Adamant Accord

Meeting Facilitation and Mediation Services

Adamant Accord Qualifications and Approach: Community Dialogue Framework at the West Lake Land Superfund Site

Introduction

I'm Cindy the Cook principal of Adamant Accord. I'm nationally known facilitator and mediator have worked diaster and me facilitator on complex environmental cleanup projects for the past years[1].

I excel at intercomplex in environmental cleanup where tensions are exceedingly high and parties have been entrenched for years-often decades.

I'm an expert helping groups resolve technical procedural and relational issues and am my ability to help transformed involving dysfunctional relationships into respectful and productive dialogues.

I enjoy "parachuting in" to situations and designing dialogue processes. I begin by listening.

I have an open, straightforward and respectful personable. People tend to and like me immediately trust me that's important when dealing with cases that involve emotional complex issues.

Once I know and understand the stakeholders and they know and me, work collaboratively with all parties to design dialogue that are based on mutual re shared interests.

Proposed Approach

I understand that EPA faces sign community for involvement issues West Lake Site and very skilled intervening in cases like this.

One of the most powerful to facilitator has is the ability to start work ection by this meeting with and listening inten project managers and stakeholders.

Once I have a solid underst the parties' interests and concer

[1] Please see my resume at http://www.adamantaccord.com/docs/Resume.pdf

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Case Summaries

Perhaps the best way to give you a sense of who I am and how I can help transform the community dynamics at West Lake is to describe a few of the many cases that I have worked on that have characteristics similar to th West Lake. So I'm limited with u remaining space to describe three projects:

- The Elizabeth Mine Community Advisory Group Facilitation
- The West Valley Citizens Task Force Process and Design
- The Mill River Sediment Remediation Facilitation

Elizabeth Mine Superfund Site Community Advisory Group Facilitation

The Elizabeth Mine Community Advisory Group was a dysfunctional group when hired by the community and EPA. Members of the CAG did not get along, and they understand the Superfund process. Members were very frustrated. Distrust of EPA was high.

I started by conducting in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. Once I understood the stakeholders' interes and concerns, I worked with the RPM to create a draft Community Involvement Plan.

I then sought the community's input on the plan. The plan was very w received, and became the basis very successful dialogue.

Because the Superfund process is nothing if not daunting, I pr "roadmap"[2] of the Elizabeth Min

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[2] For examples of the project roadma developed, please go to of the http://www.adamantaccord.com/facts.html

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Cleanup Process. The roadmap graphically depicted the process leading up to the selection of a preferred alternative and clearly indicated opportunities for public input and how and when key decisions would be made.

I also prepared a glossary of acronyms. And because a confusing number of federal and state agency officials were involved, I developed a project "Who's Who" to help community members understand each person's role.[3]

I helped the group expand its membership to include a representative of a previously unrepresented community group. I then coached the new representative and others regarding how to participate effectively in discussions with EPA.

I helped the CAG articulate their technical assistance needs, and guided community members through the process of applying for a Technical Assistance Grant. Once the community received a TAG, I worked intensively with the TAG advisors over the course of many years to ensure that their work met the community's needs.

I facilitated the meeting of the Elizabeth Mine Community Advisory Group for close to a decade. These intensive discussions led to the selection of a preferred alternative that had broad community support. The preferred alternative involved capping the [illegible] using landfill remediation technology. The broad support for the [illegible] quite a turnaround from a [illegible] where community members had [illegible] shouting down EPA officials at [illegible] meetings and were threatening [illegible] seeking support from the governor's office to get the site removed from the NPL.

EPA has touted this project as [illegible] the longest and most successful CAG facilitations in its history.

West Valley Demonstration Project Citizens Task Force

The West Valley Demonstration Project is a high-level nuclear waste storage facility in New York. The Department of Energy and the State of New York are working on cleanup and containment of the radioactive waste left behind after abandonment of a commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in 1980.

After many years of involvement in the project, the West Valley Citizens Task Force (WVCTF) had become extremely frustrated and ineffectual. I was asked by [illegible] to intervene and help the [illegible] work with DOE and NYSERDA more effectively.

With a colleague, I interviewed stakeholders, helped plan and facilitate meetings that helped WVCTF become a

[3] Community members often think of EPA as monolithic; I've found it helpful to articulate each agency representative's role.

much more efficient and productive organization that works more smoothly than the DOE and the State had it in the past.

Mill River Cleanup

The remediation of lead contaminated sediment in the Mill River in Connecticut had been a high priority of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for a very long time.

The cleanup was stalled for decades due to extreme distrust of DEEP on the part of the town officials and a very vocal community activist group.

In addition to high levels of distrust, the Mill River Sediment Remediation involved significant and complex technical issues. The parties actively disagreed regarding the best approach for sediment removal and cleanup. In order to move forward, a number of people needed to understand the technical issues and the cleanup options and come to agreement.

And as if the project didn't already face sufficient challenges, there were a number of parties with very, very challenging personalities who actively disliked one another and who seemed intent on obstructing any progress the group might make.

I facilitated an intensive set of meetings with DEEP, town officials and community members that built respect and trust. Because of the large number of technical issues involved, I worked very closely with technical experts to make sure their presentations were clear, understandable to their lay audience, and that they addressed the community's concerns.

The Mill River facilitated meetings resulted in comprehensive agreement regarding the technical approach to the cleanup. All parties were surprised at how quickly they were able to reach agreement on the cleanup design and agreed that use of performance standards was an essential part of their agreement.

The sediment remediation and verification sampling was completed a few months ago. All parties including the very strident community group are hailing the project as a success.

For More Information

For a more detailed list of projects, and examples of fact sheets and project road maps that I've produced as well as my resume, please visit www.adamantaccord.com.

[4] The facilitated discussions that resulted in agreement on the cleanup design took less than 6 months. I have continued to facilitate community dialogue over the past four years as the cleanup was conducted. The project team hopes to hold a project wrap up meeting for all involved, in 2016.

[5] Parties liked this "trust but verify" approach.

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