

Art-Speak

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH CULTURAL COMMISSION

Mission

The mission of **Art-Speak** is to promote appreciation, awareness, participation and dialogue in the support of arts and culture. **Art-speak** performs these services for the citizens of the City of Portsmouth, its City Council and all artists and art/cultural-related organizations in the Seacoast Community. The agency exists officially on behalf of the City of Portsmouth, to represent and promote arts and culture, and to act on all related matters.



Funding

Art-Speak was formed as the City of Portsmouth's Cultural Commission in October 2002. As a quasi-public agency, **Art-Speak** has non-profit status allowing the commission to secure private grant funding to accomplish many of the city's arts and culture goals, as stated in the City's Master Plan. The city of Portsmouth provides office space and associated services as well as limited funding.



Staff

Art-Speak employs a part-time coordinator for 24 hours a week to manage the day-to-day activities of the organization. **Art-Speak** has an independent volunteer Board of Directors consisting of up to 18 individuals. The Board consists of business and arts and cultural professionals from the seacoast area.

Functions

The purpose of **Art-Speak** is to:

- Promote public appreciation, participate, dialogue and support for the invaluable contribution that arts, culture and history makes to our City's economic vitality and quality of life;
- Serve as an advisor to all departments of City government on arts and cultural issues;
- Perform a coordination function for local cultural organizations and advocate on their behalf at the local, state and national level;
- Market and promote Portsmouth as a cultural destination;
- Create new resources to support local artists and cultural organizations Prepare annually a state-of-the-city cultural report for the City Council;
- Implement and periodically update the cultural plan;
- Convene and annual forum for community dialogue related to arts and culture;
- Introduce new businesses to expectations of supporting the cultural community;
- Collaborate with regional and state arts and cultural organizations.



Significant Accomplishments



- **Art-Speak** provided staff support and artist advocacy for "Percent for Art Ordinance" requiring that one percent of construction costs for new and renovated municipal buildings be designated for public art (within certain cost limits); conducted a "Percent for Art Forum" for all stakeholders including artists, municipal workers and architects.
- **Art-Speak** secured funding from National Endowment for the Arts to conduct an Arts District Feasibility Study for the Islington Street Corridor. This study will be completed by spring of 2008.
- **Art-Speak**, in Partnership with Americans for the Arts, conducted the Arts & Economic Prosperity III Survey. This survey provides economic data to encourage business to support Arts; data also provides artist and organizations with concrete data to be used as leverage when approaching business and other sponsors for funding. Funding for this work was provided by New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and the Provident Bank Community Foundation.
- **Art-Speak** held Overnight Art Events in 2005 and 2008. Overnight Art is a public art competition resulting in a temporary public art exhibit in downtown Portsmouth viewed by 1000's of residents and visitors.

