

# COMING TOGETHER FOR RACIAL UNDERSTANDING

## HANDOUTS

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DAY #3

# The Spectrum of Civic Engagement

← Sliding scale based on time, power, and complexity →

## IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum



→ Increasing Level of Public Impact

	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Involve</b>	<b>Collaborate</b>	<b>Empower</b>
<b>Public participation goal</b>	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.
<b>Promise to the public</b>	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
<b>Example techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Fact sheets</li> <li>■ Web sites</li> <li>■ Open houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Public comment</li> <li>■ Focus groups</li> <li>■ Surveys</li> <li>■ Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Workshops</li> <li>■ Deliberative polling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Citizen advisory Committees</li> <li>■ Consensus-building</li> <li>■ Participatory decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Citizen juries</li> <li>■ Ballots</li> <li>■ Delegated decision</li> </ul>

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## **POTENTIAL ROLES IN A DIALOGUE**

**COMMUNITY COACH** – an external guide that supports communities in achieving their goals

**COORDINATOR** – person that keeps track of, supports, and manages the overall process

**SMALL GROUP FACILITATOR** – person that guides the conversation in a small group. This person's role is to keep the conversation on track but must not interject his/her own thoughts feelings.

**RECRUITER** – person that helps get relevant stakeholder participation; needs to be well-connected to a range of people connected to the topic

**COMMUNICATOR/MARKETER** – person responsible for coordinating appropriate communication with marketing outlets such as the media, social media, as relevant to the topic and stakeholders

**NOTE-TAKER** – person who helps the group record important points from the discussion. This person must make a commitment to record in an unbiased manner, not using their own personal filters in choosing what to record.

**PARTICIPANT** – person who joins the conversations and brings their own thoughts and perspectives into the discussion

## **FACILITATOR SKILLS: BASICS OF PROCESSES AND SKILL-BUILDING**

- 1. Manages facilitation role appropriately** – includes skills such as remaining neutral, interjecting questions or summarizing as appropriate)
- 2. Frames dialogues effectively** – assesses the current situation and guides the participants into framing the topic to be discussed in a way that provides clarity to the scope of the conversation.
- 3. Fosters a conducive growth space for dialogue** - includes geographic location, timing, selecting of moderators/facilitators, ground rules, and group norms/expectations
- 4. Assists in group shared vision** – Aids group in seeing common ground for the future through guided questions and/or activities.
- 5. Supports group in setting norms and agreements** – Assists group in identifying and reinforcing agreed upon standards for how the dialogue will progress. This may include ground rules regarding how decisions will be made, how conflict will be managed, and general expectations on how the interactions will be managed.
- 6. Maintains conversation flow** - uses questions, silence, and appropriate challenges to keep the conversation moving forward in a productive manner
- 7. Fosters respectful, authentic, balance among all participants** – watches to ensure all participants are given space to join the conversation and that comments are respectful and authentic.
- 8. Uses Appreciative Inquiry** – frames questions within the context of Appreciative Inquiry to help foster open dialogue through an asset based lens.
- 9. Understands group dynamics** – recognizes the various dynamics that may be present in a group and can leverage healthy dynamics (such as social trust) while challenging unhealthy ones (such as group think)
- 10. Employs conflict resolution/management/mediation skills appropriately** – facilitates conversations when tensions rise that help keep participants engaged and assists them in finding reasonable resolutions to the conflict(s).
- 11. Listens across differences for understanding** – helps participants identify areas of common ground from which to build understanding of each other's' point of view.
- 12. Summarizes and synthesizes to promote group and individual understanding** – Regularly checks in to the group/individual understanding by synthesizing and asking for feedback.

- I3. Recognizes when and how to transition the group from dialogue to action** (if/when appropriate) – understands that not all dialogue will lead to action, but can recognize when a group has discussed a topic thoroughly and is ready to consider action steps.
- I4. Guides group toward brainstorming** – assists participants in generating multiple options to given situations/problems in order to foster creativity and promote broad-based decision-making
- I5. Facilitates group discussions to consider tensions, trade-offs and priorities among potential solutions** – helps the participants explore the pros and cons among a list of potential avenues/directions.
- I6. Recognizes and plans for on-going dialogue in face of change** – understands that dialogue does not happen in a vacuum and thus may need to be adjusted, especially if taking place over a period of weeks/months.
- I7. Ensures a focus on equity** – reinforces the value that all voices matter equally, and all stakeholders' perspectives should be heard and honored in a dialogue.



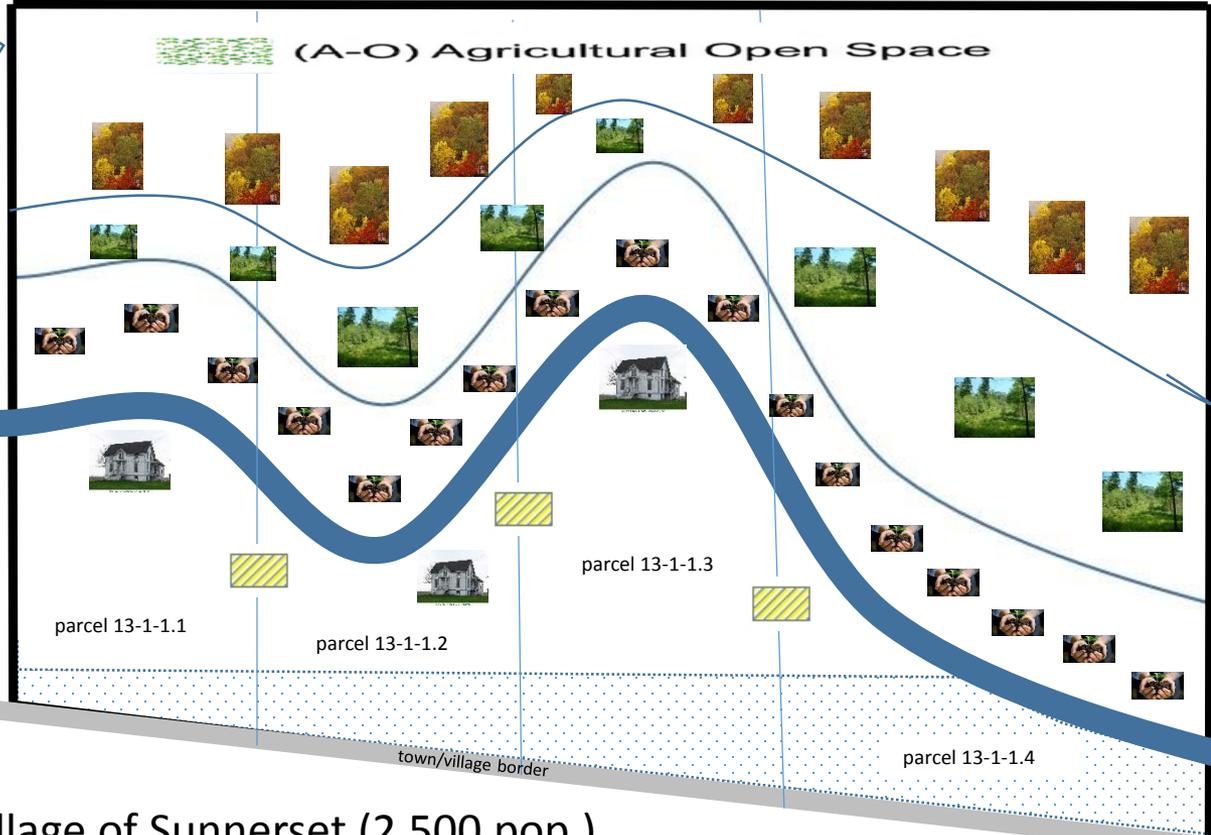
# Town of Pastoralica (3,700 pop)



THE CITY (25 mi)

200 acres: developer's land

Milky Brook



- Existing home
- Mature forest
- Reverting to forest
- Prime ag soil
- (A-O) Agricultural Open Space (town zoning north of brook)
- (RR) Rural Residential (town zoning south of brook)
- (C) Town Commercial zone

Village of Sunnerset (2,500 pop.)



ACTUAL SIZE

ACTUAL SIZE

## ROLE PLAY ROLES

1. **Leslie, a self employed electrician:** You grew up in the village. After attending community college and marrying your high school sweetheart, also white, you moved to the city for greater job opportunities and more social and cultural diversity. Your elderly parents still live in town, and you try to visit as often as possible to care for them. Your gut reaction is that county housing prices are too high in general, that this development is a step in the right direction, and that it will even offer the town and village a long needed economic boost. However, you are wary about developers who promise well-paying jobs that never materialize or that go primarily to non-local people. You also don't feel up to speed on this proposal or whether it is likely to be viable or successful. You aren't sure what to think. You are concerned that a low income housing proposal of this scale will elicit racist and classist reactions on the part of more than a few of the people you grew up with. You are nevertheless anxious that the type of change the development might bring could stress your parents and polarize the community.
2. **Chris, a retired schoolteacher:** You grew up as an only child in one of the few African American families in the area, and moved away when you were young. Five years ago you retired and, after your parents passed away, you moved back "home". You live happily alone, comfortable with your pension, and enjoy the low key, rural lifestyle in an old farmhouse that is within a mile of the proposed site. Since you are on a fixed income, the combination of a low cost of living and a high quality of life is important to you. You consider yourself generally sympathetic to the need for more jobs and affordable housing. That said, you have many concerns about new development. You are concerned about a whole variety of possible issues – construction or other truck traffic passing your house, more traffic in general, new people moving in, etc. You are concerned that new housing development will cause headaches for the farmers who maintain the peaceful fields around you. You wouldn't want to feed local prejudices you know exist by saying so publicly, but you are nonetheless concerned low income housing might bring drugs and crime. In fact, you are concerned that there could be a number of disruptive effects that you can hardly yet imagine. Fundamentally, you think the proposal is out of scale and out of touch with the community to which you returned.
3. **Jay, a village trustee:** You are a forward-thinking leader of the village retail community. You are a systems thinker and like to think of yourself as an enlightened Caucasian conservative – socially liberal, fiscally conservative. You want to understand the connections among the key social, economic, and environmental issues involved. You are concerned especially about the long term. You believe the business model of the developer is based on unrealistically optimistic expectations, and that this location is too far from the city for a development of this type and scale to succeed. Moreover, though you like the idea of residential housing, you've been hoping for a different kind of development on this property. You think that there is potential to attract a retirement community. You have nothing against city or poor people overall, but a nice retirement community would draw the kind of people much more likely to spend money in existing village stores. They would boost sales tax revenues and be less likely to require property taxes hikes (school taxes!) or demand costly village services, including policing. You are concerned about moving too fast - haste makes waste.

4. **Montana, a bookkeeper:** You are especially concerned about the cost of housing for your community's low income and elderly residents. Everyone points to the high cost of living in the city, but you know of people right here in town who struggle to be able afford their homes or apartments – and not just your two Hispanic cousins. Thus, if there is going to be new housing, they should be given priority over outsiders who probably don't even work for a living! But you can't believe that a few "usual suspects" are starting to bring their anti-development passions to bear on this first significant development proposed in years! You can't see how any development that would lower housing costs and boost the local economy could be outright opposed! Your main substantive concern is about the potential impacts of this development on the town infrastructure – water, sewer, roads, etc. While confident the development will be good for the town, you do want to make sure that the town gets the best economic deal possible. Nonetheless, you know the game that is likely to be played – the biggest threat will come from those who piously say they are in favor of housing but will kill the project through one bureaucratic delay after another.
  
5. **Pat, a professional landscaper:** You have lived in the town for decades. Most of your business was and continues to be in the suburbs closer to the city. You are a committed environmentalist. You are not thrilled about the proposal for many reasons. But most importantly, you are suspicious that the developer's proposal is just a trial balloon. The real goal is probably just to get the town to rezone the property, and you suspect the developer isn't being honest about the nature or full scale of the long-term plans for development: probably an even larger low income housing development on cheap land. Everyone knows that low income housing only works when the costs can be spread over a really large number of units. And you are also concerned about the acreage that the development itself will disturb. What if a large facility ends up being built on prime farmland soils! Or what if new development leads to disturbance of the woodlands that are finally recovering to their natural state? What about the potential for pollution of Milky Brook?
  
6. **Sandy, a farmer:** You grew up in the town and have always worked on the family farm. You are now well into middle age, but have been struggling economically for a number of years. You are not alone – you've watched one farmer after another go out of business or retire without anyone taking over the operation. Your kids actually seem to like the hard, honest work on the farm, but you know the farm can't offer them an economically secure future, and even off farm jobs in the region are scarce. You've keenly felt the area's economic decline in other ways as well – pressure to consolidate the local school you attended, ever more neglected and unsightly houses, loss of vibrancy in the village stores, cutbacks in municipal services while property taxes seem to go up anyway, etc. But as far as you are concerned, the only good thing about the proposed development is some short term construction jobs. You see no reason to abandon your general rule of thumb about non-farm area residents, whether low or high income – it's good they buy food, but the more of them there are in the area, the more complaints and hassles there will be for the farm community.

## CASE STUDY SCENARIO

### THE PROPERTY

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A developer has acquired 200 acres of mostly rural land in several adjacent parcels near the edge of the Village of Sunnerset (pop. 2,500) in the Town of Pastoralica (pop. 3,700). The property is within a 30 minute commute of a rapidly growing city of 100,000+. It is located in an agricultural region with a long history. However, regional farmers have been under economic stress for years.

Currently, 125 acres of the property to the north of Milky Brook are zoned for “agriculture”. Of this acreage,

- The 50 acres closest to the brook are on good agricultural soils and have been routinely rented to a local farmer as cropland.
- The 25 acres to the north have not been cultivated for some years and are reverting to forest.
- The remaining 50 acres are mature mixed hardwood forest sloping up into the hills.

To the south of Milky Brook, 50 acres are zoned for rural residential use; three rural residences exist on this property, but all are in poor condition and were inexpensive for the developer to acquire from the former owners.

Finally, the 25 acres immediately adjacent to the village are included in the Town’s existing “commercial” zone.

Development of the site would require significant extension of infrastructure (roads, potentially water and sewer, electric, etc.). The Town and Village governments, each moderately conservative as is typical of rural places in this state, have had a historically cooperative relationship. They tend to pay only minimal attention to the more liberal County, and even less to the City.

### SCENARIO – AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSED

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The City and County have put a high priority on expanding affordable housing. However, this is the first time in the County an affordable housing community has been proposed this far from the City. A regional development firm has purchased the property and has proposed a mix of market rate and affordable units using federal tax credit financing. The developers believe this location is close enough to the city to serve the needs of the working poor who can’t afford to live closer to their urban workplaces. In the first development phase, 37 apartment units (1 to 4 bedroom) and a common area for laundry, etc. are proposed. If successful, the developer might want to return for permission build additional units. The development is proposed for a portion of the 50 acres that are currently zoned “rural residential”. Plans for other acreage on the property are unclear.

Development of this scale was unforeseen by the town or the village. Some have struck a cautionary note about the effects such a large change might have on community character. With a few notable exceptions, town and village residents are similar demographically: older, white, long-time residents of modest income. A few are vocally concerned that new low-income residents will bring “city problems” with them. Others are concerned that this development will compete with agriculture, encroaching on farmland and causing farm/neighbor conflict. Many favor development in general, and some support the County’s pro-housing policies on principle. Still others hope for economic development benefits including construction jobs and an increased population base to support some village businesses.



## Daily Reflections

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few moments to reflect on and answer at least two of them about today's experiences.

- Share an appreciation you have for a particular person, to the group and/or about a particular experience
- Share any insights related to the process and/or content of the workshop
- Share a particular learning you have had related to the workshop
- Share any re-learning you have had related to the workshop
- Share anything else that you need to express in order to take care of any unfinished business for today so that you can start fresh in the morning
- What would have made today's experience even better?



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