

City Council Workshop

Agenda Item #3

January 30, 2017

Conservation Commission Update

The Conservation Commission has requested an opportunity to update the City Council of the work the Commission is doing and to discuss the composition of the Commission. The ordinance governing the Commission was amended in January of 2015 upon the request of the Commission to increase the number of voting members.

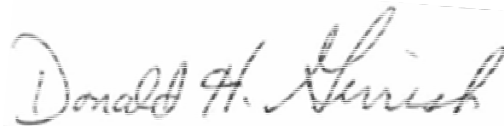
Section 2-76 of the current Ordinance states:

“A conservation commission is hereby established to consist of fourteen (14) members appointed by the city council, all of whom shall be residents of the city, and who shall serve without pay. There shall be no more than four (4) members from any one voting district. Vacancies created by members moving from their districts or from the city shall be governed by Code of Ordinances Sec. 2-121(c). The terms of office shall be three (3) years except that initial appointments after the date of adoption of this article shall be such that the terms of no more than six (6) members shall expire in any single year.

A quorum of the commission shall consist of a majority of appointed members. All decisions of the commission shall be in the form of resolutions duly passed by a majority of members who are present and voting.

All members shall satisfy the attendance requirements for all boards and commissions in the City of South Portland as established in Sec. 2-121(d).”

The Conservation Commission has included a summary of the issues they would like to discuss in your meeting packet materials. Chairperson Megan Sheehan and members of the Commission will be in attendance and provide a presentation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donald H. Gerich". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Interim City Manager



South Portland Conservation Commission

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The South Portland Conservation Commission (SPCC) requested an opportunity to meet with the City Council to review the current status of the Commission and to outline its immediate plans. Following recent losses in membership and leadership, the Commission has re-examined its role within city government and is in the process of establishing a renewed agenda that best meets the priority needs of South Portland.

The Commission is prepared to discuss issues of immediate concern or to explore general expectations of Council members. At a minimum, the Commission hopes to address the following priorities.

1. The operational status of the Commission and ongoing communication with the City Council. A recommendation is being made that Commission membership be reduced to nine members.

Megan Sheehan, Chairperson

2. The Commission has been represented by three members on the Open Space Planning Committee. The Committee has reviewed an extensive list of city owned properties and has made recommendations about differential approaches to varying sub-sets of these parcels. The Commission is supporting a recommendation that a more broadly representative group be convened with appropriate professional support to create an updated formal open space plan.

Barbara Dee

3. The Commission is working toward implementation of a grant from the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership. In collaboration with the Partnership, the South Portland Water Resources Protection Department, the Maine DEP, and the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, we have scheduled a community information forum at South Portland High School on April 19, 2017 to focus on the city's five urban impaired streams (Trout Brook, Barberry Creek, Kimball Creek, Red Brook, and Long Creek). We hope to inform residents about the watersheds of each stream and acquaint them with the potential for local water quality initiatives.

Jody Meredith

4. The Commission has proposed, in cooperation with the Water Resources Protection Department, to use Freshwater Wetlands Compensation Funds to support strategic initiatives to stabilize wetlands and maintain healthy watersheds, including community initiated small-scale water quality projects. We plan to launch a small grant program as an adjunct to the urban impaired streams community forum and want to ensure that the Council has sufficient information to endorse this variation on the use of these funds.

Bob McKeagney