Leadership Skills for Natural Resource-based Community Issues

Jonah Fogel & Matt Benson

October 31, 2009

Public Involvement in Natural Resource Issues

- Achieve five social goals*
  - Incorporate public interests and values into decision-making
  - Increase quality of public decisions
  - Educate the public
  - Foster trust in institutions
  - Reduce conflict

*Thomas C. Beierle and Jerry Cayford, Democracy in Practice: Public Participation in Environmental Decisions. Resources for the Future, Washington, DC. 2002

Evolving Models of Planning

L. Susskind, et al. *Mediating Land Use Disputes, Pros and Cons*. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge, MA. 2000.

Attribute	Technocratic Model	Advocacy Model	Participatory Model
Task	Technical advisor	Represent an interest group	Balance efficiency & fairness
Focus of Activity	Plans offer 'best' solution	Equitable redistribution	Bring interests and data to issues
Products / Solutions	Efficient allocation of resources	Plans that serve interest group	Negotiated agreements
Skills	Technical	Technical plus organizational	Technical, organizational, facilitative
Primary Client	Planning Commission	Interest group	All stakeholders
Basis of Legitimacy	Technical expert	Brings more than technical fix	Outcomes are mutually beneficial

Who are Stakeholders?

- Rule of Three:

1. Those who are affected by a policy decision
2. Those who can affect a policy decision
3. Those who have the resources and authority to carry out a policy decision

Why Involve Stakeholders?

- From a practical perspective:
  - Increase citizen participation
  - Reduce the social costs of decision implementation
  - Reduce time from proposal to implementation
  - Increase compliance
  - Reduce litigation

Outcomes that Everyone Should Expect

- Quality of Decisions
  - Decisions that **(1)** identify the values, interests, and concerns of all who are interested in or affected by the planning decision; **(2)** use the best available knowledge, and **(3)** incorporate new information, methods, and concerns that arise over time

- Legitimacy of Process
  - Process is seen by the public as fair and competent and follows governing laws and regulations

Outcomes that Everyone Should Expect

- Capacity of Participants
  - Participants, agency staff and consultants: **(1)** are better informed and more skilled at effective participation; **(2)** engage the best available knowledge and information about values, interests, and concerns; and **(3)** share understanding of the issues and decision challenges and develop communication skills, collaboration skills, and mutual trust."

Core Competencies

- Working with scientific, technical information & ‘experts’
- Principled negotiation
- Conflict management

Working w/ Scientific Information & Experts

- Keep the ‘scientists’ on target with what is relevant to the group
- Have scientists explicitly discuss the assumptions behind their data
- Encourage scientists to use plain language and good visuals
- Ask experts to state their understanding of the pertinent risks, benefits, and cautions
- Non-scientific information can be useful to a group too

Principled Negotiation

- Frame the discussion on how the stakeholders as a group can find a livable solution
- The greater the uncertainty, the more adaptable the solution should be
- Explore the best and worst alternatives to a negotiated agreement to understand how each party proposes the scientific uncertainties if there is no agreement

Moving from Conflict to Consensus

Conflict → Collaboration → Consensus

Divergent views and interests

Struggle together to discover interests…

- Interest-based negotiation
- Build trust & respect

Leads to Collaboration

Stakeholders work together to solve problem

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How Should Stakeholders be Involved?

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

iap2
International Association for Public Participation

Increasing Level of Public Impact

Public participation goal	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Key Steps in a Public Process

Convene stakeholders

▼

Clarify responsibilities

▼

Deliberate

▼

Decide

▼

Implement agreements

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Case Study & Discussion

1. What is your reaction to what you saw in the video?
2. What were the outcomes of the effort?
3. Do you see this type of situation happening in your community? How so?
4. Do you see a role for yourself in those situations?
5. What role did scientific information play in the situation?
6. How did conflict help or hurt the situation?
7. Was the process that these folks went through typical or unconventional for situations that you see in Virginia?
8. What does that say about how we resolve natural resource issues in our State?

Resources

- Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN)
  - www.virginia.edu/ien/
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
  - www.cv.ext.vt.edu
    - Jonah Fogel, Community Viability Program
    - Matt Benson, Community Viability Program
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy
  - www.lincolninst.edu
  - *Mediating Land Use Disputes, Pros and Cons*, Lawrence Susskind, et al.
- Virginia Network for Education of Municipal Officials (VNEMO)
  - www.virginianemo.net
- Learning for Sustainability
  - http://learningforsustainability.net/

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