

# *The “Quiet Revolution”*

## And How It Affects Remediation Contractors at Superfund Sites

“Public Participation’s  
Increasingly Important Role In Our Society”

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# *Igloo remediation engineers*

**off the mark**

by Mark Parisi

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# *The genesis*



- **“Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world, indeed, it is the only thing that ever does.”**

– Dr. Margaret Meade

*“Authority doesn’t always win”*

- The public no longer trusts our representative form of government or the authority that has been bestowed to them.

## *“The bottom-line”*

- ... by spending time, energy and money on the front-end of their strategic planning processes, they can materially affect --- for the better --- their profit and their community good will and rapport.

## *Savvy business units*

- Lockheed Martin
- TRC Environmental Engineering
- Arcadis Geraghty & Miller are
  - Staying on schedules
  - Meeting cost estimates
  - Making decisions that are in concert with the shared values of the communities they are working within

# *Decision-making options ...*

Decide - Announce - Defend “DAD”

Traditional autocratic approach

Consultative Approach

Input from individuals then decide - feedback

Participatory Approach

Input from groups decide - feedback

.....*decision-making options*

## Negotiating to Agreement

- Consensus - Compromise
- Fair hearings, Express what think - feel
- Agree to disagree
- Willingness to commit to outcome
- Majority opinion rules

..... *decision-making options*

## Delegation of Consensus

With constraints, criteria, boundaries

Consensus must be clearly defined

*“People have to live with decision and support it. They don’t have to necessarily agree with all aspects of it.”*

# *Social change*

- **No longer a political responsibility**
- **Non-profits and ‘grass roots’**
- **The “Quiet Revolution” begins**



## *The “Quiet Revolution”*

- **Result of skeptical citizens**
- **An overly zealous and often self-righteous media**
- **Outright distrust of the political system**
- **Cynicism about the corporation’s willingness to “do what is right” as opposed to “doing what costs the client the least.”**

# *The case for collaboration*

- **Clark County,  
Nevada**
- **Burlington, Mass.**
- **Wilmington, Mass.**
- **A facilitated session**
- **Collaboration  
instead of  
cooperation**



## *The difference it made ...*

- **Organizations that embrace public participation now meet and invite public involvement, they inform and educate the taxpayers as to what is planned and what is happening and how their tax dollars are being spent, and they now have an on-going and well established process in place to secure planned growth that involves the public.**

## *The “foot soldiers”*

- While some of the QR foot soldiers are “mad as hell” and act that way, many are reasonable, well-educated, dedicated intelligent citizens that are intent on ensuring they have a role in making decisions that impact their communities and their families.

# *Outdated social and political models*

- **Part of the problem we have today in getting people meaningfully involved in the public participation process – as opposed to coming to public meetings and ranting and raving --- is the fact we are using outdated political and social models of communications.**

# *Inefficient and outmoded processes*

- **Public hearings and meetings**
- **Least efficient yet most often used**
- **Too frequent use of “DAD”**
  - Leads to litigation
  - Bad community relations
  - Political and media scrutiny



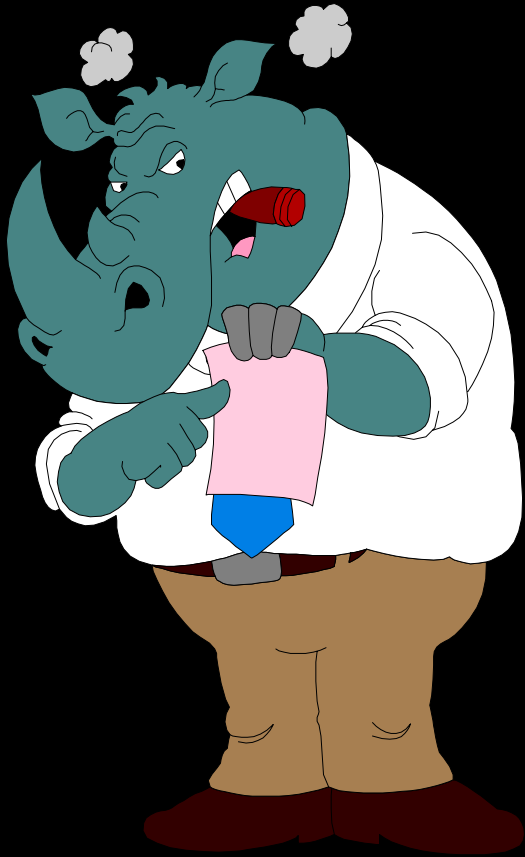
# *The “Revolutionaries...”*

- “CAVE” people

“Citizens Against  
Virtually Everything”



..... *“NOPEs”*



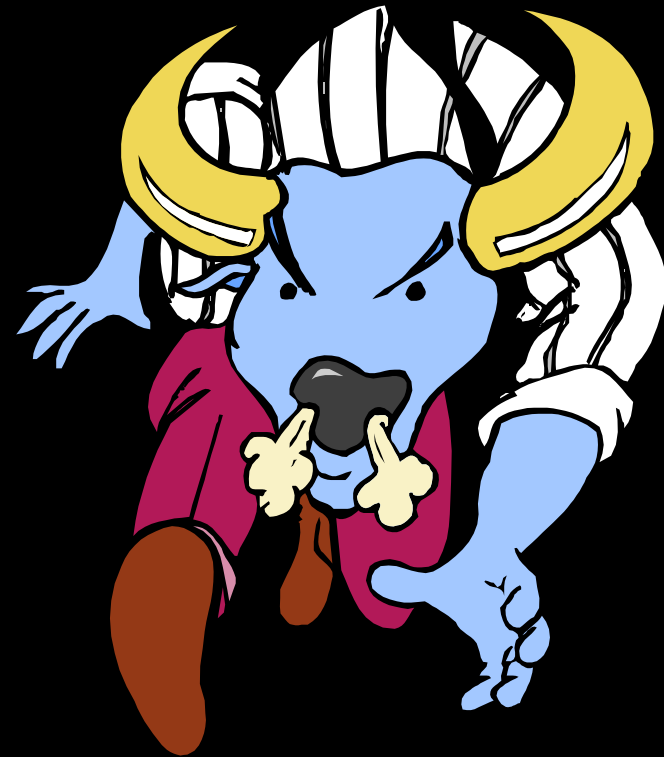
- **“NOPEs”**

**“Not On Planet Earth”**

..... *“NIMBYs”*

- *“NIMBYs”*

*“Not In My Back  
Yard”*

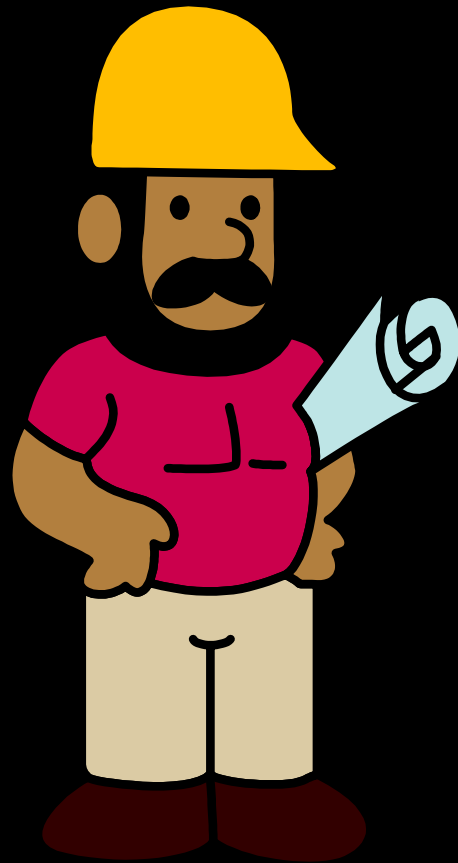


# *The Dilemma*

- **CAVEs and NOPEs and NIMBYs**
- **Have legitimate concerns**
- **Some have shared values**
- **Want to be heard and respected**
- **Want to be involved**
- **Can STOP your project**



*A successful communications  
model: ALR<sup>2</sup>*



- Ask
- Listen
- Respond
- Respect

# *Communicating with integrity*



- **The public will establish and continue a dialogue assuming you communicate with them efficiently, effectively, timely, in language they can understand, give them respect**

# *How do we succeed in the “Quiet Revolution”*

- **Use neutral facilitators**
- **Discover shared values**
- **Explore legitimate disagreements**
- **Process issues in a thoughtful and thorough manner using a well designed strategy**
- **Results = better decisions, less conflict, more “buy-in”**

## *2000 - PRSA Silver Anvil*



- **Gail Rymer**
- **Lockheed Martin**
- **Burlington, Mass.**
- **“A Civil Action”  
Specter**
- **Public collaboration**
- **Highest National  
Award**

# *Seven principles that ensured success in the Burlington model*

- **Public has a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives**
- **The process used includes the promise that the public's contributions will influence the decisions**
- **The process communicates the interests and meets needs of all participants**
- **The process actively seeks and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected**
- **Process involves the participants in defining how they will participate**
- **Provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way**
- **Process communicates how their input affected the decisions**
  - **Source: International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)**

## *Why Burlington was successful*

- **Respected the need for the public to be involved in decisions that affected their health, safety and welfare**
- **Applied the seven basic tenets**
- **Thoughtfully used a strategic planning process, a crisis and issues management matrix, and a well planned, implemented, and evaluated P2 plan**
- **Agreed to “Negotiate to Agreement”**

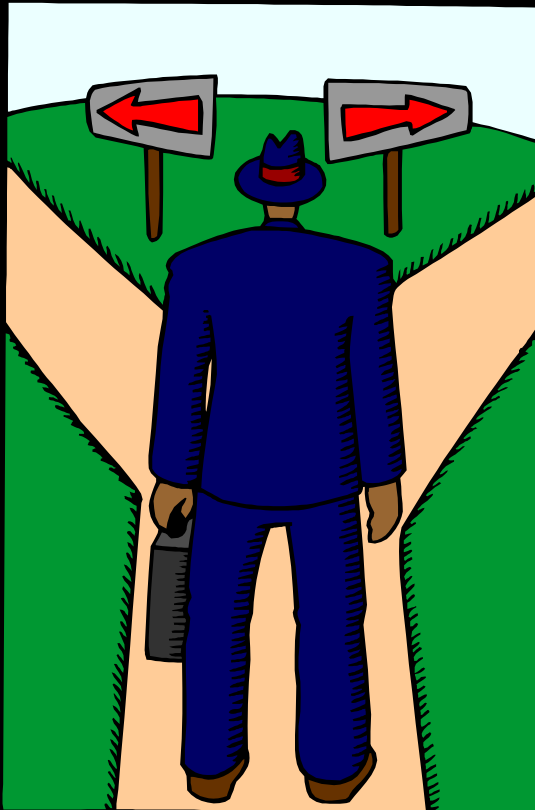
## *Benefits to conducting public involvement*

- **Saves time and money over life of project**
- **Contributes to the “bottom line”**
- **Often prevents or mitigates costly legal actions**
- **Creates community good will**
- **Often eliminates political grandstanding**
- **Allows you to meet your schedules and get your work accomplished efficiently and effectively**

# *Benefits to embracing this social revolution*

- **We will keep ourselves out of the expensive court of law and we will begin to more effectively work within the court of public opinion.**
- **Our bottom lines will show the results of not having starts, stops and detours in our projects. We will not have to litigate our way out of a situation.**
- **The public's perceptions of us will be greatly enhanced.**

# *What the public expects*



*“Tell me and I forget,  
show me and I remember,  
but involve me, and I will  
understand.”*

- The mantra of the growing legions of the public who are insisting on being a part of a truly grass roots democratic planning process.

# *Copies of presentation and text*

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*For additional information*



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