

FACILITATOR TRAINING FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

January 31, 2020

9:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Augusta City Hall

Augusta, Maine

Maine Development Foundation

with

Public Engagement Partners

www.publicengagementpartners.com

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GOALS

- Understand the role of the facilitator in public engagement and public dialogue. Introduce public engagement strategies.
- Practice facilitations techniques, strategies, and skills – we are always learning!
- Unpack neutrality – neutral doesn't equal passive! – address challenging scenarios and practice moving a conversation forward in a constructive manner.

AGENDA

9:00 am	Welcome & opening connector
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9:30 am	Facilitating for public engagement
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10:15 am	Facilitation in action
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10:45 am	Break
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11:00 am	Facilitator role and skills practice
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11:30 am	Typical facilitation challenges
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12:15 pm	Lunch
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1:00 pm	Facilitating a community conversation
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2:30 pm	Organizing for public dialogue
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3:00 pm	Closing connector & thank you
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Group agreements for a productive conversation...

- When one person is talking, others are listening
- Take space, make space. Share air time.
- If you disagree, consider asking a question rather than arguing to prove your point.
- It's ok to disagree, but don't personalize it. Stick to the issue, not the person.
- Speak for yourself, not for others and not for an entire group. Use 'I' statements.
- What's said here, stays here. What's learned here, leaves here. Ask permission before sharing someone else's personal story.
- We share responsibility for making the group productive
- Be respectful of each other

Tips for Facilitating

Role of the facilitator:

- Review the purpose and outcomes of a meeting
- Plan and design meetings
- Support good communication and full participation
- Keep the meeting on track and upholding good process
- Guide the group through conflict and difficult situations
- Manage and adapt process as necessary
- Stay neutral on content, not on process
- Serve the whole group

Facilitative Attitudes:

- Supportive of the group and process
- Show respect and compassion
- Positive presence
- Flexible
- Non-defensive and transparent
- Neutral and set opinions aside

Facilitator Skills:

- Intentional listening skills
- Strategic questioning and follow up skills
- Awareness of group development and dynamics
- Process skills
- Managing conflict, intervention skills
- Using silence (WAIT – Why Am I Talking?)
- Recording, note-taking skills

Facilitator Skills and Phrasing:

- Reflecting and clarifying – feed back or restating an idea or thought to make it clearer.
 - “Let me see if I’m hearing you correctly...”
 - “What I believe you are saying is ...”
- Summarizing – briefly stating the main thoughts.
 - “It sounds to me as if we have been talking about a few major themes ...”
- Shifting focus – moving from one speaker or topic to another.
 - “Thank you Bev. Do you have anything to add, Dave?”
 - “We’ve been focusing on views 1 and 2. Does anyone have strong feelings about other views?”
- Asking probing or follow up questions – using questions to help explore disagreements, understand multiple perspectives, and uncover common ground.
 - “What are the key points here?”
 - “What would someone with a different point of view say?”
- Managing conflict – helping conflict and disagreement be productive.
 - “Let’s refer to the ground rules.”
 - “What seems to be at the heart of this issue?”
 - “What do others think?”
- Using silence – allowing time and space for reflecting by pausing between comments.

Facilitator Questions

Open-ended questions can't be answered by 'yes' or 'no'. Use questions strategically to further the conversation into new areas or generate more participation and new ideas. Ask questions to have participants to share the values that underlie their opinions. Or use questions to clarify a point. Be aware that your role as a facilitator is not the focus of the group so use questions strategically.

General questions:

- What do you value regarding the issue?
- What seems to be the key point here?
- Do you agree with that? Why?
- What do other people think of this idea?
- What experiences have you had with this?
- Can you help us understand your reasons behind your opinion?
- What do you think is really going on here? Why is this important?
- How might others see this issue?
- What do others in the group think?
- How does this make you feel?

Questions to use in disagreement:

- What is at the heart of the disagreement?
- What is important to people who hold that opinion?
- What do you find most convincing about that point of view?
- Could you say more about what you think?
- What makes this feel so hard?
- What have we missed that we need to talk about?
- What do others in the group see is at the center of this conflict?

Questions when the conversation feels stuck:

- Where should we go from here?
- What haven't we considered yet?
- How can we make progress on this topic or in this conversation?
- What do you want to see happen next?
- What brings you hope? What brings you joy?

Closing questions:

- What are the key points of agreement and disagreement in our dialogue today?
- What have you heard today that resonates with you?
- What is one thing that you'll take away from this conversation?
- What one word describes how you're feeling right now?

Facilitator Challenges and Facilitator Responses

Situation: A very talkative person dominates the discussion.

Possible facilitator responses:

- Limit eye contact with speaker.
- Remind the rest of the group that everyone is encouraged to share their thoughts.
- Refer to the group agreements to reinforce 'share air-time' concept.
- Consider your tone of voice. You are not critical or offensive, you are speaking from a position of helping the whole group.
- "Let's hear from someone who hasn't had the chance to speak yet."
- If needed, refer to the talkative person directly. "Thank you for sharing Sara. Let's hear from Rob next."
- "I notice that some people are doing most of the talking. Can we make space for others to share their thoughts."

Situation: Someone puts forth information that you know is false. Or participants get hung up in a dispute about facts or focusing on a lack of information or needing more information.

Possible facilitator responses:

- Ask the group to consider what has been said that is false. "Has anyone heard information about this?" Often group members will correct each other or share other information. You could correct the information if you do know, but careful not to present information that is opinion.
- Ask each person in the dispute to share the main point of their information and then move on. Remind the group that it's ok to disagree or have different understanding or perspective. Move on.
- Sometimes groups get caught up in an information whirlpool of either getting in too deep in the details that they lose focus of the purpose of the dialogue or there is a focus on wanting more information. Note what information is requested on newsprint and then refocus the group back to what is essential in the focus question or what their priorities are now given what they know.

Situation: Someone comes with an agenda and keeps repeating the same talking points over and over. Or repeated comments are aimed at provoking others or disrupting the process.

Possible facilitator responses:

- Acknowledge that the person's comments have been recorded and let them know that when they have something different or new to say, they may share. Otherwise let's hear from others in the group.
- Interrupt and remind the speaker and the group of the ground rules to be respectful and no personal attacks.
- Use your judgement if you can ask the speaker to share what their motivation is. If this does not diffuse the tension and they are disrupting the process, politely ask them if to leave the group.
- Look for an event moderator or a floating facilitator and call them over to invite the person to talk one on one with the other facilitator outside of the group.

Situation: Only a few people are participating. There appears to be a lack of interest, understanding, or energy.

Possible facilitator responses:

- Sometimes the facilitator does not give people enough time to reflect. Use silence to allow people to get ready to respond.
- Use eye contact with participants who are quiet but don't put anyone on the spot. Key into non-verbal cues to see who may want to share but may need help entering into the discussion.
- Pose a question and ask everyone to go around in a circle to share a response. It is ok to pass.
- Ask people to pair up with someone next to them for a few minutes and then bring people together again and ask for pop-ups on what was shared.
- If the lack of energy is due to agreement, move on to a different topic or ask the group to consider the topic from another point of view.

Situation: There is tension or conflict in a group. Two participants argue. Or one participant confronts another.

Possible facilitator responses:

- Address and acknowledge tension directly. Remind participants that dialogue is all about sharing difference in priorities and values. For conflict to be productive it must be focused on the issue, not the person. No personal attacks.
- Respond to any personal attacks and remind participants of group agreements.
- Look to group members to help. Ask the group what they see as the root of the conflict or issue.
- If you need assistance call in an event moderator or floating facilitator to help.

Situation: There is an obvious 'ouch' said in the group but no one has said anything about it.

Possible facilitator responses:

- It is your job as the facilitator to address hurtful language or dynamics. As a neutral facilitator you are neutral to the topic, but not to the group and process.
- Refer to the ground rules if that feels relevant to the situation. Often 'ouch' moments and hurtful comments come from unintentional or uninformed places, but the impact is what is important.
- Ask the group "How are others feeling about what was just said?"
- Don't let 'the-only' identified people in your group feel that they are the one responsible for speaking up to something hurtful that was said. You are the facilitator and you need to respond.
- If you are working with a program that addresses racism, an important, and challenging issue for many people in our country to talk about, keep in mind a few things:
 - Take time for your own self-reflection on your racial identity, ethnicity, and where you are in understanding and talking about racism and structural racism in our communities and country.
 - Ideally a group talking about racism should be racially diverse and be co-facilitated and organized by a racially diverse team.
 - Make sure when you set your ground rules to address how to handle offensive remarks, even if they are unintentional. Impact is valued over intent.
 - There are great resources for community dialogues addressing race and racism with Everyday Democracy at www.everyday-democracy.org. [Compiled by Public Engagement Partners with resources from: Everyday Democracy and NH Listens]

A Community Conversation About Maine's Marijuana Policy and Mytown, ME

Short Discussion Guide Facilitator activity

Directions:

Small groups of 6 or 7 people. Each person takes 8 – 10 min practicing as the facilitator.
Activity = 60 min

You are all community members of the theoretical town Mytown, Maine. Be yourself in the conversation and if you choose to do so, you may exhibit one difficult behavior for the facilitator to address, one time. Don't overdo it!

Your town has not yet made any decisions, planning, or policy given Maine's new marijuana legislation. This community conversation is created for facilitator practice. Share your priorities as a community member. Don't get hung up in the details of reality. Have fun!

Facilitator Training Public Engagement Partners

A community conversation about our town and Maine's marijuana policy.

Everyone welcome!

Welcome and thank you for joining today's conversation.

This conversation is focused on your priorities and experiences. As the State of Maine finalizes the rules and regulations for legalized recreational use of marijuana, we consider the critical questions: ***As we consider allowing or not allowing marijuana facilities to locate in our community, what factors should we consider? How might such facilities affect our community in positive or negative ways? How do we want to plan for marijuana policy changes in our town – what do we want to see happen in our town and what is important as we move forward?***

Here is the general outline of our evening:

5:00 PM	Doors Open - Registration and Community Dinner
5:15 PM	Welcome and Purpose from the planning group
5:30 PM	Small Group Conversations
7:15 PM	Report outs in large group
7:25 PM	Next steps
7:30 PM	Adjourn

About the process: This conversation is...

- Designed to focus on what is important to *you*.
- Designed for participants to be here the whole time (please do what you need to do to be most present. Feel free to take a break or step outside to take a phone call.)
- About a constructive focus and looking forward to desired actions and solutions.
- Organized to allow the greatest possible time for everyone to both speak and listen, which is why we use small, facilitated groups where ideas can be explored, differences understood, and preferences for action expressed.
- Respectful of your time. We will keep time and respect yours by ending on time.

Group agreements for a productive conversation...

- When one person is talking, others are listening
- Take space, make space. Share air-time.
- If you disagree, consider asking a question rather than arguing to prove your point.
- It's ok to disagree, but don't personalize it. Stick to the issue, not the person.
- Speak for yourself, not for others and not for an entire group. Use 'I' statements.
- What's said here, stays here. What's learned here, leaves here. Ask permission before sharing someone else's personal story.
- We share responsibility for making the group productive
- Be respectful of each other

Facilitator 1 **Introductions in small groups**

- Your small group has a neutral facilitator whose role is to:
 - Help with the process and keeping time
 - Serve as a reminder of our agreements to be fair and respectful
 - Make sure everyone gets a chance to participate, and
 - Record key information on flip charts
- Reminder: Your group will need someone to **report out** to the large group at the end.
- **Introductions:** One benefit of these conversations is to be in groups with people whose experiences and perspectives are different from your own. As a way to get to know each other a bit, please share your:
 - Name, hometown, and a few hats you wear in community...
 - What are one or two things that you enjoy and value most about your town and community?

Facilitator 2 **Information Review**

Please spend a few minutes reviewing the information section at the end of this discussion guide on page 5 and 6. When the group is ready, brainstorm what is important to address in this community conversation.

A Brainstorm: What do you notice?

- What do you notice? What stands out?
- What is most important to you about this topic?
- What clarifying questions do you have about the information and topic?
- What topics do you most want to discuss tonight?
- What is most important for us to talk about today as our town considers how to plan for marijuana policy changes and the decisions we need to make?

Facilitator 3 & Facilitator 4 **Key Questions and Priorities**

Next, consider the framing question: ***As we consider allowing or not allowing marijuana facilities to locate in our community, what factors should we consider? How might such facilities affect our community in positive or negative ways? How do we want to plan for marijuana policy changes in our town – what do we want to see happen in our town and what is important as we move forward?***

- Given your priorities when you came in this evening, and the information we have just reviewed, spend some time discussing the key issues and **their importance to you**. It might be useful for **each person to speak briefly about your perspective**. The following questions may be helpful to prompt your thinking (but you will likely not have time to address each one individually):

- What are your priorities and preferences when considering if our community should allow marijuana facilities and what types?
- How do you connect to some of the information we considered in the beginning of the conversation? Is there anything important to consider that we haven't considered yet?
- What is your thought process or decision making to decide what preferences you have or how you would vote on a decision?
- How would you connect some of your own experience to the information or topic that we're considering? What do you want people to know?
- In your opinion, what are the potential positives of each consideration?
- In your opinion, what are the potential downsides of each consideration?
- What questions do you have or more information that you want to have?

Facilitator 5 **Community Actions and Next Steps**

Given Maine's new marijuana legislation and that major decisions are left to local municipalities, what are the key factors our community should consider? If our town does decide to move forward with allowing marijuana facilities to be located in our town, what issues are important for the community to think through and resolve?

- What steps do we need to take in our local community as we decide a path forward?
- Who or what organizations need to be involved and working together?
- What do we want our elected officials to know when in the decision-making process?
- What do we want our neighbors and community to know?

Facilitator 6 **Final Priorities**

Based on your group's conversation, *"Are there any common-ground thoughts or ideas in this group? If so, what do we want to say at the end of the evening? If not, what diverse points of view do we want to convey?"*

A consensus is not required, but if one emerges, or perhaps if the group wants to put forward two or three primary points of view, that is fine. These will represent your **key recommendations or findings**.

Thank you!

[This discussion guide is for facilitator training purposes only and is based on civic engagement organization resources.]

Information Section

(The information is a brief overview to be used for activity purposes and is not considered comprehensive. Updates may not be reflected.)

Office of Marijuana Policy of the State of Maine

Maine voters approved the recreational use, retail sale and taxation of marijuana in November 2016 as the Marijuana Legalization Act.

Governor Janet Mills, inaugurated in January 2019, created the Office of Marijuana Policy (OMP) in February 2019. The Office of Marijuana Policy is responsible for the oversight of all aspects of legalized marijuana, including Maine's existing Medical Use of Marijuana Program.

Retail sales are unable to take place until rulemaking is completed and marijuana establishments are licensed.

OMP began accepting adult use business applications in the end of 2019. It has received 76 license applications so far – 38 for retail stores, 27 for cultivation facilities and 11 for manufacturing facilities.

All individuals working in or for a licensed marijuana establishment who possess, cultivate, manufacture, package, test, dispense, transfer, serve, handle, transport or deliver marijuana or marijuana products are required to have an Office of Marijuana Policy-issued individual identification card after background check.

A Kennebunk lab with ties to the New Hampshire medical marijuana program has become the first lab to seek state certification to test recreational marijuana in Maine. "Labs are critical to our mission of ensuring the health and safety of all Mainers," Gundersen [of OMP] said. "...we need an effective and responsible licensing and regulation system. And to do that, we need testing labs."

Municipalities

A municipality's legislative body must vote to allow a particular type of marijuana establishment. Municipalities have two options: 1. Opt-in (with or without conditions or limits) and notify the Department 2. Wait—Default is the same effect as prohibition

The Maine Municipal Association is currently aware of 14 municipalities (out of 488) that have opted in to allow some or all of the four types of non-medical marijuana businesses authorized under state law (cultivation, manufacturing, retail, and testing).

Auburn - Bangor - Bowdoinham - Brunswick - Etna (*retail not allowed) - Eustis - Farmington - Hallowell - Mercer (*only manufacturing allowed) - Paris - Poland - South Portland - Topsham (*retail not allowed) - Waterville

Municipalities can: 1) Designated zones for establishments 2) Additional limits on hours 3) Expand "buffer zone" around schools

Municipalities cannot: 1) Waiver of restrictions on co-location 2) Expand hours of operation 3) Allow establishments within 500 feet of schools

Example: Rockland residents voted in a nonbinding referendum in November 2018 on whether to allow marijuana businesses in Rockland. Voters said no to allowing adult recreational marijuana stores in the downtown by a 1,610 to 1,282 tally (56 percent to 44 percent).

But they said they would support recreational marijuana stores elsewhere in the city by a 1,670 to 1,240 tally (57 percent to 43 percent).

Estimated Adult Use Tax Collections by year	Total Tax Revenue	General Fund	Public Health and Safety Fund	Local Government Fund
2020	\$4.4 million	\$3.8 million	\$0.5 million	\$58,080
2023	\$33.2 million	\$28.8 million	\$4 million	\$4 million

Maine Medical Use Marijuana Program

Office of Marijuana Policy is responsible for Maine’s existing Medical Use of Marijuana Program. The Maine Medical Use Marijuana Program exists to ensure and facilitate an efficient, responsible and legal medical marijuana environment within the State of Maine. The program safeguards confidentiality to all participants and assures access to safe and reliable medicine.

In 1999, Maine became one of the first states in the country to legalize cannabis for medical use. Voters passed a citizens initiative in 2009, allowing a person who has a doctor’s certification to purchase medicinal cannabis from a caregiver or dispensary.

In 2013 Maine’s medical Marijuana Laws were rated the best in the country by Americans For Safe Access; balancing needed safety protections with patient privacy protections.

Example: Brunswick has two medical marijuana storefronts, and the second opened after the town passed a marijuana licensing ordinance, which went into effect January 1. Although anyone can enter the store, sale of products containing THC are limited to clients who are at least 21 years old and have received a Maine Medical Marijuana Card from a doctor.

Sources: State of Maine Office of Marijuana Policy, Medical Marijuana Caregivers of Maine, Maine Municipal Association, and newspapers: Press Herald, Boston Globe, Village Soup, Bowdoin Orient.



Practices for building Equity & Inclusion Into Community Engagement Processes

Given the complexities of our history in the US and the inequities that currently exist in many of our systems, creating truly equitable engagement processes is a tall order. However, it is possible for us to continue to practice and improve our ability to do this. Below we describe strategies to build relationships, organize for inclusion, and share power in order to implement equitable dialogue and deliberation processes.

I. Build RELATIONSHIPS first

With self

- Continue to develop your own understanding about equity and issues of social inequality and oppression (race, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc.) and the impact of these identities on how you interpret the world.
- Develop awareness of your own biases and understandings. Increase your understanding about what you don't know about how others experience the world.
- Be open to learning more.
- Be willing to be uncomfortable at times.

With others

- Meet one to one with people prior to inviting them to join an engagement process. Get to know them a bit. Share a meal. Find out what matters to them.
- Create a safe space where it is ok to be uncomfortable.

With affinity groups

- Give the nature of systemic and internalized oppression, it can be helpful to have people meet in affinity groups (i.e. same ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) prior to joining a mixed group process. Affinity groups can provide a safe place to talk frankly about issues; prepare people to participate in a mixed group with more confidence; and provide an opportunity for people to receive support from others.

II. Organize for INCLUSION

Form a diverse organizing committee

- Form an organizing group that is diverse (consider race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, class, etc.); includes other kinds of diversity relevant to the issue being addressed; and includes formal and informal leaders in the community.
- Establish decision-making and group norms that actively encourage giving voice to the groups that have been marginalized in the past.
- Name power dynamics and privilege and intentionally create group processes that will address the issues.



Frame issues in ways that are balanced and accessible to all

- Frame the issue with the help of a diverse group of people who bring a variety of experiences and perspectives to the table
- Create accessible materials (use visuals, everyday language, no jargon).
- Offer culturally relevant translations.
- Write at an accessible reading level for people with all educational backgrounds.

Recruit and train diverse facilitator teams

- Identify facilitator teams that are reflective of community demographics (gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, age, etc.). You may want to consider co-facilitators that represent different populations in the community – such as youth and adults, white people and people of color, a known liberal and known conservative, etc.
- Prepare facilitators to create inclusive spaces for conversation (i.e. scan for equitable participation, model power sharing, create a space to hold uncomfortable conversations, foster a welcoming atmosphere).

Hold events in the right place at the right time

- Choose locations that are familiar to people of color, low income people, and other marginalized populations.
- Schedule events that don't interfere with days of celebration, religious observances and cultural festivals.

Provide support so everyone can participate

- Offer supports such as child-care, transportation, meals and translation.
- In some cases, stipends or incentives can be helpful.
- Make sure venues are accessible to all.

III. Share POWER

Share decision-making

- Choose a decision-making process (i.e. consensus, voting, etc.) that is agreed to by the group.
- Scan the group to ensure that everyone is an active participant.
- Ensure that key decision-makers reflect the diversity of the group.

Establish clear links between the engagement process, decision-making and power

- Make sure you have a plan for how results of process will lead to action.
- Secure commitments from decision-makers and formal leaders.

Ensure that people who represent differing viewpoints as well as the diversity of the community lead action efforts.

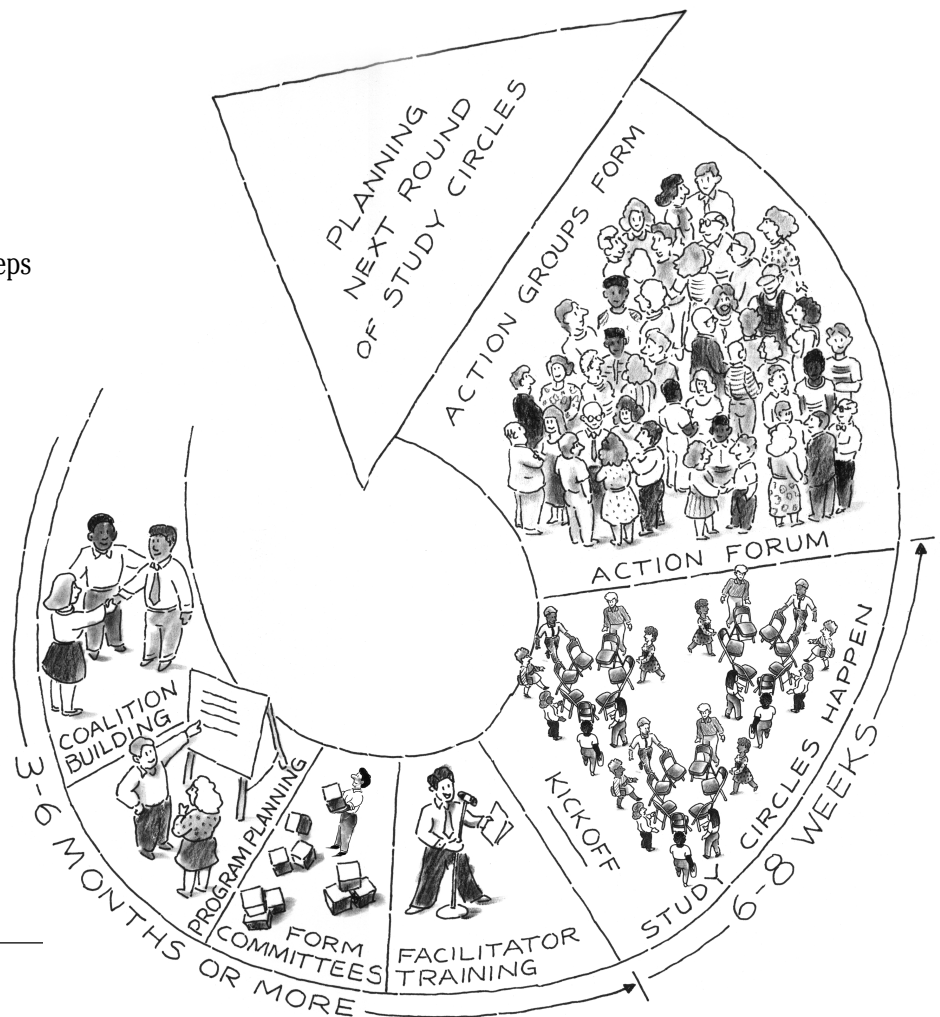
Organizing a Community-wide Study Circle Program

Part 2

Part 2 walks you through the steps of organizing a community-wide study circle program.

- ◆ Each step builds on the one before it. For example, successful recruitment and action results depend on how well you define goals, build your coalition, and develop a plan.
- ◆ Sample documents appear in some sections.
- ◆ Sections can be pulled out, copied, and given to committee members to help them work more easily as a team.
- ◆ Steps can be revisited. Most organizers find themselves going back to various steps from time to time.

The information in this guide should help you to do most of the work without direct assistance from SCRC. It shows you how to implement most of the strategies you need to launch a community-wide study circle program. Whenever you do need our advice or assistance, we encourage you to call us.



Visit
www.studyircles.org

for the latest news from community-wide programs
and updated information for organizing
your program.

< < < **Return to TOC**

The Basic Steps of Organizing

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Step 1: *Get Started*

- Build an initial working group, and hold a pilot circle
- Talk about what study circles could accomplish for your community

Step 2: *Clarify Your Issue and Think About Discussion Materials*

- Clarify your issue
- Decide whether you need to create your own discussion materials
- Set up a guide-development committee
- Contact SCRC for advice
- Recruit outside help if you need it

Step 3: *Build Your Team*

Build a Strong, Diverse Working Group and Organizing Coalition
Identify a Coordinator and Establish Clear Areas of Responsibility

Step 4: *Develop a Plan*

- Talk about why it is important to engage the community in dialogue and problem solving on this issue
- Define the goals of your program
- Decide on geographic scope
- Consider how you will achieve diversity in the circles
- Decide what support you will provide for action ideas
- Talk about resources – what you have, and what you need
- Develop a written work plan
- Make sure there is effective communication among all those involved in the work



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Step 5: *Share the Work of Organizing Study Circles*

- Plan and Carry Out Communication
- Develop a Budget and Plan for Fund Raising
- Document and Evaluate Your Program
- Recruit Participants and Form Diverse Groups
- Plan for Action, Including the Action Forum
- Recruit, Train, and Support Facilitators
- Plan the Kickoff
- Find Sites and Handle Logistics

Step 6: *Hold a Round of Study Circles*

- Hold the kickoff
- Conduct the study circles
- Have the action forum, and support and track action efforts

Step 7: *Sustain Your Program and Expand the Impact of Your Work*

- Refer back to your initial program goals, and have a conversation about the future
 - Share ownership of the program
 - Support the coordinator
 - Make sure to communicate your successes to the larger community
 - Take care of yourselves and support one another
-

Top Ten Things to Do When Hosting an Event

- #1 Always greet people when they arrive.
- #2 Take time for meaningful introductions.
- #3 Point out bathrooms and all logistics that help make folks comfortable.
- #4 Always review group agreements.
- #5 Let participants know they are part of something bigger; be clear about how their voices will make a difference.
- #6 Support your facilitators—it is hard work to remain attentive and fair minded. A moderator should be available to check in with small groups.
- #7 Always prepare for differences that make a difference (political, racial, social class, education, etc.). All voices are equal.
- #8 Be prepared for direct questions and assume transparency is the best approach when answering questions about your project.
- #9 Ask participants to complete an evaluation, and always debrief with facilitators and the planning group.
- #10 Have fun and maintain a sense of humor!



www.nhlistens.org



Public Engagement Resources and Organizations

Ben Franklin Circles	https://benfranklincircles.org/
Bridge Alliance	https://www.bridgealliance.us/
Deliberative Democracy Consortium	https://deliberative-democracy.net/
Essential Partners	https://whatisessential.org/
Everyday Democracy	https://www.everyday-democracy.org/
International Association for Public Participation	https://www.iap2usa.org/
Kettering Foundation	https://www.kettering.org/
Living Room Conversations	https://www.livingroomconversations.org/
Make Shift Coffee House	https://makeshiftcoffeehouse.com/
National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation	http://ncdd.org/
National Institute for Civil Discourse (Revive Civility)	https://nicd.arizona.edu/ https://nicd.arizona.edu/revivecivility
New Hampshire Listens	https://carsey.unh.edu/new-hampshire-listens
On The Table	https://onthetable.com/
Orton Foundation, Community Heart and Soul	https://www.orton.org/build-your-community/community-heart-soul/
Public Agenda	https://www.publicagenda.org/
Public Engagement Partners	https://publicengagementpartners.com/

Books:

Slow Democracy – Susan Clark and Woden Teachout

Public Participation for 21st Century Democracy – Matt Leighninger and Tina Nabatchi

The Deliberative Democracy Handbook – John Gastil and Peter Levine

We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting for: The Promise of Civic Renewal in America – Peter Levine

The Ecology of Democracy: Finding Ways to Have a Stronger Hand in Shaping Our Future – David Mathews

Conferences:

NCDD annual conference

Tufts University Frontiers of Democracy annual conference

State Network:

Maine Network of Engaged Communities – hosted by Maine Development Foundation and the George Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions at the University of Maine (*handout provided on the network, website in development*)



1

Goals

- Understand the role of the facilitator in public engagement and public dialogue. Introduce public engagement strategies.
- Practice facilitations techniques, strategies, and skills – we are always learning!
- Unpack neutrality – neutral doesn't equal passive! – address challenging scenarios and practice moving a conversation forward in a constructive manner.

Public Engagement Partners 2

2

Agenda

Welcome, opening connector, learning agreements
 Facilitating for public engagement
 Facilitation in action
 Facilitator role and skills practice
 Addressing challenging scenarios

Lunch – take a break!

Practice facilitation in small group dialogue
 Facilitating for inclusion
 Brainstorming public engagement strategies in your town
 Closing by 3:30 PM

Public Engagement Partners 3

3

Opening Connector

2, 4, All

- Share your name, your Maine hometown
- A few hats you wear in your community
- What draws you to your work or community projects? What do you find most interesting?
- What brought you here today and how do you see facilitation helping you in your work or community life?

Public Engagement Partners

4

4

Group Agreements

- Learning agreements / Group agreements
- Build them together or confirm a list
- Don't skip this step! When you get into sticky moments, refer to them.

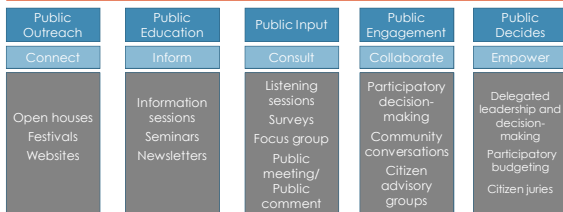
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Spectrum of engagement

Increasing level of public participation



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6

6

Dialogue is Different

Think about a time when you were at a public meeting that didn't go well or wasn't as successful as planned.

In pairs:

- What stood out to you about the process? Identify one or two things that were a problem?
- How would a dialogue approach have changed the process?

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7

7

Arc of Dialogue

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Information
- Brainstorming
- Key questions
- Action ideas (sometimes)
- Report out (3 – 4 key ideas)
- Summary Report

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Organizing a Community-wide Study Circle Program

Part 2

Part 2 will take you through the steps of organizing a community-wide study circle program.

- Each step builds on the one before it.
- The results, successful or not, and what you learn will vary.
- The study circle will be a valuable tool for your community.

- Sample documents appear in some sections.

- Sections can be pulled out, copied, and given to committee members to help them work more easily on their own.

- Steps can be modified. Don't forget to document any changes.

- Don't forget to give feedback to various steps.

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Facilitation in action

Downtown Dreams: What will be the future use of the newly acquired property on Main Street?

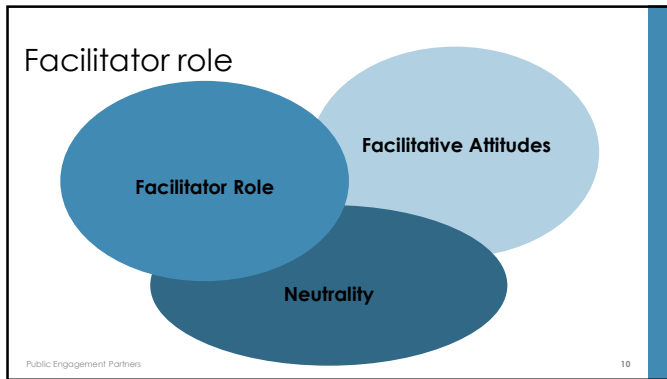
Building a brainstorm:

- What do we need to consider when we think about the possible uses of the land?
- What are your priorities? What is important to you?
- Who are all the stakeholders we should keep in mind?

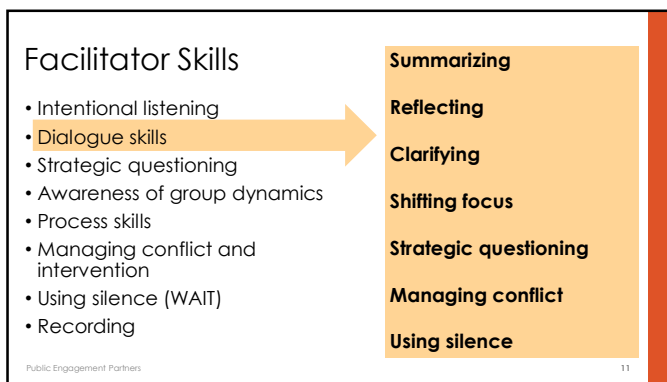
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9

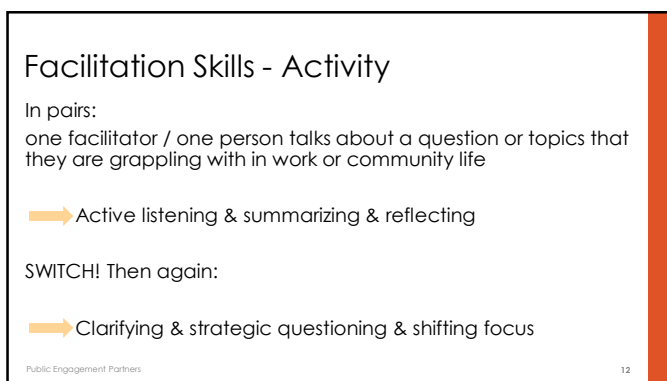
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Typical Facilitation Challenges



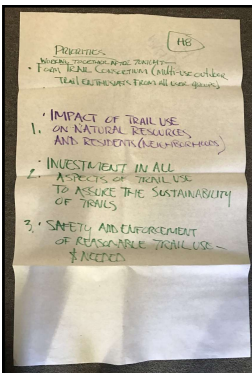
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Take a break.



14

Multi-tasking art of taking notes



- Capture big ideas and themes
- Use words of the speaker
- Handwriting matters
- Label pages and be organized
- Don't let notes become the focus
- End with a summary sheet

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15



16

Debrief

- What did you notice?
- What worked well as a facilitator?
- What felt easy to you? What was a challenge?
- What feels promising about public dialogue?
- What feels like a challenge for this type of public engagement?



QUESTIONS?

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17

Organizing and Facilitating for Equity and Inclusion

- Making sure that all voices are represented in public decisions, especially in areas that affect them ie: youth, historically disadvantaged groups
- Diversity in identity - political, racial, socio-economic, demographic, and lived experience
- How do you encourage, welcome, and plan for difference in your engagement work?

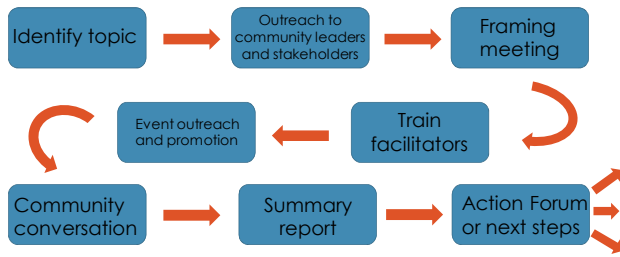
When difference makes a difference.

"The only cure for bias is other people."
- Jonathan Haidt

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18

Planning Overview for Community Conversations



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19

19

Organizing and facilitating dialogue in your community

In small groups:

- What issues or topics feel best approached by public dialogue in your community?
- What would you need to do or know more about to start organizing for dialogue? Who are your partners, stakeholders and potential facilitators?
- What do you need to know more of or experience to improve your facilitation skills?

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20

20

Closing connector

In pairs:

One thing you bring to facilitation that is a strength...
One thing that you want to work on...

One word closing in standing circle

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21

21

How do you see public engagement and facilitation helping you, your work, your efforts to create strong Maine Downtowns and community life?

Do you have a project in mind?
Let us know. Let MDF know.

Maine Network of Engaged Communities

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22

Thank you!

Public Engagement Partners
www.publicengagementpartners.com

Quixada Moore-Vissing, *Founder and Principal*
Courtney Wrigley, *Senior Associate*

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23

The Community Conversations

The Marston Property Exploratory Committee worked with New Hampshire Listens to design a community conversation on the future use of the Marston Property. The property was recently acquired by the community, and the committee was formed to explore what uses the property would best serve the residents of Nottingham. Prior to the Community Conversation, Committee members hosted a table at Nottingham Day where over 125 community members posted ideas for the property on a large white board. Ideas ranged from gardens and athletic fields to a skate park and community brewery. The conversations were open to anyone who wanted to attend them on the evening of October 24, 2014, from 6:00 to 9:00 at night. The participants in the conversations spent three hours in a facilitated discussion about their priorities and concerns for the future use of the Marston Property. Over 52 people registered in advance to participate in these conversations, and 93 people total attended the event. Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight small discussion groups. On October 15, 2014, members of the Committee met with 14 older residents at a Senior Luncheon. Input from that group is integrated into the report below and serves as the ninth small group. Children's remarks at the end of the evening are indicated as such.

Focus Questions

The Marston Property Exploratory Committee and NH Listens worked collaboratively to develop a set of focus questions to guide the discussion. The key questions asked of participants were:

- What are the most important criteria for determining the best use of the Marston Property?
- What community values should be considered (recreation, frugality, health, etc.)?
- How could the Marston Property address some of the needs of the town of Nottingham?
- What ideas for the property would allow the most people in the community to use and enjoy the land? (Consider families, older adults, scouts, school children, etc.)
- When considering mixed use options, what criteria should be used to determine the balance of the mix? What options for shared use come to mind (for example, shared school use, rental space, trails, open space, or community farm)?
- How might the past history of the Marston Property in connection with hazardous waste and materials affect future land use decisions?
- What are your thoughts on funding options and the use of volunteers, civic organizations, and other ways to offset hard cash investments? What are you willing to contribute?
- What are your thoughts about revenue generating activity to benefit the town?
- What are your priorities if changes are implemented and phased in over time?

The information section of the discussion guide (Appendix E) was used to expose participants to a variety of data, but the focus of the conversation followed the participants' interests and concerns. Facilitators asked questions like "What do you notice about this information?" They often followed up with prompting questions, such as "What stands out to you?" or "What is most important to you?" or "What seems like the most critical aspects of this opportunity?"

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The conversations converged around six primary sets of findings, including:

1. The Marston Property as a Space with Multiple Uses

There was an overwhelming sense that the Marston Property should not be used in just one way, but in several different ways. Although participants had different views about how to use the property, the most widely suggested uses include athletic fields, gardening and farming, building a community center, and trails that could be used for walking, skiing, and other uses.

2. A Financial Plan for the Short and Long Term

Participants indicated a need for more financial information about potential plans for the Marston Property including overall costs of prospective projects as well as the impact on taxes over time. There was talk about how the property could generate revenue to sustain itself and benefit the community. Participants indicated the need for both short- and long-term financial plans that address details of the property such as approximating the cost of maintenance and upkeep over time.

3. Clear Goals with Distinct, Achievable Steps

Participants talked about the need for Nottingham to create plans for the property with clear goals and distinct phases that correspond to achieving these goals. There was a desire for the town leaders to consider existing resources and deficiencies in the community and to create a plan for the property that is responsive to the overall needs of the town. Participants expressed value in plans that provide details about a funding strategy, the design of the property, including potential development of the grounds, and an approach to sustaining and maintaining the property over time.

4. The Marston Property as a Space for Everyone

Participants expressed a desire for the Marston Property to be a space where an array of populations in the community from different backgrounds and age groups can come together to celebrate community life in Nottingham. There was an interest in framing the Marston Property as a hub of the community.

5. Parking and Other Developments

Many participants talked about the need for a parking lot so that people could come to enjoy the Marston Property. Bathrooms, a community center, and a concession stand were discussed in addition to other potential development plans for the property such as athletic fields, farms, and gardens.

6. Keeping Marston Safe for Everyone

Participants commented on the need to ensure that the Marston Property is a safe place for a range of people to come together. These concerns ranged from evening security to environmental impacts from hazardous waste to traffic issues. Rules for use were discussed as a way to address safety concerns.