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**ARTSPEAK ANNOUNCES PUBLIC INPUT SESSION ON PUBLIC ART
FOR NEW MUNICIPAL GARAGE**

PORTSMOUTH, NH - ArtSpeak, the City of Portsmouth Cultural Commission, will host a public input session on the Percent for Art portion of the city's second parking garage on Tuesday, March 7, at 6:30 pm at the Portsmouth Public Library Levenson Room. The session will serve as an informational meeting to orient the public on the location of the garage and surrounding proposed buildings, the industrial history surrounding Deer Street, and how public art can serve as a mechanism that shapes public spaces and tells a story. The event will also be an opportunity to introduce the Public Art Project Planning Committee, an eight-member subcommittee of ArtSpeak, created in accordance with the city's public art procedural guidelines adopted in 2013.

Committee Chair and ArtSpeak board member, Councilor Nancy Pearson, says, "Public art projects that engage the community can provide us with the means to improve our environment and develop a sense of pride and ownership over our parks, streets, and public spaces. Public art projects are most effective when they are part of a larger, holistic, multidisciplinary approach to enlivening a city or neighborhood. In this way, public art can contribute both to community life and the vitality of our public spaces." Parents, children, artists, neighbors, community leaders, city staff and the general public are invited.

In 2006, Portsmouth became the first city in New Hampshire to pass a Percent for Art Ordinance: “Statement of Purpose: It is hereby declared that it shall be the public policy of the City of Portsmouth to assist and encourage the participation of its citizens and visitors in the enjoyment of the many benefits which flow from the arts. Among other activities to this end, the City will allocate a portion of the expense of public building construction and significant building renovation projects to be spent on works of art, which shall be available for the benefit of all without additional cost to those persons. Such works of art shall be called public art as defined in more detail herein.”

ArtSpeak is the not-for-profit agency created to serve the city of Portsmouth by implementing the Cultural Plan. Through the use of advocacy and promotion, ArtSpeak supports Portsmouth’s artists, visitors, citizens and businesses. Its mission is to promote appreciation, awareness, participation and dialogue in the support of arts and culture. To learn more visit the Art-Speak website at www.art-speak.org.

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