



# CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MEDIA CONTACT

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## NEWS RELEASE

### **City Invites Community to Join Storm Damage / Coastal Resiliency Workshop**

***SOUTH PORTLAND, Maine*** – The City of South Portland invites community members to attend its **Storm Damage/Coastal Resiliency Workshop on Tuesday, February 13 at 6 PM at the South Portland High School Lecture Hall.** (Please note that the start time is earlier than previously announced.)

The Workshop will feature presentations by City staff and officials from state agencies about the City's coastal resiliency work and recovery efforts following the January storms that caused flooding and damage. Time for community members to comment and ask questions will follow the presentations. Some of the topics that will be addressed during the workshop are:

- What is the extent of the damage the storm caused?
- What is possible for the former fishing shacks that were destroyed?
- What actions do state agencies recommend for coastline protection?
- How is South Portland planning for climate change?
- What funding is available to governments and homeowners to recover and prepare for the future?

Joining City Council and City staff at this workshop will be Maine Floodplain Management Program NFIP State Coordinator Sue Baker, Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency Director Michael Durkin, and representatives from Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Harbor Master's office. Officials from the Army Corps of Engineers and Climate Council of Maine have also been invited, but their attendance is not yet confirmed.

Regarding the former fishing shacks on Fishermen's Point that were destroyed in the January 13<sup>th</sup> storm, initial research and information from state agencies indicates that the City cannot recreate

these structures in the same location or re-build as they were. The shacks, which have not been used for fishing in many years, stood in a federal flood zone and shoreland zone. Any rebuild would need to meet local, state, and federal standards, which would include meeting elevation, setback, flood resistance and height limitation requirements. Were the City to rebuild the shacks as they were, South Portland likely would be suspended from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), according to Sue Baker, the Maine Floodplain Management Program Coordinator and Barb Skelton, South Portland Code Enforcement Director. Being suspended from the NFIP would have significant negative consequences for the City and its residents. The requirements and effects of suspension from the NFIP will be discussed at the workshop.

“Those buildings stood in that spot for generations and were very special to our community,” said City Manager Scott Morelli. “While it’s clear that we can’t replace them exactly as they were, the City is eager to learn more and further explore our options.”

As the primary intent of the workshop is to obtain more information from state and local officials about the aforementioned topics, the City does not expect to make decisions at this workshop, including in regards to the former fishing shacks.

During the meeting, members of the public will have up to three minutes each to speak, and may ask two questions during their allotted time. One or more state or local officials will answer following each participant’s questions. For those unable to attend, the workshop will be livestreamed at [https://bit.ly/SPCTV\\_Live](https://bit.ly/SPCTV_Live) and on SPC-TV (Spectrum Channel 2). Community members watching from home may email up to two questions to [workshopquestion@southportland.org](mailto:workshopquestion@southportland.org) during the workshop. Questions may be emailed beginning at 6PM on February 13.

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