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RESOURCE USE ISSUES
AND
THE PLANNING PROCESS

U.S.D.A., NAL

Cataloging Prep

Proceedings of
The Joint Meeting of Northeast Regional Committees
and
The Extension Public Policy Committee

Second Northeast Extension Seminar
on

Public Issues Involving Land Use
Boston, Massachusetts
October 11 - 13, 1966

Northeast Regional Committees
on

Farm Management Extension
Farm Management Research
Extension Public Policy
Resource Economics

Published by

Institute for Research on Land and Water Resources
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania

and

The Farm Foundation
Chicago, Illinois
1967

FOREWORD

This publication represents a collection of papers which were presented before the Second Northeast Extension Seminar of The Northeast Regional Committees. The conference, which was held in Boston, October 11-13, 1966, explored the topic of "Resource Use Issues and the Planning Process."

The seminar was attended by professionals in rural and urban planning, economics, and sociology; landscape architects; educators, agricultural agents; and extension specialists in forestry and wildlife, area development, and public affairs.

Included in this publication are all papers which were presented before the four committees and those presented before the Northeast Regional Extension Public Policy Committee. They represent current thinking in the field of resource use and planning.

Much guidance and support was given by Henry M. Hansen of the University of Connecticut, and Joseph Ackerman and R. J. Hildreth of the Farm Foundation to the Boston Conference and the publication of the papers presented there. Financial costs were underwritten by the Farm Foundation and the Institute for Research on Land and Water Resources of The Pennsylvania State University.

Finally, we salute Jack Brown and Carroll D. Price, II who devoted many hours to the editing of this compilation of papers.

John C. Frey, Chairman
Northeast Regional
Extension Public
Policy Committee

DISCUSSION OF THE MARYLAND PRESENTATION by Charles Gratto*

The Maryland presentation contains examples of four Extension roles which, although loosely classified as "public affairs," seem sufficiently distinct to merit separate consideration; these are (1) education, (2) support, (3) intervention, and (4) goal setting.

EDUCATION

Extension usually characterizes itself as an organization for informal, off campus, youth and adult education, directed toward problem solving. Within this context, public affairs education is a logical and integral part of Extension's mission.

The Maryland seminar, "Land Development in Suburban Growth" as described by Dean Tuthill, and the materials in A Watershed Plan -- The Potomac in Focus, prepared by George Allen, seem to be quite typical of the public affairs aspect of Extension education.

Through the years, Extension has developed an extremely effective method of providing an educational setting in which people learn to identify problems explore alternative solutions, and contemplate courses of action. In this respect, the Maryland presentation has added to the store of methods and ideas that are central to public affairs education.

SUPPORT

Extension plays a second role -- related to, but distinct from -- in public affairs education. Quite often, Extension becomes involved with individuals, groups, or agencies that are engaged in action programs directed toward the solution of specific problems. As a matter of fact, Extension may participate in the formation of action groups when existing institutions can not or will not provide the leadership for problem solving.

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In this role, Extension provides the client with technical knowledge that bears on his problem. Maryland examples range from the assistance provided by Mr. Allen to numerous groups and agencies in preparing applications for federal grants, to the "Urban Sediment" seminar described by Mr. Tuthill, to the background materials prepared for Southern and Western Maryland citizens. The support role is a familiar one. The Maryland presentation indicates that Extension in that state is working to meet the needs of a wide range of action-oriented clients.

INTERVENTION

Since Extension has, for a long time, served as a change agent, the intervention role is not really a new one. However, intervention in the problem-solving process, when it implies Extension's taking public positions on issues -- operating as an integral and active part of the political structure, and acting as a leader or an advocate for a particular body of clients, within the context of public affairs and resource development -- is quite different from intervention in production and consumption processes of rural families.

Intervention activities in community, regional, state, and national affairs are bound to change the image, function, and organization of Extension. Intervention at the community level and above relies more on trial and error than have earlier intervention efforts. While a body of social science methodology relating to the intervention role exists, it is by no means equal to the demands placed on it by current intervention activities.

Examples of intervention gleaned from the Maryland experience include (1) support of legislation for sediment control, (2) the "urban sediment" seminar, and (3) George Allen's activities in Western Maryland where he has provided very real leadership for resource development and initiated action toward that goal.

Extension people share common views with respect to the education and support roles. Presentations of the type given by Tuthill and Allen provide an opportunity to discuss the intervention role -- one about which substantial differences of opinion exist, and where methodology has not

kept pace with aspirations.

GOAL SETTING

As the educational establishment continues to grow, it will some day take its place as big education, competing in a very concrete way with big business, big labor, and big government for a voice in shaping American society. As a part of the educational establishment, Extension will be, sooner or later, involved in the goal-setting role.

As a matter of fact, there are indications that Extension is already somewhat involved. Note the specific recommendations regarding the future development of Southern Maryland and Mr. Allen's deep involvement in the affairs of this Western Maryland area.

The goal-making role is even less well defined than the intervention role. The Maryland presentation provides an opportunity for sharing of ideas and opinions regarding Extension's goal-making role.

In summary, the Maryland experience illustrates Extension activity in its education and support aspects. In addition, it provides a point of departure for a preliminary discussion of two less well understood roles -- intervention and goal setting.