the Critical Area regulations in MICC Title 19, which allow improvements that do not expand disturbance into critical areas but instead stabilize and maintain safe residential use.

The project will maintain existing vegetation and tree cover, with no additional earthwork beyond the small volume already placed to support the wall. The improvements do not require SEPA, JARPA, or additional shoreline approvals, as they are outside shoreline jurisdiction and do not exceed thresholds for further environmental review.

Conclusion:

The applicant respectfully requests approval of a **Critical Area Review 2** for 7445 W Mercer Way. The wood retaining wall is a minor residential improvement that supports safe access and use of the property, complies with MICC Title 19 requirements, and avoids additional disturbance



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to critical areas. The work is consistent with City standards for steep slope protection and demonstrates that the project maintains no net loss of critical area function.