Public participation in a government land decision in Prince Edward Island: The case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility

Billie-Jean Flynn
Wilfrid Laurier University

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN A GOVERNMENT LAND DECISION IN

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND: THE CASE OF TRACADIE CROSS

WASTE WATCH FACILITY

by

Billie-Jean Flynn

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THESIS

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Abstract

Public participation is a cornerstone of democracy and a central value of Community Psychology. The purpose of this participatory action research was to develop an understanding of public participation as through the experiences of Islanders engaged in land decision making in Prince Edward Island. In particular a case study of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility was developed through document analysis and in-depth interviews. A sketch of public participation in Prince Edward Island was grounded in in-depth interviews from case study participants, as well as additional in-depth interviews with Islanders who have been engaged in land decision making independent of the case study.

The results showed that land decisions are improving in terms of more participatory decision making, however participants still indicated the exclusive nature of Government land decision making. Participants described a desire to contribute to the decision making process and the loss of valuable local knowledge when citizens are excluded from sharing in the decision making. A multi-stakeholder perspective of effective public participation was developed, revealing effective public participation comprised of collaborative decision making, community mobilization and, a long term commitment to educating the public on active community and government involvement. The outcome recommendations were developed to contribute to creating more effective public participation in Provincial Government land decisions. Six outcome recommendations were developed: seeking public involvement; creating equality in access to information; promoting public initiated participation; connecting multiple levels

of organization; creating transparency in decision making; and mandating power to the public.

Participants described a hope for the future of public participation in Government land in Prince Edward Island and the power to achieve more participatory decision making through the power of communities.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1 Introduction

Whether it is conceptualized in theory, manifested in action or held as a value,

public participation is central to Canadian society. It is a value central to Community

Psychology and a value deemed to be of increasing importance to healthy communities.

In this research, I explore the experiences of people involved in Provincial Government

land decision on Prince Edward Island with the goal of informing the theory and practice

of public participation.

To engage the interest of the public, an issue must be so connected to the life of

the people that they will sacrifice time, energy and resources to participate in the decision

making. For the people of Prince Edward Island, or "Islanders", there are few issues that

will engage public discussion, debate, and action more compellingly than the land. In my

research I seek to explore public participation as experienced by Islanders through a case

study pertaining to a land-related issue and key informant interviews with Islanders who

have participated in land decision making.

Given the attention given to public participation by academia, I would suggest that

public participation is to academics what land issues are to Islanders. In fact, it seems

there are few issues that engage such widespread academic inquiry as public participation.

Students of Political Science, Geography, Environmental Studies, Planning, and

Psychology have examined public participation. Each of these disciplines adds its

perspective to our evolving understanding of public participation, its application, its

value, its role, and the way it is experienced.

Exploring public participation from a Community Psychology perspective can

broaden our understanding in many ways. While I draw upon literature from various disciplines in this thesis, the influence of Community Psychology is distinctive. The values central to the field of Community Psychology, empowerment, equality and citizen participation, are interwoven throughout this thesis. This research is grounded in the experience of Islanders actively engaged in land decisions with the express clear goal of creating change.

<div align="center">Guiding Theory</div>

As a researcher, I situate myself in a constructivist paradigm. Therefore this research is based in the constructivist paradigm from a phenomenological perspective. This is evident in the inductive research approach and the use of qualitative methods. It is also reflected in the participatory approach to this research; there has been an emphasis on participants taking ownership of the path their information has taken in the final outcome of this research. The research methodology itself is grounded in Participatory Action Research. Stakeholders have been included throughout this research, participating in in-depth interviews and in providing feedback on the results and outcome of this research.

The data were analysed inductively, with the intent of using key concepts and questions reflective of a broad view of public participation to guide the analysis. In particular Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation (1969) and Rich, Edelstein, Hallman and Wandersman's (1995) model of empowerment and citizen participation were used to consider the role of power and empowerment of public in decision making. The Resource Mobilization Theory (Jenkins 1983; Nelson, 1994) was important in the

analysis of community initiated participation. Specifically, the concepts of community, resources and the context of social change were useful. A theoretical model of effective public participation was developed to identify elements central to effective public participation, as discussed in the current literature. This model was used as the theoretical ideal from which the results (the experiences, ideas and opinions of participants) were considered and discussed.

Public Participation

The idea of public participation proposes that those most affected by a decision should have influence in the decision making process (Heller, Price, Reinharz, Riger, & Wandersman, 1984). It is conceptualized in two forms: government and community initiated (Rich et al., 1995). Various kinds of public participation are rooted in democracy, representative democracy and participatory democracy (Parenteau, 1988). It is found that in participatory democracy those most affected should have the influence in the decision (government initiated) and in representative democracy through the participation of elected officials in the decision making as well as the influence the public has on these elected officials (public initiated).

Public participation is central to Community Psychology. As much as the goal of Community Psychology is to improve quality of life for all citizens in a community, public participation is a means to achieve this goal (Hooyman, 1981). Meaningful public participation demands empowered communities (Florin & Wandersman, 1990; Perkins, 1995; Rich et al., 1995). However, empowerment can also be an outcome of public participation (Rich et al., 1995). Therefore, effective public participation can involve a

3

number of components, but clearly, for public participation to be effective it must include the empowerment.

The study of public participation in real life experiences demands an issue that engages the public. Questions of land have intrigued, inspired, engaged, and infuriated Islanders for generations. In this research, I explore public participation in the context of government land decisions in PEI. Through this action research project, I explore how the public informs and influences land decisions in PEI. While the issue of the land engages Islanders, rarely do we step back and explore how Islanders are engaged in these decisions and the implications of that involvement. To appreciate why the issue of land decisions was chosen, I think it is important to describe just how central land is to the life of individuals, communities and PEI as a whole.

<center>The Research Setting</center>

Prince Edward Island - Some Context

Issues related to the land are central to Islanders because the land is vital to individual, community and provincial livelihood. These issues unite people with a common interest, but they are also the source of many conflicts. The land of Prince Edward Island is the centre of many of the socio-political elements of the province, whether they are cultural, economic, political, or social.

Economically, PEI is resource dependent. Agriculture, tourism, fisheries and forestry are the four main industries of PEI (Government of Prince Edward Island, 1999). The success and sustainability of these industries are influenced by government land decisions. The health of these industries is particularly relevant to Islanders since

<center>4</center>

unemployment and seasonal employment are high in the province. Because we draw upon the land for our livelihood, many Islanders are direct stakeholders in land use decisions.

Prince Edward Island is Canada's smallest and most densely populated province with a population density of 24.3 (people/km^2). It is a rural province, approximately 55% of the population resides in rural areas. While 47% of the land mass is in farmland, only 10% of the rural population reside on farms (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2000). This combination creates tensions because of conflicting interests and because land use decisions and practices readily impact many residents. The density and diversity of rural areas add to the complexity of land decisions in PEI.

Related to the density and diversity of rural areas is the scarcity of land in Prince Edward Island. Collectively Islanders own approximately 9% of the land mass through provincially owned Crown land. This percentage is the smallest of any provincial government in Canada. Clearly, government land decisions impact individual Islanders as well Islanders as a collective in the Provincial Government (Round Table on Resource Land Use and Stewardship, 1997).

Clearly, the centrality of land to the economy, as well as the nature of the population distribution in Prince Edward Island contributes to the volatility of land decision making in PEI. Indeed, the political life and land use issues are so intertwined that "the politics of the land is the politics of PEI" (Lapping, 1992).

Presently, the political climate in Prince Edward Island is one that suggests the public take an active role in monitoring and participating in the actions of Government.

5

The most recent provincial election resulted in a clear majority government, with only one opposition member. Now, more than ever, the public must be vigilant concerning the actions of government to ensure that their interests are accurately addressed by their elected representatives.

Land issues are contentious issues, not only because they are central to the economic and political life of PEI, but because of the deep connection Islanders have to the land. As an Islander myself, this sense goes beyond nostalgia for home or beautiful landscape. This connection is best expressed by Island artist, Lucy Maud Montgomery:

> *"Great is our love for it (Prince Edward Island); its tang gets into our blood; its siren call rings ever in our ears; and no matter where we wander in lands afar, the murmur of its waves ever summons us back in our dreams to the homeland. For few things am I more thankful than for the fact that I was born and bred beside that blue St. Lawrence Gulf... Or does it go deeper still, down to the very soul of the land? For lands have personalities just as well as human beings; and to know that personality you must live in the land and companion it, and draw sustenance of body and spirit from it; so only can you really know a land and be known of it. "* (Montgomery, 1917)

The Community of Tracadie Cross - Some Context

The ethnic history of the area known as Tracadie Cross began with the Native Mi'kimaq people. This area off of the North Shore of Prince Edward Island was named Tulakadik, or camping ground. While the name of Tracadie is a Francophone translation of this Mi'kimaq word, there is little French influence in the history of Tracadie Cross (Morrison, 1980). Much of the community was settled in the late 1700's by more than 400 Scottish Catholics brought to Prince Edward Island by Captain John MacDonald (Bolger, 1973). To this day, many of the names of the community reflect the Scottish ancestry.

Like most communities in Prince Edward Island, Tracadie Cross is not an incorporated community. This community of Tracadie Cross is located approximately 25 km from Charlottetown, the Capital City and the largest of two cities (Charlottetown and Summerside) in Prince Edward Island. It is not marked by a busy main street, rather it sits just off of the main Provincial Highway. The centre of the community is built around the Catholic Church, the local school and the community centre.

Tracadie Cross is included in Lot #36 of Statistics Canada 1996 Census Statistics. The population of Lot #36 was 744 people with in 82 km^2. In 1996, the unemployment rate was 15% and the average household income was $45, 669. Approximately 23% of the population were employed in land-related industries of agriculture, forestry, fishery, mining and tourism (Government of Canada, 2000).

In many respects, the community of Tracadie Cross is like so many of the communities in Prince Edward Island, and perhaps elsewhere. There are no indicators that suggest why Tracadie Cross was able to mobilize so successfully and influence not only Government, but Islanders in general, only the capacity of the community itself.

An Overview of the Research

The Purpose of this Study

This purpose of my research study is to explore public participation in PEI government land decisions, as it exists today and as it ought to be, in theory and in practice. My thesis is academic in nature, seeking to inform theory of public participation, but it is also an action research project by design aimed at learning from, and giving back to, my community.

While the lines between the academic and action focus of the study are somewhat blurred, some distinction is made in the outcomes of this research. Academia requires that such research contribute to the academic community. This is achieved in the nature of this research, in its empirical qualitative approach, exploring multiple-stakeholder experiences and expectations of government decision making. Community-based action research calls for research to give back to the community to promote change. This demand begins to be addressed through the outcome recommendations which create a plan to support effective public participation in Island land decisions.

Research Questions

In studying the issue of public participation I was inspired to explore many research questions, and it was enticing to explore each in detail. However, the following research questions are those that have guided this research and the purpose of this research has been achieved in seeking to find "the"answer to these questions.

- What is the nature of public participation in Prince Edward Island Government land decision making?

    How is the public represented in the decision making process?

    In what ways does the public participate in the decision making?

    What influence (power) does the public have in the decision making?

- What is effective public participation and how can it be encouraged in Prince Edward Island Government land decisions?

Research Rationale

This research evolved from my experiences and observations as an Islander living

in Prince Edward Island. I am both inspired and concerned by the relationship between

the land and the people of Prince Edward Island. I am inspired by the wonderful

connection that Islanders have to the land. However, in some respects this connection is

better described as a dependence. It is because of this dependence that concern arises, for

if much of what defines and sustains the people of Prince Edward Island is tied to the

land, then by the definition of public participation, Islanders must have influence in land

decisions.

Community Concerns

There is also evidence from Islanders that they are dissatisfied with land decisions

made, and even the role that citizens have in decision making processes. Evidence for

this is drawn not only from my own observation of living here, in the research setting, but

also from the Round Table on Resource Land Use and Stewardship when it traveled

across Prince Edward Island in the mid 1990's speaking with and listening to Islanders

and organizations regarding land use. While it did not specifically address public

participation in government decisions, the final report of the Round Table on Resource

Land Use and Stewardship did reflect Islanders feeling dissatisfied with the land

management by their government.

In addition to this, there are numerous community organizations and groups that

exist to address various land use issues. The growing number of grass roots organizations

indicates a need by the community. Linney (1990) suggests that the presence of grass

roots organizations stems from a lack of confidence in government's ability to meet a given need of the community, or a need for the community itself to become empowered.

Furthermore, while any perusal of the print, radio and television media reveals public disagreement, dissatisfaction and even distrust in the government land decisions, it was through the actions of one group that the issue of public participation in government land decisions came to light. The group was a community group that organized after they learned that a waste management facility was to be situated in their community. What distinguished this group from the many other groups involved in land issues in Prince Edward Island was that this group clearly articulated a sense of exclusion from the decision making process (TARRP, 1999). It went beyond the issue of the waste management facility in their community and raised questions to the broader issue of public participation in the decision making process. The case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility is the case of study for this research of public participation in provincial government land decision in Prince Edward Island.

The case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility, the numerous groups addressing land issues, the concern of Islanders reflected in the Round Table on Resource Land Use and Stewardship (1997), and certainly the crucial role that land plays in the life of Islanders, all set the stage for this research. Clearly, Islanders not only want to be included in Provincial Government land decisions, but they are insisting on being involved.

Personal Motivation

My motivation to do this research was sparked not only by my identity as a community psychologist, but also by the fact that I am an Islander. In many respects, I am a stakeholder in this research.

Community Psychology is a sub-discipline, a division of psychology, and at times I think it is a paradigm in itself. Community psychologists often define Community Psychology by its guiding principles and values, and it seems that we often identify ourselves, not in the issue that we research, but in the action our research creates. Because of this work toward change, my identity as a community psychologist and as an Islander were fused, and inspired me to do this research.

I wanted my thesis to benefit my home community. For many years, I had been involved in land use issues, participating through public meetings, protests and community organizations. I have an ever growing concern for the path of change of the Island, its communities, its natural resources, and what Islanders often call, the Island "way of life". I do not propose to change the fate of the Island with my research. I simply want Islanders to have an opportunity to have a voice and influence this change. I see my research as a step in this process.

For academia my research presents a multi-stakeholder perspective of public participation as exists and should exit. It illustrates the tension between the ideals and application of public participation. Through the qualitative research approach to understanding the phenomenon under study, public participation, research results can be transferred to a broader context. In addition, the conceptual framework provides a

description of key elements of public participation based on a literature that is multi-disciplinary in nature but centred on the Community Psychology values of empowerment and equality.

Assumptions

True to qualitative research in natural settings, my research process has been one of constant reflection. In this process I have been challenged personally, clarifying my own assumptions, and professionally in understanding how these assumptions influence my research. Most assumptions have been clear from the outset of this research and, while they have been supported in a more extensive review of the literature, they initially evolved from my values as a community psychologist. Other assumptions have emerged out of the research or the research process.

My research is based on the assumption that public participation is good and necessary. This stems from my values as a community psychologist, and has been supported in theory and research, which will be explored in further detail in Chapter 2. The second major assumption of this research is related to the idea of "effective" public participation: that is, effective public participation can and should be empowering. Is it always achieved? No. Should it be a goal in the design? I would suggest, yes. Again, this assumption evolved from my values as a community psychologist but has been supported in literature and research. Finally, when I began this research project, I assumed that more public participation was better. It became clear that this is not necessarily true. The amount of public participation is not necessarily directly proportional to the power of the public in the decision making process and, it is the power of the public and the

opportunity to effectively contribute to decisions that affect their lives that is of interest.

Plan of Presentation

This chapter has set the stage for the research. The rationale and purpose of the research, the research setting and context, the assumptions of the research and the theory and values guiding this research have been presented.

In the next chapter, popular and current literature related to this research is reviewed. The complexity and diversity of the issue of public participation is illustrated in the numerous interpretations of public participation as a concept. Some benefits and challenges of public participation are presented. Guiding theories utilized in this research are discussed: Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation; Rich, Edelstein, Hallman and Wandersman's (1995) model of citizen participation and empowerment, and the Resource Mobilization Theory (Jenkins 1983; Nelson, 1994). Also, theories of decision making and planning and other elements important to public participation are presented as they contribute to the conceptual framework of effective public participation that I developed.

In the third chapter the methodology of this research is presented. Constructivism is presented as the guiding epistemological orientation of this research. The epistemological framework continues to take shape with influence from a phenomenological orientation, inductive research approach and qualitative methods. Next, the research process, sampling, data gathering and data analysis are presented. Ethical considerations for this research are discussed. Finally, I end this chapter reflecting on the research process, particularly on my role as a community researcher.

The fourth chapter presents the results of this research. The results are presented in three sections. The first section consists of the case study of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility presented in a case story and emerging themes from in-depth interviews with case study participants, representing both community and government interests. The next section presents the themes of key informant interviews. Information in this section presents a contextual picture of public participation in provincial government land decisions for Prince Edward Island. Finally, this chapter ends with participants' opinions and perspectives of effective public participation.

In the final chapter I conclude my research by presenting six outcome recommendations. These issues and the outcome recommendations to address them are based in the experiences of the participants supported by research presented in the literature review. I also discuss future research possibilities. I end this chapter and this part of my research with some final thoughts of public participation in general and in Provincial Government land decisions in Prince Edward Island.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

The issue of public participation attracts the interests of various disciplines. Psychology, political science, environmental studies, sociology, and public health are only a few of disciplines that expend considerable effort examining this complex issue. Literature, theory and research from these and other disciplines are explored in this chapter. The purpose of this literature review is to examine the existing base of knowledge that will support this research.

In this chapter, I begin with a presentation of the various definitions and views of public participation. There are as many definitions as writers writing about public participation. The dynamic nature of public participation, in theory and practice, is illustrated in the history of public participation. With a grounding in the multi-disciplinary definitions of public participation and a review of its dynamic history, the challenges and benefits of public participation are presented. This chapter ends with the guiding theories and conceptual framework utilized in this research. The three guiding theories utilized in the data analysis and the discussion of the findings are reviewed: Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation; Rich, Edelstein, Hallman and Wandersman's (1995) model of citizen participation and empowerment, and the Resource Mobilization Theory (Jenkins, 1983; Nelson, 1994). These theories are also utilized with other theories, models and perspectives in the conceptual framework of effective public participation that is used to present the research results.

This research, is practically oriented and driven by values commonly expressed in Community Psychology. Two values, equity and empowerment, are the foundations for

this research and are explicit in theoretical framework of effective public participation. The literature review chapter ends with questions that have not been addressed in the literature and the contribution that this research may add to the base of knowledge of public participation.

<center>Definitions of Public Participation</center>

In its broadest and most encompassing view, public participation occurs when citizens have some level of input or impact in a public decision. Definitions vary somewhat and while these differences may seem minor, the implications for these subtle changes can be great, changing the role of the public from a source of information in a decision making process to one of sole decision makers.

Heller, Price, Reinharz, Riger, and Wandersman (1984) define public participation as "a process in which individuals take part in decision making in the institutions, programs and environments that affect them" (p. 339). This definition, often used in literature in Community Psychology, emphasizes that public participation is for the empowerment of the public, suggesting that the motive is one of creating the opportunity for self-determination of the public.

The World Health Organization (1978, in Minkler 1997) conceptualizes participation as central to healthy individuals, families and communities through its definition of community participation, "community participation is the process by which individuals and families assume responsibility for their own health and welfare and for those of the community to develop the capacity to contribute to their and the community's development" (in Minkler, 1997). This definition presents public participation in terms

<center>16</center>

of the public gaining power to influence their lives and environment. Public participation is a process to achieve self-determination. In addition to this, the WHO (1978, in Minkler 1997) definition of community participation suggests that the act of participating itself results in a strengthening of the community through a building of community capacity.

The British Columbia Commission on Resource and Environment (CORE) defines public participation from the perspective of resource management. Public participation "...provides the public with the meaningful opportunity to help shape land use and related resource and environmental decisions in a manner that meets the broad public interest by reconciling individual interests, and ensures that government has the necessary information to make decisions that best achieve the public interest" (CORE, 1994, p. 18). This definition, while suggesting public involvement in decisions that affect them, differs the previous two definitions in its emphasis on decision making rather than self-determination. The goal for public participation is less for the building of empowerment and capacity for communities, groups and individuals that participate, but more for the development of good land decisions that find balance between the broad public interest and individual input of those most directly affected by decisions.

Finally, Graham and Phillips (1998) define public participation as, "the deliberate and active engagement of citizens, by the council and/or administration - outside the electoral process - in making public policy decisions or in setting strategic direction" (p. 4). In their view public participation is presented as a process initiated by government in which the public influences decisions that impact their lives.

17

These definitions of public participation are similar in emphasizing the involvement of the public, by some means, in the decision making process. However there are notable distinctions. First, these definitions differ in the motivation or the intent for involving the public in the decision making process. In the latter two perspectives (CORE, 1994; Graham & Phillips, 1998), the public is integrated in the decision making process, and emphasis is on the quality of the decision without any clear value in motivating public involvement. In contrast, the former two definitions of public and community participation (Heller et al., 1984; WHO, 1978, in Minkler 1997) are more explicitly value-based. The motivation for public participation is to create the ability, opportunity or environment for individual, family and community self-determination. They both emphasize a process of achieving self-determination and influence, a process that leads to empowerment and building community capacity.

Empowerment is a central value of community psychology and a guiding value of this research. Public participation can and should be empowering. This is supported by the following literature. Meaningful public participation requires empowered communities and is thus inherently linked with empowerment (Florin & Wandersman, 1990; Pateman, 1974; Perkins, 1995; Rich et al., 1995). Zimmerman (1995) explains the complex relationship between empowerment and public participation, suggesting that empowerment results from and, is necessary for, public participation. Therefore, empowerment can arise from a process and can also stem from the outcome of a process.

Empowerment is conceptualized in many different ways. Some describe empowerment at multiple levels: individual, organizational, and community. Nelson,

Lord and Ochocka (2000) explain the relationship between empowerment and mental health as existing at the micro, meso and macro levels. In this explanation, empowerment exists at the micro level through individual skills, well-being and control. When individuals interact in supportive relationships, empowerment exists at a meso level. Finally, empowerment exists at the macro level with inclusive and supportive communities and social institutions. In this systemic presentation, health (in this explanation, mental health) evolves from the interaction of individuals and these empowering environments.

Empowerment is also considered in a political context. Prilleltensky and Gonick (1996) explain empowerment as a result of self-determination, political participation, and distributive justice. Empowerment results when people define the issues of importance, when they attempt to influence the political agenda through participation and, when this influence is not challenged by inequities in resources and power.

Finally, Wallerstein (1992) defines empowerment from the field of health promotion, in that empowerment is a "social-action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities toward the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice" (p. 198). In this definition, empowerment exists at multiple levels with the goal of gaining power in the various socio-political contexts that influence quality of life.

The definitions illustrate the complexity of empowerment, existing at multiple levels (micro, meso, and macro) in various contexts and expressions (control of and influence in personal and community health, political environments, and social justice).

19

These levels and expressions of empowerment do not exist independently but interact to produce empowering processes and outcomes. In this research, I emphasize empowerment at the macro level but I also recognize that empowerment at all levels is crucial for public participation. Empowerment at any level results from complex inter-relationships and interactions at multiple levels.

Historical Development of Public Participation

The role of public participation in our society can be considered in its position in democratic theory. Historically, the role of public participation in contemporary democratic theory has been questioned by some contemporary democratic theorists who suggest that the interest of the public is better served by representative rather than participatory democracy (Pateman, 1974). Parenteau (1988) presents a more recent version of the debate over public participation in democratic theory. She suggests that representative democracy is flawed in that it is elitist and therefore, it does not often reflect the voice of those marginalized by the larger community (Parenteau, 1988; see also Pateman, 1974; Ventriss, 1985; Wilson, 1999).

The flaws of representative democracy show the need for participatory democracy to ensure that those who may be most affected by a public decision are represented in that decision making process. The general public interest may be represented through elected officials, but the specific needs and interests of this fraction of the population suggests that their participation is necessary in the decision making process to ensure that their interests are represented. This participation must be equitable, providing resources and opportunity to influence the decision (Parenteau, 1988).

20

With an increasing theoretical appreciation of the need for public participation there has been a movement for implementation of the theory public participation, through greater public influence in government decision making. Since the late 1960's there have been increased demands from the public for more power in government decision making (Bens, 1994; Duffy, Roselan, & Gunton, 1996). For example, Graham and Phillips (1998) suggest that "citizen engagement" better reflects the advances that public participation has made and sets the ground for more dynamic and creative opportunities for involvement of the public in local governance. Specifically, they propose six principles for citizen engagement. These principles of citizen engagement inform government initiated participation. The first principle is that the process should be community-based. Citizen engagement should be connected to the political process, involving elected government and staff. Citizen engagement should include public education. The process of citizen engagement should be flexible in methods and timing of citizen engagement as well as in the solutions sought. Finally the process must be transparent, for public learning, and for the legitimacy of the process in the public eye (Graham & Phillips, 1998).

Summary

The dynamic nature of public participation, in theory and practice, is evident. While the role of public participation in society was questionable at the turn of the 20th Century as described by Pateman (1974), it seems that the debate over public participation has shifted, not necessarily to questioning its relevance in governance but to debate over the application of the ideals of public participation. While public

participation in theory may be more accepted, its application in each situation has challenges and advantages that must be considered to find the best means of putting theory to practice.

Types of Public Participation, Benefits and Challenges

The application of public participation is dynamic and full of surprises. With the process of ongoing change in the conceptualization and application of this public participation, it is important to consider the advantages and challenges of a more participatory decision making. In the following sections, I present the advantages and challenges of both government and public initiated public participation. In addition, the role of public participation in building healthy communities is discussed.

Government Mandated Public Participation

In government mandated public participation, government creates opportunities for the public to participate in the decision making process. There are three primary motivations for government to provide more participatory decision making and involve the public in it: functional, political and democratic (Duffy et al., 1996). In general, government is motivated to create more participatory decision making for functional reasons. Often with more participatory decision making, there are concerns about the efficiency of the decision making process. However, when the decision-making process is viewed in its entirety, including decision-making as well as implementation, then a more participatory process is not necessarily more time consuming in that it may promote more effective implementation (Thomas, 1990).

Another functional motivation for government in creating more opportunity for

public participation is that greater participatory democracy promotes more active citizens with greater awareness, education and experience of democracy, government, and the decision-making process (Morrell, 1999; Pateman, 1974; Ventriss, 1985; Wilson, 1999). If the public is educated and experienced in governance, then the implications are great. A public that is aware, educated and experienced in governance is empowered and that can have residual effects for future decision making. It also has considerable benefits for promoting healthy communities through building the capacity of the community (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Also, public participation is a means by which communities engage in self-determination, a key element of healthy communities (WHO, 1978).

Political motivation is another form of motivation for government to have a more participatory process. Promoting a more participatory process often reflects well on the public image of the government. If these processes are successful and create a positive experience, it may enhance the legitimacy and credibility of the government in the eyes of the public (Duffy et al., 1996). In addition, Graham et al.(1998) suggest that citizen organizations have a greater trust in the community than government. So by increasing the role of citizens and citizen organizations, there may result a corresponding increase in the trust of government decisions. However, Graham et al. (1998) further suggest that when citizens lack real power in the decision-making process, a mistrust in the process results.

Also, social change theory suggests that the public can influence government decision making from outside the process by creating a social issue and causing political

pressure. Perhaps as a means to minimize conflict (Ventriss, 1985), or to protect its political sustainability, government can create more participatory decision making to minimize political pressure, another political motivation for government to create a more participatory decision making process.

A third and final motivation for government to promote a more participatory process is democratic motivation. As Duffy et al. (1996) state, "democratic motivations for enhanced public participation are derived from the characteristics of participatory democracy itself: ethics, morals, fairness, and equity" (p. 2).

The motivations for more participatory decision making are numerous. In relation to decisions and the decision making process, participatory decision making can efficiently arrive at sustainable decisions. In the process, government can gain trust, legitimacy and credibility in the public eye while working to create a more democratic and just government.

Public Initiated Participation

Public initiated participation can take a variety of forms, from an individual letter writing campaign, to a coalition of grass roots organizations lobbying government. It occurs at all levels of society and allows for the public to create its own voice by its own means. It is a means by which those members of society who feel excluded from a decision making process can have the power to voice their needs, and perhaps even have their voice heard.

The motivation for public initiated participation is clear. A community that mobilizes to have its voice heard does so because citizens have felt excluded from the

24

decision making process or in the decision itself. Community mobilization requires time, energy and resources and therefore is not entered into lightly. Individuals, groups, communities and society in general do gain from community mobilization. As previously addressed, public participation builds individual skills, knowledge and awareness of the governance and this builds individual capacity that can contribute to further systemic capacity.

Graham et al., (1998) outlines the role of public initiated participation in three distinct roles. First, it provides a voice for the community with the goal of future change at some level of society. Providing a unified voice for the public can support the actions to create change (Centre for Research and Education in Human Services, 2000). Public participation is also linked to a development of a sense of community and empowerment (Florin & Wandersman, 1990).

Second, groups that initiate participatory opportunities are increasingly providing services to the community. They provide a valuable service for the community by creating a voice and means for that voice. This also raises a concern that public interest groups minimize the pressure for government to provide effective leadership. Public interest groups also engage the citizenry in political activity and debate. This third role often results in identifying mutual values and goals, building community cohesion, and in personal feelings of efficacy (Graham et al., 1998).

While it may seem that interest groups who mobilize to challenge the status quo ultimately serve their own purpose and self-interest (Morrell, 1999; Ventriss, 1985; Wilson, 1999), Finkle, Webb, Stanbury and Pross (1994) suggest that these groups also

serve a role in society for government. The premise of this idea is that these interest groups serve, to some extent, as a social barometer, from which the government can gauge the urgence of social concerns and needs.

Clearly there is a value in the public initiated participation. It seems that it is necessary not only to provide more public influence in decision making, but also in the secondary outcomes that benefit the community and society in general. Public initiated participation challenges government in its decisions and its exclusive structure. It is a source of public education and a means of promoting healthy communities. I believe it is important to clarify that presenting the beneficial outcomes of public initiated participation is not meant to diminish the emphasis on more participatory decision making. It is also not meant to minimize the considerable personal expense that the public experiences in engaging in these struggles.

<u>Building Healthy Communities Though Public Participation</u>

As previously stated, public participation plays an important role in building healthy communities. One of the most widely used definitions of healthy communities is that of the World Health Organization (1986), "a healthy (community) is one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential" (in Minkler, 1997). Hancock and Minkler (1994, in Minkler, 1997) suggest that a healthy community is not necessarily one of health status, but one that continually progresses toward this ideal view of a healthy community.

Hancock and Duhl (1986, in Minkler, 1997) outline eleven elements for a healthy community. Of specific importance to this research, they suggest that a healthy community is one in which there is "a high degree of public participation in and control over decisions affecting one's life, health and well-being" (p. 144, in Minkler, 1997). These perspectives of healthy communities combine to suggest that both government and public initiated participation as processes add to healthy communities through capacity building. Both government and public initiated participation contribute to healthy communities in communities having control in decisions.

Government initiated participation adds to the development of healthy communities indirectly in educating the public regarding the governing structures that impact on their lives. Developing healthy communities through the development of skills and knowledge of the community and its institutions reflects Kretzmann and McKnight's (1993) model of asset based community development. In this model, the method of dealing with community identified issues is to look internally, within the assets of the community, rather than identifying the weaknesses of the community. In this model, government initiated public participation would add to the knowledge of the governing bodies and the ability of the community to work with its institutions for future community development.

Public initiated participation also supports the development of healthy communities through building the cohesion of the community, and the skills and knowledge of the community in the governing systems, but other systems as well. Often community mobilization draws on various resources in the community, and in connecting

with these resources, the early steps of asset based community development begins with the identification of the skills and resources of the community.

The process of participation, through government or public initiated opportunities builds on the resources and skills of the community, brings people together, and engages the public in the social institutions that affect their lives. Healthy communities is not a community-based approach to decision making and service delivery, it comes from the "ground up", from community direction, control and ownership in their lives (Labonte, 1995). Both public and government initiated participation are important in the development of healthy communities.

Challenges to Effective Public Participation

Challenges to effective public participation are numerous. Some of the more widely suggested concerns are that the decision making systems do not have the structure and resources to provide more participatory opportunities (Bens, 1994). A recognition of the value in public participation has not translated into practice (Grant, 1994). If government itself is not empowered with the skills and knowledge to engage the public then this is truly a challenge in effective public participation.

A second challenge to effective public participation is the pluralistic nature of society. The question is which groups should be included and have power? There are numerous interests that can be included in any decision making process (Borrini-Feyerabend, 1999; Lowry, 1998). Thomas (1990) suggests a way of identifying which members of the public to involve in the decision making process. He believes that those members and/or groups in the public who could inform the decision making process or

who may challenge the implementation of the decision should be involved. While this approach may seem overly pragmatic, it gets to the core of what motivates government to involve the public, an effective decision and an avoidance of confrontation.

With numerous groups competing for the power of having influence in the public and political realm, there is a cause for concern in the ability of these groups to have influence. There is also a concern for equity in public initiated participation for those being marginalised and lacking power to influence the system.

Finally, perhaps the greatest challenge to effective public participation is the different opinions to what is relevant knowledge. This position is exemplified in suggestions that the public lacks relevant knowledge to participate. In general, government tends to rely on technical and physical criteria in decision making, while citizens rely more personally meaningful criteria (McAvoy, 1998).

Summary

Public participation in application, through government and public initiated participation, has numerous benefits for the public, government and the decision making process itself. However, its application continues to be challenged by concerns related to the duration of decision making process and the quality of the resulting decision. However, as the following section illustrates, these challenges are being countered with innovative decision making approaches and an explicit expression of public participation in terms of power and empowerment.

Participatory Decision Making and Planning

As the public demands for greater influence in governance increase and become recognized, models of decision making and planning reflect the emerging trends in government planning and decision making. While most will agree that public participation is necessary in local planning and governance, how this is achieved and what form it takes varies. The movement toward more cooperative planning and decision making is reflected in the following models and guidelines.

Participatory Resource Management

Participatory management suggests equal power of stakeholders in the management of, in this instance, natural resources. Borrini-Feyerabend (1999) describes the elements of participatory resource management of natural resources based on a project of co-management of a nature conservation. This collaborative management process emphasizes the context and the process in the approach to resource management.

The emphasis of participatory management is on a partnership process that recognizes that the management of natural resources must respect the multiple values and interests of those in and out of the community. A partnership process also recognizes that partners have both rights, responsibilities, and entitlements to the natural resource, that these must be reassessed beyond conventional roles, and that this must be reflected in the management and its process. Goals of participatory management must go beyond the short term and bring equity to the management of the natural resource. Participatory Resource Management is based on five principles that reflect the complexity and variability of such a process: adaptive management, pluralism, governance, patrimony,

and management of conflicts.

Adaptive management is a process of management that seeks to balance the structure needed in a management process with the variability of natural environments and collaborative work. This process incorporates structure in outlining management objectives, indicators and ongoing evaluation. Collaborative management is reflected in the emphasis on documenting the management process and sharing this information with co-managers.

Pluralism is achieved when government, non-governmental groups and, individuals with various interests work collaboratively in the management process. The pluralism is evident, not only in the representation of diverse interests and "entitlements" in the decision making process, but also in achieving equity in the management process by involving those groups and individuals most excluded in management.

Governance is defined as "the complex of different ways by which individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common concerns" (p. 6). In participatory resource management, this is an ongoing process in which multiple perspectives (public and private) are involved in ongoing interaction and governed by compromise.

Patrimony, ownership by inheritance, is incorporated into the participatory management in valuing sustainability through owner obligation. In emphasizing owner obligation and not owner rights, participatory management tackles what McAllister (1995) identifies as the "root of the conflict" in the liberal-democratic system in which there is a tension between recognizing the rights of an individual and those of the collectivity. Patrimony is represented in the management process through a process

31

similar to Participatory Action Research, where multiple stakeholders share their needs and views and arrive at mutual management objectives, methods, and decision making structures.

Good conflict management in participatory resource management means there should be early intervention in conflicts. It also means compromise, emphasizing negotiation from a common ground. Consistent with the role of relationships and partnerships in this model of participatory management, conflict that arises is resolved through dialogue and mutual understanding and is oriented towards arriving at decisions that have followed a process and have structured formalized outcomes.

Participatory management consists of three phases. The initial phase is the stage of preparing for the partnership. It is a process of organizing and understanding. In this phase, information is gathered regarding natural resources, and it is also a time of organizing for those involved in the co-management. The second phase involves negotiating the management agreements. It is a process of meeting, negotiating, planning and informing. The result of this process is a mutually acceptable management plan with structured objectives and outcomes, that is shared with the citizens who have not been involved in the management process. The final phase includes implementing and revising the agreement. In this phase, agreements are piloted, and people reflect upon and learn from the process.

The described model of Participatory Resource Management evolved from real experiences, where community stakeholders partner with traditional and established resource managers (i.e., those in government). This model is flexible and focuses on

developing a partnership process grounded in the mutual goal of managing the environment. This partnering is innovative because it finds structure which is not grounded in predetermined roles and responsibilities, but rather in objectives and indicators that emphasize equitable and sustainable co-management of natural resources. This model outlines a process of management and planning that consists of values such as partnering, negotiation, and mutual learning. In the following section, cooperative planning is presented as a decision making process that emphasizes mutual needs as the primary goal.

Cooperative Planning

Traditionally planning has integrated the values and culture of the community with its economic needs (Grant, 1994). By definition then, planners have a challenging role since they must mediate the needs of many different groups.

Decisions regarding placements of waste management have commonly been based on technical factors. The decision making process often began with the identification of the form of waste management facility required, then with the development of the criteria necessary for a suitable site, and then moved toward selecting a site suitable for such a waste management facility (MacLaren, 1995). The movement toward cooperative planning is described as environmental assessment (Meredith, 1995). It has also been successfully used in the siting of waste management facilities in several locations across Canada (MacLaren, 1995).

In this decision making process, the needs of government are outlined in a preliminary form. After this point, a rough sketch of the facility and criteria are identified

33

to focus the site selection. Then the process takes a marked shift in that the emphasis moves toward finding a site, a community that is willing to host the waste facility. The process then moves toward cooperatively defining the method of waste treatment that would meet the needs of both government and the community (MacLaren, 1995; Meredith, 1995)

The benefit of this approach is that the community maintains control. They can withdraw from the process at any time. Because there is power sharing, the process is empowering. Some cautions are associated with this model of planning. This process is contingent on the community wanting to participate. If the community does not want to participate, then the conventional model of planning is often used. Also, the focus of this process is on finding a site that is socially acceptable but this may be achieved at the expense of the natural environment. While the community as a whole may be in favour of such a decision, some groups in the community will inevitably be more negatively affected by virtue of their proximity to the location (when sitting a waste management facility, for example). Finally, and perhaps of greatest concern, is that some communities are more likely to volunteer for a process, particularly for the economic benefits. Often, these communities are economically disadvantaged. Therefore, when seeking out communities in which to locate socially undesirable development such as waste management facilities, ethical concerns must be addressed.

This model illustrated a new approach to planning, fitting technology to the needs of stakeholders rather than negotiating needs to fit technology. In the following section, the role of stakeholders is presented in the British Columbia Commission on Resources

and Environment's description of the goals of more participatory decision making.

British Columbia Commission on Resources and Environment

In 1994, the British Columbia Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) presented a comprehensive provincial strategy for public participation in British Columbia resource and environmental decisions. In this report, CORE (1994) established motivations and actions necessary for meaningful public participation to promote sustainable resource and land use decisions. CORE suggested that meaningful participation requires that those members of the public that are most affected by decisions must be involved in the decision making process (CORE, 1994).

CORE outlined the goals of public participation. If achieved, these goals would result in a participatory decision making process in which those most affected by decisions would be involved in a meaningful and cost effective manner. The decision making process should vary, depending on the situation, and be based on communication, dialogue, and consensus building. Further, parties from public and private interests should enter into the process in good faith. If so, the resulting decision would be based in diverse knowledge and experience, it would be sustainable and would balance local and provincial interests (CORE, 1994).

The process of land use planning presented by CORE sets out a partnership of public (individual and group), professionals, and elected government officials. These parties determine the social, economic and environmental objectives for land use planning. CORE defines the role of the general public as one of informing decision makers of public interests. Professionals also contribute to the decision by assessing

35

various aspects of feasibility, but in this decision making process, the ultimate responsibility for decisions rests with elected officials (CORE, 1994).

The mode of public participation suggested is holding roundtables. Community resource boards are also suggested as a feasible option for balanced community involvement in broad-based decision making. CORE suggests that these boards can also play an advisory role beyond the issue at hand, and that they should be involved in ongoing evaluation (CORE, 1994)

CORE's model of public participation meets the needs of both public and government. Traditionally, arguments against public participation reflect pragmatic concerns over the quality of the decision and resources expended in a more participatory decision making process. These concerns appear to be addressed emphasizing a process that is cost-effective, in which those engaged enter in good faith to achieve sustainable decisions that balance local and governmental interests. The participatory process presented by CORE suggests that when the decision making process includes the views and interests of the general public and the public is significantly affected by a decision, then equity and justice can be achieved.

It is important to note that CORE suggests that the final decision rests in the hands of elected government. Ultimately, this view of public participation is one of participatory decision making, in which the public is involved in the decision making process, though it does not necessarily have the final decision making power. It is in the element of "good faith" that public power may exists in this decision making process. If government enters into a decision making process in "good faith", then a redistribution of

power in the decision making process may be incorporated if there is a desire to work toward equity and justice through the decision making process as well as the end decision.

Summary

This section presented models and guidelines of public participation in decision making. Public participation was discussed in terms of power imbalances in the decision making process, as well as how the process and outcomes themselves can empower and disempower the public. Models of participatory decision making were presented, illustrating public involvement in planning and decision making through advising, co-designing and co-managing in environmental and land use planning and policy.

This section illustrates that public not only should, but can play a central role in government decision making. In general, these models propose a redistribution of power such that those most affected have influence in the decision. There remains variability in the power associated with the public in this redistribution of power.

These models reflect real life participatory decision making, based in social, land use, and planning issues. From this section, we learn that a movement to more participatory decision making has implications for community health and sustainability through community empowerment and sustainable decisions. Indeed, when these decisions reflect the interest of those significantly affected by a decision, then the decision making process has also achieved, not only healthy and sustainable, but just and equitable decisions. A movement toward more participatory decision making in governance and planning requires creative and innovative approaches, redistributing

power in the decision making systems for the role of the public to shift from one of input to impact. These theories, models and perspectives are summarized in the following conceptual framework of effective public participation.

Guiding Theories and Conceptual Framework of Effective Public Participation

Public participation is often considered in terms of those opportunities created by government in which the public participates to some extent in the decision making process. However, in a broad sense, public participation also includes actions initiated by the public to influence the decision making process. This dichotomous conceptualization of public participation is reflected in the models and perspectives of public participation presented.

This theoretical map of this research is based on three theories and a conceptual framework of effective public participation developed from my literature review. The three theories presented in this section are used to guide the development of the analytic framework of the data analysis, as well as in the presentation of the research results: Arnstein's (1969) ladder of public participation; Rich, Edelstein, Hallman and Wandersman's (1995) model of citizen participation and empowerment (Model of Citizen Participation and Empowerment); and the Resource Mobilization Theory. The conceptual framework of effective public participation guides the discussion of the results in which public participation as expressed by participants is considered in terms of a theoretical model of what the literature suggests is effective public participation.

Arnstein's Ladder of Public Participation

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of public participation is a cornerstone of public participation theory. Arnstein's work centres on citizen power and describes the redistribution of power as including the "have-nots" in the decision making. This redistribution of power is evidenced through acts that see those members of society who have traditionally been excluded from socio-political processes "sharing in the benefits of the affluent society"(1969, p. 216).

In this model, the amount of public held power is shown as a continuum illustrated as a ladder. The eight rungs of the ladder of citizen participation range from non-participation at the lower rungs, to degrees of tokenism at the middle section, and to degrees of citizen power at the top rungs of the ladder.

At the lowest rungs of the ladder, non-participation is identified as the stages of manipulation and therapy. Manipulation happens when the public is presented with participatory opportunities, but given no real power to influence the decision. The intent is only to gain public support. The next rung of the ladder, therapy, exists in participatory opportunities when the intent is to educate the public and alter public values and opinion through this educational process. Public education in the form of public participation is considered the lowest form of public participation, in fact non-participation, as the public has no influence in the decision making process.

In the next level of Arnstein's ladder, tokenism, the public is provided with opportunities to participate, but no real power to influence the decision. The third rung of the ladder, informing, is not significantly advanced over the lower level of non-

39

participation, in that opportunities for public participation are presented in the form of public education. This form of public education can be the first rung toward more public power. If the public is educated about their rights, responsibilities and options, followed with power to influence, then informing is a rung closer to more citizen power. However, all too often, opportunities for public participation end at informing the public, without providing power to influence. In this case, the process toward more citizen power ends at the third rung.

The fourth rung, consultation, occurs when the public is consulted in the decision making process, but it is still at the discretion of decision makers whether to include the information, opinions and perspectives of the public in the decision making process. Consultation too, can be a first step toward citizen power, but again, often participatory opportunities are limited in power and therefore consultation rests at the fourth rung as a form of tokenism.

The fifth rung, and final stage of tokenism, is placation. This level of citizen participation represents progress toward more citizen power in that the public has influence in the decision making process. However, this level still is considered tokenism because those citizens that have been allotted power are either not representative or accountable to either those most affected by a decision or those that hold the least power, the "have-nots".

As we reach the top section of the ladder of citizen participation, the public has achieved real opportunity to influence decision making process. This upper portion of the Arnstein's (1969)ladder is divided into three final rungs. At the sixth rung, partnership,

the public has real opportunity and power in the decision making process. The power allocated to the public is negotiated between the public and decision makers, but generally involves sharing power equally in the decision making process.

At the seventh rung, delegated power, the public has even greater power in the decision making process, such that they are assigned the greatest power in decision making. The greatest portion of power and accountability rests in the hands of the public.

The final rung of the process toward citizen power is the eighth rung, citizen control. At this level, citizens hold all power and accountability in the decision making. The role of traditional decision makers is minimal and, in some cases, they do not have influence at all. Arnstein (1969) is cautious in presenting this level of citizen participation, noting that no one actually has complete power in any decision making process. However, at this level, citizens have control over governance of programs or institutions.

Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation is an influential work for citizen participation theory and practice in the latter part of the 20th Century. A weakness of this model is that it is confined to government initiated participatory opportunities, therefore limiting its use as a tool in assessing power of the public through public initiated efforts. The great strength of this model is in its description of public participation in terms of power. This description is conceptualized as a continuum. Its widespread use in theory and its clear description of the power of public in decision making promote its applicability as a tool to assess the real opportunities of the public in the decision making process. Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation, in its widespread use, has continued to

assert that public participation is an issue of power. The following model describes

public participation as a source of empowerment or disempowerment.

Rich, Edelstein, Hallman and Wandersman's (1995)

Model of Citizen Participation and Empowerment

The model of citizen participation and empowerment presented by Rich,

Edelstein, Hallman and Wandersman (1995) explains how decision making processes can

be empowering or disempowering for communities. The model of public participation is

presented based on their assessment of the empowering and disempowering potential of

local environmental hazards, but it is applicable to a wide variety of situations.

This model of public participation integrates the concepts of power,

empowerment and citizen participation. In this model four forms of empowerment

(formal, intrapersonal, instrumental, and substantive) are presented. Formal power refers

to the structural or formal opportunities created by decision makers that facilitate or

inhibit public influence in decisions. Formal power does not exist merely in the

opportunity provided. It is also dependent on the formal opportunities to participate in

relation to the characteristics, capacities and abilities of the community. Therefore, if an

opportunity is not one in which the community can easily participate, then this may result

in a disempowering experience. It is not a real opportunity to have power in the decision

making process.

Intrapersonal power refers to the perception by the public of its ability to

contribute to a decision making process. Intrapersonal empowerment is related to a

person's sense of competence about an issue and a sense of competence in his/her ability

to influence the decision making process. If members of the public feel that they can make a significant contribution and feel a sense of trust in the process to participate, then there is intrapersonal empowerment.

Instrumental power is the ability of the public to participate in the decision making process. The ability of the public to participate is determined by factors such as knowledge and material resources, as well as the opportunity to participate in the process of decision making. Therefore, even when formal opportunities exist, if relevant information is not accessible and comprehensible, then there lacks a real opportunity for participation.

Finally, substantive power is a relational conception of empowerment since it refers to the ability of decision makers and the public to work together to reach decisions. It requires that the decision is mutually acceptable and that it has been achieved with both parties participating.

This model emphasizes creating an empowering process with the goal of achieving sustainable decisions. According to Rich, Edelstein, Hallman, and Wandersman (1995), sustainable decisions are decisions that are "scientifically sound (in the sense of actually removing or mitigating the hazard) and politically durable in that affected individuals will accept them as fair and satisfactory" (p. 668-669).

The model of citizen participation and empowerment is, in many respects, an ecological approach to citizen participation. This model of empowerment in public participation is diverse in its multiple levels (individual, community, institutional); it emphasizes empowering relationships that result in sustainable decisions; and it stresses

43

the role of resource distribution (tangible and intangible) in empowering citizen in public participation. I would suggest that this model is one that encourages healthy communities because it promotes public participation, empowerment and sustainable decisions. While this model illustrates the means by which public participation can be empowering or disempowering, it does not clearly express how communities can gain power, when it is not provided by decision makers. The following section presents the Resource Mobilization Theory, a widely utilized theory that explains the success of community mobilization in terms of creating public interest through effective use of resources and political opportunities.

<div align="center">Resource Mobilization Theory</div>

While there is a trend toward more public participation in government decision making, this is a process of constant change. Galaskiewicz (1979) suggests that society's institutional structures exist because of an unequal distribution in power. This is supported in Pateman's (1974) analysis of contemporary democratic theorists who argued that more participation of the general public would disrupt these governing systems. Effective public participation requires change in the roles and power in the decision making process.

Social change is therefore fundamental to more effective public participation. The power of the public to influence government takes two forms in what Bennett (1987) identifies as first and second order change. When the public influences government to alter a decision, this is considered first order change. First order change is more common as it is a change within the system, in an action, decision, policy, or process. When the

public influences government to alter the decision making process, the change is more fundamental. This form of change, a change of the system, is called second order change, and is much more difficult to achieve. The movement toward more public participation in governance is an example of systemic change. At the beginning of the 20th century discussion centred on whether public participation was necessary. At present, most would agree that public participation is important in governance. This is an example of the movement toward changing the role of public in governance, and therefore exemplifies systemic change.

The Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) is one of the most widely used theories of social movements. It evolved from the study of social movements (Jenkins, 1983). The premise of this theory is that the outcome of a coalition movement depends on activities/processes, support and political context (Nelson, 1994). The RMT is a theory which focusses on public pressure in the political environment to create change.

The RMT contends that the activities and processes of the social movement determine the success to the extent that they are able to maintain the issue in the public eye. The creation of an issue as a social problem impacts on the ability of the movement or coalition to affect the other factors necessary for a successful outcome (Nelson, 1994).

The key resource for social movements in creating change is gaining support from outside sources, particularly outside power holders (Nelson, 1994). Again, the extent to which an issue remains relevant in the public eye, the more likely it will be successful. This is a cyclical pattern. As the social support and credibility of the movement grows, so too does the relevance of the issue in the public realm. As the

relevance of the issue in the public realm grows, so too does the support from outside sources and power holders. While these follow a cyclical pattern, both are crucial to the success of a movement.

The significance of a coalition movement's access to organizational support is described by Buechler (1993). This access to outside support, particularly from power holders, distinguishes the greater likelihood of established special interest groups at achieving success than social movements that are less established with outside power holders (Buechler, 1993).

The third element that determines the success of a coalition movement is the political climate (Nelson, 1994). Social movements are political movements. Buechler (1993) describes social movements as "extensions of politics by other means" (p. 218). When issues are publically relevant and have credible organizational support, then there is considerable public support, and, political pressure for change. When a political climate is unstable, for example, because of divided electorate or an upcoming election, this instantly can influence the success of a social movement.

Jenkins (1983) presents a multi-factor model of resource formation for the RMT. In this model, the resources necessary for the success of a coalition have a threshold point. These resources work in combination to reach this threshold point. At that point, the addition of further resources is irrelevant to the success of the movement (Jenkins, 1983). This is an adaptive element of the RMT, that suggests its applicability to a variety of movements.

The RMT is a theory of social movements that explains the success of a coalition

to the extent that the access to resources (tangible and intangible) can influence the activities/processes of the movement to gain outside support and credibility. In combination, these elements raise the profile of the issue in the public eye, creating political pressure for power holders to meet the demands of the social movement.

Though it emphasizes the context of change, the RMT is criticized in that it does not consider culturally relevant factors (Buechler, 1993). In its emphasis on power in political and economic terms, Buechler (1993) contends that the RMT ignores culturally relevant sources of power. What is a source of power for one community, may not be a relevant source of power for another.

The RMT has been a theory central to the development of the understanding of social movements. It is based on political power of social movements. As long as we continue to define the success of social movements in political terms (i.e., gaining power in political decision making), then the extent to which a social movement can gain political power, through economic resources or other culturally relevant sources of power, continue to define the success of social movements.

Summary

Arnstein's (1969) ladder, the Model of Citizen Participation and Empowerment (Rich et al., 1995) and the Resource Mobilization Theory are three theories central to this research. They were used in the identification of key concepts and questions for the data collection and analysis process. They are also utilized in the presentation of the findings in Chapter 4, as is the conceptual framework of effective public participation.

All three theories were utilized in this research because of their emphasis on a

redistribution of power in decision making. This is the clear influence of Community Psychology in this research. An exploration of public participation can vary in its focus depending on the discipline. The influence of Community Psychology is explicit in the emphasis on empowerment and power sharing in decision making.

The Resource Mobilization Theory and the Model of Citizen Participation and Empowerment (Rich et al., 1995) were also selected because of their emphasis on context and environment, as well as on the distribution of resources. While it is my approach in research to seek to understand a phenomenon in its context, considering the context is also important because it promotes the transferability to and the usability of the research in other settings.

Finally, these three models were used because in combination they encompass government and public initiated participation. In combination, these theories emphasize public participation (perhaps not identified as such with the Resource Mobilization Theory), a voice for the public, and a framework of creating a more equitable decision making process. These three theories have been combined with other theories, models, research and perspectives to develop a conceptual framework of effective public participation. This framework is presented in the following section and utilized in the presentation of the results in Chapter 4.

Effective Public Participation - A Conceptual Framework

While the three theories presented in the previous section are central to this research, they do not provide a clear picture as to what constitutes effective public participation. They provide a framework of how the public can have more power in the

decision making process, through government mandated opportunities with Arnstein's (1969) ladder and the Model of Citizen Participation and Empowerment (Rich et al., 1995), or through community mobilization with the Resource Mobilization Theory (Jenkins, 1983; Nelson, 1994). However, these theories do not clearly outline pragmatic elements of a more participatory decision making process. In addition, these three theories alone continue to present a fragmented view of public participation in which key elements such as the roles of government and public are not easily compared in government and public initiated participation. The following conceptual framework of effective public participation incorporates these theories with other theories, models and perspectives to outline key elements to effective public participation based on the literature.

Table 1

A Conceptual Framework of Effective Public Participation

	Government Initiated	Public Initiated
Role of Community	community-based (Graham & Phillips, 1998; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993)	community driven
Political Process	political process (involves political system- elected and staff- and public) (Graham & Phillips, 1998)	political action (Resource Mobilization Theory)
Education	public education (By government) (Graham & Phillips, 1998)	public education (by community to create awareness and public support; community become educated through the resource mobilization process)

| Nature of Process | flexible process based on capacity of community (Graham & Phillips, 1998; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993)

partnership decision making (evidence in Borrini-Feyerabend, 1999; McLaren, 1995: Meredith. 1995) | adversarial, reactive, creating public pressure on government (Resource Mobilization Theory) |
|---|---|---|
| The Public's Knowledge of Decision Making Process | transparent process (Graham & Phillips, 1998) | public may or may not have knowledge of the decision making process |
| Interest Represented | decision making process incorporates stakeholder perspectives, both (evident in democratic theory) government and the public (general and particular stakeholder groups) | represents interests of community (evident in participatory democratic theory; based on definition of effective public participation) |
| Empowerment | public empowered through the process (Rich et al., 1995) | empowering process (evident in literature through education and community capacity building of skills, knowledge and resources and linked to empowerment through Rich et al., 1995) |

Based on the presentation of theory in this chapter, arriving at a view of effective

public participation may seem confusing, if not unattainable. At the outset of this

research, I assumed that more participation in government decision making was always

better than less public participation. While this is not false, it certainly is not true;

effective public participation is much more elusive.

Ideally, a decision making process reflects the interests of the general public,

government (elected and civil servants) and those members of the public most affected by the decision, such that the resulting decision is acceptable to all those involved. **However, I would suggest, based on the literature that there is a distinction between effective decision making and effective public participation in a decision. Effective public participation occurs when those most affected by it have influenced that decision. They may not be formally involved in the decision making process, but they have power in influencing that decision.**

From this literature review it seems that there is a movement toward more participatory decision making, though there still remains room for much improvement. This is suggested in the shift in debate of the relevance of public participation to discussion regarding the implementation of public participation theory and values.

We have also learned that social movements and community mobilization are beneficial for individuals, communities and society. Therefore, effective public participation should encompass both participatory decision making and community mobilization. Table 1 summarizes the conceptual framework for effective public participation. I have drawn on much of the literature review to develop this framework. In particular, the works of Graham and Phillips (1998), Kretzman and McKnight (1993), and Resource Mobilization Theory (Jenkins, 1983; Nelson, 1994) have been important in tying together the elements important to both government and public initiated public participation. In addition, the link drawn between public participation and empowerment presented by Rich et al. (1995) has been influential in the development of this framework. I have drawn somewhat on the research in general to add to the idea of effective public

participation where it seemed that the literature indicated a particular element, but it was not explicitly developed in a previously discussed theory.

To what extent should the public hold power in the decision making process? Evidence the there can be a redistribution of power in the decision making process in which the public has greater power, though not necessarily the final decision making power. Such a decision making process still result in politically and environmentally sustainable decisions. The models presented in this literature review of participatory decision making situate the power of the public in decision making ranging from having one of having input in, to one of having impact on the decision.

The opportunities to participate must be innovative and creative to meet the diverse capacities of the various communities that participate in the decision making. This may involve a redefinition of the decision making process, as with the cooperative model of siting waste management facilities, or it may be in the form of traditional public meetings. The method of public participation is effective when it brings to light the interests of the community and the general public in an equitable and just manner in the decision making process.

Effective public initiated participation results when those who are most impacted by a decision influence that decision. This is achieved through shared decision making, but it is also successfully achieved through organized community mobilizations and social interventions. These mobilizations and interventions are often successful when they are organized in structure and action. In particular, organization in action results with an organized plan based on long term objectives achievable through numerous short term

objectives. In effective public participation the community is central to the process. In government initiated participation the decision making is community-based, coming from the community but reflecting the needs of government. In effective public initiated participation, the actions are more than community based, they are community driven.

Effective public participation is inherently political. Within the structure of government in government initiated participation, decision making is political in the sense that it draws on the political, governmental structure from personnel (elected government and civil servants) to resources. Community mobilization, on the other hand, is adversarial, reactive and, indeed political, in the creation of political pressure to move the community issue. Effective public participation involves public education, from government educating the public to empower and informing the public, to the public educating itself to create awareness and build support in the public eye.

Central to public participation is the concept of empowerment. Effective public participation empowers communities through empowering the members and institutions of the community (Rich et al., 1995). Empowerment can be achieved in many ways in public participation, but in general it occurs in process and outcome. Does effective public participation result in empowering outcomes? Ideally this would be the case. However, a just and equitable decision in which there was much compromise and negotiation may be suitable, but not empowering. Is effective public participation an empowering process? Effective public participation, as described, is an empowering process in which there is equal access to resources and information (not just access to information, but understanding the information) and a respect for multiple perspectives

and ways of knowing.

Good public participation suggests that the public influences the decision making process in proactive manner. Indeed this is effective public participation. However, public participation initiated by the public in a reactive manner can also be effective when the result is influence on the decision. Therefore, effective public participation may not be ideal, but it achieves the goal of influence and impact on the decision making process.

Conclusion

While there is substantial information available in public participation theory and research, there are many areas that are still unclear and unanswered in the current literature. In addition, the dynamic nature of this phenomenon demands research that is consistent and current with the transitions in the state of public participation.

In particular, current research is lacking in inductive qualitative analyses of the experiences of people engaged in the process of public participation. Also, the nature of the information available continues to reflect the division between government and public in that one source of research rarely addresses both perspectives. There is a lack of research that explores public participation from the perspective that both government and the public are equal stakeholders in decision making.

This research addresses some of these gaps in the current literature. My inductive qualitative research explores public participation from the experiences and perspectives of government and public interest groups as stakeholders in government decision making.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter presents the theoretical orientation of the research and research methods. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research, actions, theory, and context, to better understand the research process, findings and potential applications.

I begin this chapter with the methodological assumptions which guide this research. These assumptions are followed by a general overview of the research process as a whole. The next section describes the participants and the way in which they became involved in the study. The methods of data collection and analysis are then presented. Finally, I present the ethical considerations for this research and how these concerns were addressed. The chapter ends with my reflections of the research process, particularly the challenges I faced as a community researcher.

Methodological Assumptions

Qualitative research contends that the research cannot exist independent of the researcher. This certainly holds true for this research. As a researcher, I am situated firmly in the constructivist paradigm. This is reflected in the constructivist nature of the research design, with the emphasis on a phenomenological approach to understanding the issues. The constructivist approach to this research is also evident in the flexible qualitative research "design". These defining concepts, constructivism, phenomenology, inductive research process, and qualitative methods, are described in this section.

Constructivism

The basic beliefs and assumptions that a researcher holds in how knowledge exists, has considerable implications for research. It influences all areas of the research,

even the development of the research questions. Conventional research is distinguished in its orientation to an objectivist paradigm that is based on the assumptions that there is one truth, answer or solution in the research. This truth can be attained separate from the researcher's influence and is achievable through a deductive inquiry that controls the context to understand this truth (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

An alternative paradigm is constructivism. Research oriented to a constructivist paradigm is based on the assumption that there are multiple truths that are socially constructed. The work of research is toward better understanding these truths in a process that is holistic and is based in the research context. This approach of research is based on the assumption that the researcher influences the research and this assumption is embraced to the extent that the researcher is considered a tool of the research. The research process is flexible and results are based on the collaborative construction of a new truth (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Phenomenology

Phenomenology as a term is considered an epistemology, paradigm, and an approach to research. Phenomenology is based on the assumption that an individual knows his/her own reality (constructivism). A phenomenological research approach is based on this assumption, in that "there is an essence or essences to shared experience" (Patton, 1990, p. 70). Research from a phenomenological perspective seeks to explore the phenomenon under study through "methods that capture's people's experience" of the phenomenon (Patton, 1990, p. 71).

Qualitative Methods

Research oriented in a constructivist paradigm and a phenomenological perspective is well suited to qualitative methods. Such research requires exploring the experiences of participants in their context and working collaboratively to reconstruct an understanding of the phenomenon under study. Qualitative methods are best suited to such research.

Qualitative methods seek to illuminate the event or issue under study in its context. Qualitative methods are more than simply working with words versus numbers. Qualitative methodologies are used to bring to light the experiences or the issue through finding common patterns in each of the unique contributions of each participant (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Inductive Research Process

Research, qualitative or quantitative, positivist or constructivist, objective or subjective, however it is designed and planned, will often change from its original outline. Particularly in natural settings, research must be open to unanticipated influences that will impact on the research process, methodology and even the research questions. An inductive research process is one that has an emergent design. In includes the familiar research components, a research purpose, research questions, proposed data collection and methods of analysis, and even time-lines. Inductive research is reflexive and changes based on the emerging findings (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

An inductive approach to research is illustrated in many ways in the research process, most notably in the inductive analysis. This bears some discussion as it is

57

something that I struggled with in this research process. Inductive analysis of data does not seek to support or challenge a theory in the analysis of the data. Inductive analysis is a process of making sense, finding commonality and contradiction in the data, of complex experiences (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Summary

Opening the discussion of how one's beliefs influence the research, is like opening a Pandora's box. When we critically assess the very assumption of how reality exists, this opens all aspects of the research to critical questioning. Challenging as it may be, this discussion on the epistemological assumptions of the research is crucial to learning, understanding and, having confidence in the research. This is a necessary balance between critically assessing the research, the core assumptions, and not losing the research and findings in that questioning. The intent of this section is to identify these core assumptions and provide a base of information to orient this research in its theoretical assumptions. These core assumptions are evident in all aspects of the research: purpose, process and outcomes.

The purpose of my research is to study the issue of public participation from those who have engaged in the process of public participation. This issue is studied exploring these real life experiences in their context with the intent of developing an common understanding of public participation as it exists today in land decisions in Prince Edward Island.

General Research Process

The general research process is outlined in Appendix A. To explore the issue of

public participation in provincial government land use decisions on Prince Edward Island,

I chose case study using in-depth interviews. I selected a case study as a way of

understanding public participation for the following reasons. A case study is a great

source of in-depth and detailed information that occurs over time and in a context (Yin,

1989). I used document analysis and key informant interviews as the main methods to

gather data for the case study. In addition, I conducted in-depth interviews with key

informants participants, independent of the case study.

Participants were interviewed over a period of four months (February to May

2000) with a semi-structured interview format (Appendix B). During this time,

documents related to the case study were collected. The data were analyzed in June, 2000

and case reports were distributed to participants for feedback in July, 2000.

Participant and Stakeholder Feedback

The research process has been based in Participatory Action Research (PAR), a

research approach that joins the principles of participatory research, involving

stakeholders in the research process, with action research, research that creates change.

PAR is presented in this section as it is a form of participatory decision making and its

application in research suggests that roles defined by power imbalances, researcher and

research participant, can be redefined to redistribute the power (Nelson, Ochocka, Griffin,

& Lord, 1998).

PAR includes major stakeholders throughout the research process, in such a

manner that both the researcher and participants become co-researchers (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Patton, 1990). In this research process, the role of the researcher is redefined from one who controls the research process to a facilitator for research participants (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Much like the struggles of decision makers in land use planning and governance, researchers who engage in participatory research are challenged to create a research process with the goals of achieving quality research in an empowering process in which, ultimately, stakeholders have the power in the research. When researchers and stakeholders research in a collective and collaborative manner to create change in the research process and the outcomes, then PAR becomes a form of social change (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Patton, 1990).

Participant feedback was crucial to this research for several reasons. Practically, participatory research that involves stakeholders in the research is considered to produce findings that are more acceptable to stakeholders (Patton, 1990). Also, from my perspective as a researcher, I would not be comfortable with a research project that explores public participation, but did not reflect participatory research. I wanted participants to feel included in the process. I wanted them to be empowered in the process. Perhaps most importantly, participants were involved in the research process because I wanted them to have as much ownership as possible in the results. It is particularly important that participants have control over their information in the research process, therefore participant feedback was utilized as a means of ensuring that participants controlled their information, particularly direct quotes which have been incorporated in this thesis.

Participants were involved in the research process through personal interviews and through feedback. With a first round of feedback, all participants were provided with their typed case reports. In the second round of feedback, all participants were asked for feedback on the outcome recommendations. Participants were also asked for feedback on sections of the results in which their interviews were used to construct common themes.

Feedback from other stakeholder groups was also sought on the final outcome recommendations. The reason for this request, was to promote the action research focus of this research. I hope that in seeking feedback from these stakeholder groups, the outcome recommendations will continue to evolve. The outcome recommendations were distributed to government (elected officials and civil servants), special interest groups, and members of the public who have and have not been engaged in public participation in Provincial Government land decisions.

Feedback on the outcome recommendations is ongoing and now exists independent of the research. This is a necessary part of action research. While the completion of the thesis sees the completion of the academic research, the action research emphasis calls for continued refinement and implementation of the outcome recommendations.

Participants and Sampling

In total, 10 people were interviewed: six for the case study and four Key Informants. I chose to select participants using purposeful sampling. Main criteria included: strong involvement with the community, strong knowledge and strong experience n the research issue. The value of purposeful sampling is that

participants can provide information that is very specific and focused on the research question (Patton, 1990). Purposeful sampling was necessary for this research because there is a small population of potential participants. In addition, the focus of this research is on learning from and joining multiple perspectives on public participation, particularly in provincial government land decisions, the research requires a sample of individuals with diverse roles and who have experienced the issue under research.

Case Study

I selected the case study of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility for several reasons. First, it was a weil publicized issue, so the sampling process and access of documents was easy. This case study was also selected because there was much conflict and ambiguity over the Government decision making process associated with the issue. I was particularly interested in two aspects of this conflict. If we know, from experience and from research, that the siting of a waste management facility is, at the least, contentious, is there a way to prevent this conflict? Secondly, the community presented a very well organized opposition to both the decision and the decision making process.

This supports the selection of the case study based on what Stake (1994) identifies as an instrumental case study. In this type of case study, the case is selected to further explore an issue, rather than the extraordinary characteristics of the case. The general criteria for participants was that they had played an active role (as Community Member or Government Advisors) in the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility.

Case Study Community Members

Participants were recruited at a monthly meeting of the Tracadie Area Residents for Resource Protection, or TARRP. I attended this meeting, and briefly spoke with TARRP about my research, its purpose and what their participation would involved, similar to the telephone script in Appendix D. Potential participants were asked to contact me if they were interested in learning more about the research. I also wanted participants to contact me after the meeting, rather than at the meeting, to ensure their anonymity.

Case Study Government Advisors

As the number of potential participants for this group was limited, participants were approached by myself. Case Study Government Advisors were identified by two methods. First, I inquired with key informants, who were linked to the case study, though not directly, as to who was involved in the decision to site the Waste Watch facility in Tracadie Cross. In addition, Government Advisors were also identified in the document analysis, through public documents or newspaper articles.

The Case Study Sample

The sample of case study participants is described as a whole (community members and government advisors) to protect the identity of participants. The sample was comprised a total of six people, three members from TARRP and three representatives of Government Advisors.

The case study sample was comprised of 4 males and 2 females in the sample. Participants ranged in age from mid thirties to mid sixties. The experiences of

participants in public participation range from limited involvement to decades of experience with government and public initiated participation. Participants represented various occupations, farmers, fishers, civil servants, social activists, and educators.

This sample size was deemed sufficient for the purpose of this research because interviews became similar at the third interview, or sampling to the point of redundancy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By the third interview, the experiences of Community Members seemed to be similar. Case Study Government Advisors were sampled to the point of redundancy, with one caveat. It became clear during the research process that the decision to site the Waste Watch facility in the community of Tracadie Cross was ultimately a decision made at the level of the Provincial Cabinet. Attempts were made to have a member of Cabinet to participate in the research. However, I was unsuccessful in this attempt. This is clearly a flaw in the sample. In an effort to obtain the perspectives of elected officials in this research, outcome recommendations have been sent to the Premier and the Ministers representing environment, agriculture, and forestry.

Key Informant Participants

Key Informant participants were selected using the method of intensity sampling. A total of four Key Informant participants were interviewed. The sample resulted in participants that represent a sample of 2 males and 2 females. The ages of participants ranged from early thirties to mid sixties. They represented diverse interests: senior level civil servants, public interest groups, academia, and public citizens. Among the sample, participants also have been involved in land issues in forestry, agriculture, fishery, and other land or environmental issues. These individuals have been actively involved in the

64

issue of Government land decisions in Prince Edward Island for many years. They have represented public and government interest at the community, provincial and national levels.

<div align="center">Data Gathering and Analysis</div>

<div align="center">Data Gathering</div>

Two forms of data were collected, documents and interviews. Document analysis was used to construct the skeleton of the case study. Document analysis is a useful approach to data collection for case studies and is used widely for issues covered in the media (Patton, 1990). Document analysis was selected as a means to collect data for the case study and to provide information about the actions and events in the case study. Newspaper articles were easily accessible and those articles in the local newspaper from the period of September, 1998 to September 1999 were examined. Formal reports were identified by participants, key informants and reviewing newspaper articles for possible documents sources.

In-depth interviews were conducted with case study participants and key informant participants. In depth interviews are a method of data collection that is widely accepted and very suitable to research from a constructivist paradigm and naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Again, the purpose of in depth interviews was to gather information in a process that was structured through a semi-structured interview format, but open to exploring and delving into the experiences and knowledge that participants held. I chose to add the key informant participants to the research in consideration of the action portion of the research. The goal of the research is to develop outcome

<div align="center">65</div>

recommendations, I therefore believed adding the key informants as a means to broaden

the experiences explored in the research and to ensure that the outcome recommendations

would be applicable outside the context of the case study.

Document Analysis

Documents considered in this report were legislation, public papers, public reports

and newspaper articles. Documents analyzed in this research were public papers in the

form of the TARRP Position Paper (February 1999), public reports in the form of the

Report on Site Selection by the Island Waste Management Commission (September

1998), and over 100 newspaper articles from The Guardian, The Eastern Graphic, and

The West Prince Graphic.

Documents were analyzed to provide the core of the case study. A content

analysis of events, actions, decisions related to the case of the Tracadie Cross Waste

Watch facility were identified in the documents. Document analysis resulted in little new

knowledge. Document analysis proved useful for supporting information presented by

participants. While the case of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility has been based

the Report on Site Selection, it has supplemented with some key newspaper articles and

even statements from participants to clarify some points.

Interview Analysis

Case Report Development

Transcripts were read once to become refreshed with the data. The responses to

each question were analyzed by content analysis in which I identified statements that

reflected the key concepts and open questions in Appendix C. This was done by coding

in the right hand margin key words, concepts and phrases. The responses to questions in each section were then organized into four sections: experiences with the case study and/or public participation in Provincial Government land decisions, decision making, opinions and perspective, and future applications for Prince Edward Island. This process was consistent with the design thus far. However, the interview format was flexible and therefore issues often surfaced at different points during interviews. Therefore themes from each question were categorized irrespective of the question or section in which it occurred. For example, if a participant made a statement in describing their experiences of public participation as contrary to what they thought public participation should be, then that statement was considered in both the sections of "experiences" and also in the section of "opinions and perspectives of public participation". The themes (major points or patterns of statements, ideas or experiences) of each section for each participant were then summarized. Each section with its summarized themes was amalgamated into one case report for each participant.

Case reports consisted of the major themes for each section (e.g., feeling of exclusion in the decision making process), a summary of my interpretation of that theme, and one or more quotes from the interview with that participant. Providing this information allowed participants to verify and correct what I interpreted as the distinctive theme(s), how I interpreted those themes, and the statement that I believed best illustrated this theme. It also provided an opportunity for the participant to have control over whether a statement was found in the text of the thesis.

Case and Cross Case Analysis

From this point onward, the case reports were used as the main data source. A matrix (Appendix D) was developed in which each cell (where column and row meet) contained the themes of that section for that participant. This allowed for cross case analysis. Patterns for each section for each group (A- Community Members, B- Government Advisors, and C- Key Informant) were explored. Cross case analysis was attempted for all participants (A, B, and C), for Case Study (A and B), for Community Members (A and participants 8-10), and for Government Advisors (B and participant 7). Most cross case analyses were unsuccessful in presenting any new themes beyond those already developed. The results, therefore reflect analysis for each group of participants (case study and key informant) and all participants as a whole.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) address the assumption that naturalistic inquiry is not as trustworthy as traditional scientific research by outlining four criteria for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was sought in three ways. First, credibility in the interpretation and viability of outcomes was sought through participant and stakeholder feedback. Credibility was also sought in the case study through triangulation of data sources, with documents and participant interviews from Community Members and Government Advisors. Finally, credibility was also sought with triangulation of Case Study participants with Key Informant participants, supporting the research in the broader phenomenon of public participation in Provincial Government Land Decisions.

Transferability in the research was sought on three levels. First, Key Informant participants supported applying case study results to the Island context. Also feedback from non-participant stakeholder supports applying the outcome recommendations to the Island context by providing another means of member checking. Finally, transferability of the research to other research context can only be achieved through a rich description of the research context. This is achieved in numerous ways, particularly through the description of the case study, the detailed illustration of land issues on Prince Edward Island, and the emphasis on the research context throughout the research.

Dependability and confirmability of the findings were sought through triangulation and an audit trail. I used various data sources and multiple stakeholder perspectives. An audit trail was also used to record the research in the development of the research process and even the process of refining the research theory as a whole.

Ethical Considerations

This research has met the ethical requirement for Wilfrid Laurier University. The participants were initially invited to participate in this research study by telephone or email (Appendix E). For those who expressed an interest in participating I sent a detailed information letter and a letter of informed consent by mail or email (Appendix F and G). At the time of the interview I reviewed the informed consent with the participant and addressed any questions or concerns before we completed the informed consent.

Risks for participants in this study were related to confidentiality and anonymity. Given the public and political nature of the study, I had concern for maintaining the anonymity of participants. These concerns were addressed in ensuring that names were

not attached to tapes or transcripts. In addition, names and other identifiers were removed from quotes used in this report. Also, asking participants for feedback further ensured their control of the information presented in the final thesis. These precautions were taken for all participants. All participants were informed of the risks in the letter of informed consent. I also expressed in this letter and verbally with participants prior to completion of the informed consent, that I was open to using other methods they felt were necessary to further protect their anonymity and confidentiality.

In reflecting on the ethical considerations, anonymity and confidentiality are real concerns given the size of the community and the political nature of this issue. However, my impression during the data collection process was that many participants were bothered by the process of informed consent. In fact, with a few participants, it seemed that they were almost insulted by the process. Perhaps there was too much emphasis on confidentiality and anonymity. In the future, I would be inclined to present the option to participants of having anonymity along with the reason inherent in the decision and, allow the participant to decide what they would prefer.

The benefit to participating in this research for participants stems from the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences as individuals and as a collective with all participants with the intent, through the action research design, to create change. In particular, TARRP expressed an interest in influencing the decision making process. Therefore, participating in this research was a means to work toward that goal.

The Research Process, Some Conclusions

Research in communities must be flexible and adaptive to the research situation. I cannot conclude for certain, but I believe that having the Provincial election called in March of 2000, during data collection, had a considerable impact on this research in delaying the data collection and responses of potential participants. Due to the political nature of the issue I was hesitant to contact potential participants during the election period, particularly those who represented Government Advisors. This caused a delay in the research process. After the election there was also a period of readjustment in which the Provincial Cabinet was changed considerably. This may have been a factor in not having an elected representative agree to participate in the research, a notable flaw in this research.

I have learned a great deal from this research process. Obviously it was a process of learning about public participation, as it should be, but I also learned a great deal about my role as a researcher, particularly a community researcher. The position of a community researcher is a precarious one. In qualitative research, the researcher is an instrument to the research. Therefore, a researcher from the community has more knowledge of the setting and is likely well connected to the community. There is also a benefit for the researcher, because the outcome of the research can add to creating change in one's home community.

In this research, I was a researcher and a stakeholder. I am an Islander and I have taken an active role in land decisions for several years. I have met with participants for interviewing, and with some participants I have met on other occasions for feedback. I

have been in the research setting throughout the research process. The fact that I am from the community has not necessarily made this better research, but it has, I believe, facilitated in making this good research.

There are also challenges and disadvantages being a community researcher. I would say that it is my role as a member of the community that has been the greatest challenge for me in this research process. I know many of the participants, they are part of my community and, for me, I have placed considerable pressure on myself to accurately reflect their experiences and contributions in the research. In particular, Prince Edward Island is small in size. Communities, organizations and government are equally small. I have been concerned that in critically assessing actions, decisions, and their implications, there may be a sense of personal accusation. This of course is not the intent. The personal attachment to the research, the participants and the setting means there are personal and professional investments to ensure the research and the research process include the community. The role of a community researcher is a great challenge, but it also becomes personal issue. I don't leave my community when the work is done.

Chapter 4 Results and Discussion

In this chapter the results are presented from both document analysis and in-depth interviews with participants. This chapter is presented in three sections. In the first section of this chapter, the Case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility is presented, first with the Case Story of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility and then through the experiences of both groups of case study participants, Community Members and Government Advisors, are presented. This section ends, with a discussion of the case study in relation to the conceptual framework of effective public participation. Finally I discuss lessons learned from the case study.

In the second section of this chapter themes from interviews with Key Informant participants (with the inclusion of one quote from a case study participant) are presented. These themes illustrate the present state of public participation in Provincial Government land decisions. I end this section illustrating the context of public participation in Government land decisions in Prince Edward Island in parallelling the results of the case study with themes emerging from interviews with Key Informant participants.

This chapter ends with factors contributing to effective public participation based on interviews with all participants. This section reflects the multi-stakeholder perspective from which the results are derived, in the broad view of public participation.

The Case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility

Site Selection Process

When the PEI Waste Management Commission was given the mandate to select a

site for the Island wide implementation of Waste Watch, a Waste Watch pilot recycling

and composting program had been functioning in East Prince, Prince Edward Island for

several years. The PEI Waste Management Commission, though appointed by the

Provincial Government, was made up of members of the public from across Prince

Edward Island. Government was represented by one member of this committee. To

fulfill the mandate of selecting a site, the PEI Waste Management Commission developed

a subcommittee (Site Selection Committee) to oversee much of the site selection process.

The Site Selection Committee advertised the criteria for site selection and presented a call

for public submission of possible sites by press release and press conference. At this

point, the Site Selection Committee hired ADI Limited (a local engineering firm) as a

consultant to perform much of the site selection process (Island Waste Management

Commission, 1998).

ADI developed factors and criteria for the site selection process in consultation

with the Site Selection Committee. A scoring process was then developed by ADI

through the weighting and scoring of these factors and criteria by members of the public

and a Study Team. Public scoring was completed by a focus group of 18 members of the

public (Island Waste Management Commission, 1998). Factors and criteria were given a

weight based on their relative importance. The public focus group weighed factors based

on their relative importance, providing ADI with a sense of what factors were important in the view of public in the siting of a waste management facility. The Study Team weighed factors based on technical relevance. The weighing from the focus group was combined with the technical rating of factors and criteria completed by the Study Team to result in the score for each criterion on which sites were assessed for suitability in the site selection process (Island Waste Management Commission, 1998).

At this point, 18 sites were evaluated using the weighted criteria. These 18 sites were identified as possible locations for the waste management facility by three sources: the public, the Site Selection Committee, and ADI (five sites of Crown land identified by ADI). The eighteen sites were evaluated using the scoring process developed by ADI , through the public focus group and Study Team. In July of 1998, ADI submitted a report summarizing the findings of the evaluation of the eighteen sites and presented four sites to further evaluate their suitability as a possible sire for the Waste Watch facility. At this point, the site of Tracadie Cross was not included in the list of 18 evaluated sites (Island Waste Management Commission, 1998).

Shortly thereafter, further testing for suitability began on the four sites identified by ADI in the July 1998 report. Two of the four sites were withdrawn from the site selection process because the Site Selection Committee was unable to purchase the private land associated with these two sites that would be necessary to meet a required buffer zone area. In August 1998, the Site Selection Committee was asked by the Provincial Government to consider two additional sites involving Crown land. Once the Site Selection Committee secured the private land associated with the site, these

additional two sites were scored with the same process the used to assess the previous 18

sites (Island Waste Management Commission, 1998).

On September 1, 1998, the Island Waste Management Commission submitted the

Report on Site Selection for the proposed new Waste Watch facility. At this point, Island

Waste Management Commission presented four of the high-scoring sites that they

determined to be appropriate for further environmental assessment (Island Waste

Management Commission, 1998). It was suggested by the Island Waste Management

Commission that the Provincial Government follow a process for site selection that was

used to situate a Waste Watch facility previously in Prince Edward Island. With such a

process the Provincial Government would inform the four communities in which the top

four sites were located, that a site in their community was being considered for a new

waste management facility. Then, a process of public education and consultation with

these four communities would follow.

The suggestion of the Island Waste Management Commission was not heeded.

How the decision that Tracadie Cross was the location of the new Waste Watch facility is

unclear. What is known is that The Report on Site Selection was dated September 1,

1998. By all accounts, the decision to situate the Waste Watch facility in the community

of Tracadie Cross was at the Provincial Cabinet level. On the evening of September 2,

1998, the local Member of the Legislative Assembly and the Minister of the Environment

approached members of the community of Tracadie Cross to inform them that a site in

their community was selected as the site of the new Waste Watch facility. This decision

was made public the next day.

76

Community Mobilization

The residents of the area surrounding the proposed site began to meet within a week after the community learning of the decision to situate the Waste Watch facility in Tracadie Cross. It started only with a few residents of the community. However, over the next few weeks, the residents of Tracadie Cross and neighbouring communities began to meet more regularly. This core group of community members became known as TARRP (Tracadie Area Residents for Resource Protection). TARRP was a large and diverse group, representing people of all ages (The Guardian, December 18, 1998) and various interests.

> *"The door was open to anybody who wanted to come and give input in the decisions. The weekly meetings, I mean some were attended sometimes by 45 people. There were always around 40 and 35, and when attendance was down to 25, that was considered to be a small number for the weekly meeting... One of the really interesting things about TARRP that was that it was across the board. There were farmers, there were fishers, there were teachers, there were public relations people, social activists, environmentalists, small business people, housewives, Aboriginal people came in and out as part of it; there was even a journalist who participated a lot. There were government workers, civil servants, you name it. Everybody in the community."* (Case Study Community Member)

Over the next year TARRP organized and acted to challenge the Provincial Government decision to situate the Waste Watch facility in its community. Numerous activities took place. There were weekly meetings open to the public. Government representatives were invited, as were guest speakers.

Government was represented at these meetings by the Department of Environment at all levels: civil servants, senior civil servants with Deputy Ministers, ministerial and, even the Premier. There were three outside experts invited from across North America to speak with TARRP about the decision, its viability, suitability and alternatives. In

addition, there were tours of the site, public protests on the Provincial Legislature, letter writing campaigns to provincial and federal officials, ongoing contact with media (in particular print media), community fundraising activities, community newsletters were distributed and, a web-site was developed to provide updates on the activities of TARRP (The Guardian, November 13, 18, 27, 1998).

TARRP was organized not only in its activities, but in its focus. They challenged the decision to sit the Waste Watch facility in their community on several grounds. First, TARRP challenged the decision because they saw the process as flawed, not being satisfied with an explanation of how their site, moved from a ranking of seven to one. Second, TARRP also challenged the lack of public involvement in the decision making process. Finally the decision was challenged on the grounds that they believed that more environmentally sensitive waste management process could be implemented (TARRP Position Paper, 1999)

The case of Tracadie Cross was well publicized. There was coverage from radio, television and print media. Indeed, a perusal of The Guardian, a local newspaper for Prince Edward Island, from September 1998 to September 1999 identified in excess of 50 articles, opinion pieces or letters to the editor in reference to the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility and an additional 20 articles, letters and opinion pieces regarding the state of Island-wide implementation of Waste Watch.

In late May 1999 the Provincial Government decided against privatization of Waste Watch. Instead, it would become the responsibility of a Crown Corporation, the Island Waste Management Corporation. This Corporation would manage the Island wide

implementation of Waste Watch, under the supervision of a Board (The Guardian, May 22, 1999).

After more than a year of organized activity by TARRP, the Provincial Government announced that Tracadie Cross would not be the site for the Waste Watch facility. With this decision, TARRP was successful in achieving one of its major goals, the reversal of the decision to sit the Waste Watch facility in their community. While this resolved the question of the sitting of the Waste Watch facility in Tracadie Cross, this decision resulted in two further questions: What would happen to the piece of land on which the Waste Watch facility was to be situated? And where would the new Waste Watch facility be situated?

While many groups may have called an end to their work with such a decision, TARRP continued to meet. Weekly meetings turned to monthly meetings to resolve the fate of the parcel of land. Many possibilities were explored. The possibility of the land being used as a Native spiritual healing ground was considered as Native artifacts were discovered on the site. Turning the land into a forest regeneration location was another suggestion, but to this date, no plans have been finalized for the proposed site of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility.

Experiences of Case Study Participants

The story of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility describes the decisions and actions taken, but reports fail to describe the impact of these actions on those most connected with the decision. To understand these events they must be considered in the context of those involved. The Community Member participants shared their experiences

with TARRP, about what motivated them, and about what they have taken from this experience, as individuals and as a community. The participants representing Government Advisors discussed their experiences in the site selection process and the conflict between Government and TARRP. The experiences of both Community Member and Government Advisor participants are presented in the following section, revealing similarities and differences.

The Resource of Knowledge

The theme of knowledge was discussed on several occasions by all participants, and can be further divided into two sub-themes. The first sub-theme, a missed opportunity for shared knowledge and experience (in the decision making process), refers to both groups of case study participants expressing a lack of opportunity to share their experience and knowledge in the decision making process. The second sub-theme, addresses the role of outside experts. Both groups of case study participants spoke of the presence of outside experts that were brought to Tracadie Cross by TARRP.

Missed opportunity for shared knowledge and experience. Arriving at the decision to site the Waste Watch Facility independent of community consultation and, to do so contrary to the advice of those with previous decision making experience, was discussed often in interviews with participants. Participants expressed the sense that they could have informed the decision making process, but their knowledge and experience were either not sought, as in the case of Community Members, or disregarded, as in the case of the Government Advisor participants.

Community Members expressed knowledge of the site selected, the natural

80

environment and potential implications for the local fishery. They did not see these factors considered in the decision making process.

> *"I was tossing around in my mind why this wasn't a good site for a landfill to begin with, especially as far as the fisheries is concerned, because where they proposed it be located was a kilometre and a half from Tracadie Bay, which is on the North Shore of Prince Edward Island, and a kilometre and a half from the Hillsborough River, which is on the south side of PEI."* (Community Member)

Participants representing Government Advisors had invested their time and knowledge in this process and expressed a sense of resignation that this was the way decisions are made. They indicated that the decision making process was a missed opportunity for sharing information with both the Provincial Cabinet and the community. Participants representing Government Advisors had the role of informing and advising government and, had the process been followed as they suggested, there would have been a process of public education as the four top-ranking sites were further assessed for feasibility. For many, they carried years of experience and knowledge in the very issue of waste management facilities and presented what they saw as a process and decision that were fair and just.

> *"Government (elected representatives) doesn't always listen to civil servants and bureaucrats. They want to put their own spin on it. If I was sitting around the Cabinet Table, I would have told them all this but you don't have that opportunity. You try to shove the material up the lines so that they understand. I don't know who they listen to. They have their own way of doing things. There is a part of it is done in isolation"* (Case Study Government Advisor)

> *"We recommended to government that a full discussion take place within those four communities. We hold public meetings, we give them (the communities) a footprint of the site, what was going to happen. All of the action, the cost involved, the whole works. Government chose not to take that approach"* (Case Study Government Advisor)

The role of outside experts. Throughout the process of community mobilization,

TARRP brought outside experts to Prince Edward Island. For TARRP, these outside

experts provided a source of great information. It also seems that it provided an

opportunity to create awareness in the public eye of their issue and, perhaps add

credibility to their effort.

> "...what you do is you research and there are people out there that are so
> knowledgeable about so many things, as we found out. They've (outside experts)
> been all over the place and seen so much damage to the environment through
> ignorance, and researched them carefully, and done so much work on all of these
> issues. So you pick their brains. You're not expected to know everything, for
> goodness sake. But you are expected to know where to find answers. " (Case
> Study Community Member)

For Government Advisors, the role of outside experts was questioned, as was the

information they presented. Government Advisor participants often remarked of the

misinformation that outside experts presented. This misinformation was more than a

disagreement in "what is relevant knowledge", rather the knowledge that was questioned

was more contextual, based on lack of knowledge about Prince Edward Island.

> "The one (outside expert) I most enjoyed was when they brought in (outside
> expert) to declare what a marvellous area that was going to be destroyed. She
> stood on an area that was a farm back in the 1930's and declared it was a virgin
> woodlot. " (Case Study Government Advisor)

Exclusion in the TARRP Decision

Both Community Members and Government Advisors expressed a sense of

exclusion or shock in the decision to site the Waste Watch Facility in Tracadie Cross.

While it was expected that the Community Member participants would express exclusion,

I was surprised that Government Advisor participants expressed surprise in the decision.

The expression of exclusion for both groups of participants stemmed from the same

action, the decision of Cabinet to decide, independent of community involvement, to sit the Waste Watch facility in Tracadie Cross.

Exclusion of community members. For the community of Tracadie Cross the decision was a shock. They were not aware that their community was being considered as a site for the Waste Watch facility. Community Member participants, first heard of the decision on the evening of September 1, 1998, when the local Member of the Legislative Assembly and Minister of Environment informed a selected few in the community.

Participants described feeling a lack of respect in the decision making process and a lack of democracy. Perhaps it was this sense of exclusion that motivated the Community Member participants to become involved in TARRP. I believe it was more likely the decision, which resulted from an exclusion of the community and therefore did not represent their interests, that motivated this group of participants. However, as the decision was made in an exclusive manner, this was a means for the public to challenge government on the decision making process.

> *"And they were absolutely amazed, because there was no consultation whatsoever, as I understood it. Well I heard about this about a week later. And immediately, that piqued my interest, because the total lack of democracy. That's what really got me started in the first place . . . But it was the total lack of democracy that really bugged me."* (Case Study Community Member)

> *"I guess that was my biggest challenge, on a personal level the lack of respect that the higher, the people in authority don't respect the people that aren't in the position of authority. They forget the people who trusted them to make important choices."* (Case Study Community Member)

Exclusion of decision makers. Participants representing Government Advisors also expressed exclusion, not in the decision itself, but in the surprise of the process in which the final decision was made. This group of participants had previous experience in

83

the site selection process in the siting of a waste management facility. When the results

of the site selection report were presented to the Provincial Government it was

recommended that the site selection process be open to the four communities in which

sites were being considered. The announcement of Tracadie Cross as the selected site

was also unexpected for this group of participants.

These participants had a vested interest in the decision. Most of participants had

contributed considerable time and energy to the decision making process, only to see their

effort dismantled by the Cabinet decision. While they did not have as much at stake as

the residents of Tracadie Cross, this decision did have implications for the group of

participants representing Government Advisors.

> *"The next thing we know, a couple of Ministers had gone to Tracadie Cross. And
> it is my understanding that the four proposals we put forward went into Cabinet.
> Cabinet with whatever criteria that they had decided that Tracadie Cross would
> be the optimal place to put it. And out they went, the night before, and told the
> citizens. The next morning it was announced, and of course it went down hill
> from there. And it became just a political football."* (Case Study Government
> Advisor)

TARRP as a Source of Public Participation

For both groups of case study participants, the general consensus was that TARRP

was an effective means of public participation for the community of Tracadie Cross. The

theme of TARRP as a source of public participation can be further divided into two sub-

themes. With the first sub-theme, creating public and political pressure, participants

spoke of the ability of TARRP to raise the profile of its issue in the media and with

government. The second sub-theme, the role of TARRP in creating democracy, describes

TARRP as a means of democracy for Community Members and, an expected part of

democracy for Government Advisors.

Creating public and political pressure. As described in the case story earlier in this chapter, TARRP mounted a successful social intervention. They contacted elected officials at federal and provincial levels. They gained support throughout the Island and beyond by creating awareness through various actions and events covered in the media. They also learned about the process of influencing government.

> *"And the fact that all of a sudden that we are farther ahead on this than the government and the bureaucrats at the Department of Environment. And we also learned how to, how far to push that particular Department of Environment and, how far not to push."* (Case Study Community Member)

> *"I am not sure what lesson I could draw from Tracadie Cross, except that when a community does get thoroughly mobilized without worrying about tactics, they are able to fight back and they know where to put the pressure and they put it right on government and right on the politicians. The politicians blinked and backed off . . . When a community feels threatened, it will do more in a few months than it would do normally in years."* (Case Study Government Advisor)

The role of TARRP in creating democracy. Both groups of case study participants connected TARRP and democracy. For Community Members, they found democracy in TARRP. For them, TARRP was a democratic process and was an effective mobilization in which democracy worked for them. For Government Advisors, TARRP was connected to democracy in a different manner. Government Advisor participants expressed an appreciation for the role of TARRP in creating a voice for their community.

Community Members expressed, as illustrated in the case story, numerous activities and initiatives. For the Community Members of TARRP, these activities followed a democratic process for the community. This process was enhanced by the reversal of the decision to sit the Waste Watch facility in their community.

"But it was a great reward to meet these people and work with them. And they are so good natured . . . it was very good democratic, our dealings with each other, and so that was really nice and of course the greatest reward was that we didn't get the dump." (Case Study Community Member)

For Government Advisors, the role of TARRP was expected and accepted as necessary for the community. Particularly since Government Advisor participants disagreed with the means by which the decision was arrived at, they saw the claim of an unjust process as a real concern for the community and therefore, the formation of TARRP was expected. While there was disagreement with information and actions of TARRP, in general Government Advisor participants described TARRP as effective in meeting the interest of their community.

"I think firstly, the manner in which they had been approached by Government to buy into the site, and that was totally wrong. And because of that they got their backs up . . . They wouldn't listen to our approach, they just kept bringing folks in and . . . fought it very effectively. But at the same time, Government was wishy-washy... There was an election coming." (Case Study Government Advisor)

Public Participation in the Case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility - Was It Effective?

How Was the Public Represented in the Decision Making Process?

With this research, I tried to address the following research question: What is the nature of public participation in Prince Edward Island Government land decision making? This research addressed this research question by bringing to light the ways in which public are represented (or not represented) in the decision making process. In terms of the nature of public participation in the decision making process, public participation did exist in the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility. Public participation existed in

both government mandated and community initiated participation: the Island Waste Management Commission (government mandated), the ADI public focus group (government mandated), and in TARRP (public initiated).

The Island Waste Management Commission as a form of public participation was mandated with selecting a site at an early stage in decision making. As the Island Waste Management Commission was comprised primarily of public members, this represents a form of public participation. In this sense, Government was a partner in the decision making process, in that one member of the Island Waste Management Commission was a Government representative, and the remaining committee members represented various interests of the public. However, the Cabinet overruled the recommendation of the Island Waste Management Commission to open the decision making process to the four communities in which sites were being considered, a decision that eliminated any opportunity for those most affected by the decision to have influence in the decision making process.

Public participation in the decision making process also existed in the scoring process, through the ADI public focus group. However, it is important to note that in The Report on Site Selection ADI suggests that the public could not be included at certain points in the decision making process as it would not be able to understand the complexity of this issue. It would seem that producing a report with such a statement adds doubt to the intent of the decision maker, in this case ADI, to engage the public in good faith.

The final form of public participation in the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch

facility is that of public initiated participation. TARRP raised a successful social intervention campaign using multiple activities, creating awareness using multimedia, and pressuring government to reverse its decision.

TARRP's success can be described with Resource Mobilization Theory. It was a political process. They called upon the elected officials to be accountable for their actions. Indeed, the political climate was well suited for a successful community mobilization, as a provincial election was impending. Also, consistent with the Resource Mobilization Theory, TARRP was successful because there was a great awareness and interest of the general public in TARRP. They brought their issue to the public eye challenging Government decision making. They created public awareness and interest in TARRP's cause at the community and provincial levels through educating the public of their issue. They gained credibility in the public eye with outside experts. In raising awareness they also created support in the public eye. The pressure was on Government to defend its decision and the decision making process, a process that they could not defend.

In What Ways Does the Public Participate in the Decision Making Process?

The case of the Tracadie Cross Waste Management Facility indicates that public participates in decision making, largely by their own initiative. While some opportunity is created to participate in the form of committees such as the Island Waste Management Commission, the real opportunities to influence the decision making process were opportunities created by the community. Public participates through organizing as in the formation of TARRP, creating public awareness by communicating with the general

public by way of print, television, radio and Internet media, and in creating an avenue for dialogue in meetings open to all the public and government.

What Influence Did the Public Have in the Decision Making?

Clearly, the influence of the public was in the actions of TARRP. While there were opportunities for the public to participate, the power to influence the decision existed in the actions of TARRP.

Empowerment existed in what Rich et al. (1995) would identify as intrapersonal and instrumental empowerment. Specifically, intrapersonal disempowerment existed throughout the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility. All participants expressed an ability to participate and to effectively contribute to the decision making process, only to see any opportunity of formal empowerment eliminated by the Cabinet decision making process. Opportunities for intrapersonal empowerment did exist for Community Member participants.

Instrumental empowerment was gained for case study community participants in the actions of TARRP. The opportunity for instrumental empowerment is reflected in the results in the important role of outside experts. Instrumental empowerment also existed in the members of the community gaining knowledge in the political process. This is evident in Case Study Community Members expressing knowledge about influencing and creating pressure for government.

Effective Public Participation in the Case of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility

Can these forms of public participation be considered effective public participation? The opportunities created by government for the public to participate

clearly were not effective forms of public participation. There was a lack of opportunity for those most affected by the decision to have influence in the decision making process.

It is difficult to assess if effective public participation would have existed if the decision making process had followed the path suggested by the Island Waste Management Commission. It seems that the process would most likely not be considered effective public participation, based on the conceptual framework of effective public participation presented in Chapter 2. The decision would not have been community based. The option would be for the community of Tracadie Cross to readily accept the proposed waste facility, or it may have been imposed on the community if none of the four selected communities expressed interest in the waste facility. Indeed, the decision making process would not have been consistent with effective public participation, as those most affected by the decision would not have a true opportunity to influence the decision.

TARRP was a form of effective public participation based on the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2. TARRP was community driven. It was a diverse and large group, suggesting that it presented a representative voice for the community. Through TARRP's actions, bringing together community members and open communication in public meetings, newsletters and a web-site, it seems that there resulted a connection in the community. The process of TARRP was political. They called upon elected officials to be accountable for their decision. In addition, government, elected and civil servants, were invited to all meetings of TARRP.

The process of TARRP created an educated public. The members of TARRP

gained skills and knowledge regarding waste management and also in the political process. Through this process of education and community mobilization, Case Study Community Members expressed intrapersonal and instrumental empowerment. Intrapersonal empowerment was indicated in descriptions of a sense of influence through TARRP. Instrumental empowerment was suggested in the development of skills and knowledge in the political process.

Clearly, based on the conceptual framework of effective public participation, TARRP was a source of effective public participation. In addition, TARRP's effectiveness is reflected in the decision not to sit the Waste Watch facility in the community of Tracadie Cross. In this decision, those most affected by the decision finally had influence in the decision.

Lessons Learned From the Case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility

The Case Study of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility holds many lessons. It tells the story of government mandated public participation that consistently excluded the public from all decision making levels. It also tells the story of effective public participation through TARRP. Effective public participation did occur through public initiated opportunities. TARRP provided not only the means through which community members could develop a voice, but it provided the means to communicate that voice and have influence.

In exploring public participation in this case, one cannot ignore the continued misuse of representative democracy by the Government of Prince Edward Island. This is not meant to be malicious, but opportunities in which government could have

redistributed power with the public were repeatedly overlooked from the recommendations of the Island Waste Management Commission to the exclusion of the community in the decision to sit the Waste Watch facility in Tracadie Cross. It is also important to note that while the ultimate decision resulted in favour of TARRP, the final decision still rested in the hands of government. It was made at the time in which government decided and in the manner in which it decided. It is still unknown how this decision was arrived at and who made the decision.

The experiences of both groups of case study participants also support the role of empowerment in public participation. Clearly, Community Members felt empowered through their experiences with TARRP. What was surprising was the common experience of disempowerment for both groups in this decision making process. While it was expected that the community would have felt disempowered, the exclusion of Government Advisors from the final decision was not expected. This illustrates the complexity of public participation when the role of the public exists at multiple levels and at multiple stages in the decision making process. Public participation rarely involves simply one community and government. There are multiple stakeholder groups involved at different stages with various levels of power.

The case of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility brings concern for the state of public participation. The actions of TARRP indicate effective public participation initiated by the public. However, it is widely accepted that for effective decision making and implementation, the public should participate in the decision making process. This is even more necessary with contentious issues, such as the sitting of waste management

92

facilities. Therefore, if the Provincial Government was not forthright in providing

opportunity for public participation with such a contentious issue I must question

whether the Provincial Government will be forthright in issues that are less discernable as

necessary for public participation.

The case of Tracadie Cross Waste Management facility adds weight to the

grounds for participatory democracy. For the community of Tracadie Cross

representative democracy failed. Indeed, it may be suggested from the perspective of

representative democracy that the majority of the population of Prince Edward Island

would have supported the decision to site the Waste Watch facility in Tracadie Cross.

However, I would suggest that other more participatory decisions may also be appropriate

for the majority of the population and do not necessarily preclude a decision that would

also benefit a disadvantaged minority.

There are numerous aspects to the case of Tracadie Cross that could be explored.

In particular, I would describe the theme of knowledge in the case study as ever-present.

Further research could explore, in particular, the role and impact of outside experts to

grassroots initiatives, but also the impact of outside experts on decisions and decision

makers.

The State of Public Participation in Provincial Government Land Decisions -

Experiences of Key Informant Participants

Public Participation in Transition

Key Informant participants shared a broad view of public participation in

Provincial Government land decisions. In their experiences with public participation,

Key Informant participants describe the present state of government land decision making as a movement toward more participatory approaches. These participants have been involved in land use issues for decades and have seen the public having more influence in the decision making process.

> "... for a while there in the 60s and 70s, we were seeing the attitude that the scientists knew a lot and we should listen to the scientists. And then suddenly in the 80s for whatever reason, people suddenly realized, that traditional ecological knowledge was exceedingly important in doing proper wildlife management and whatnot. And the biologists trained at the university ... didn't have all of the answers. So I guess the same applies for here. Every time you deal with the public on an issue, you learn about, especially in our department when dealing with environmental issues about something in a local area. Somebody who lived in that area all of his or her life, can often shed some interesting light on the subject at hand. That is very helpful to us as it gives us the benefit of that traditional knowledge from the community". (Key Informant)

The Value of Local Knowledge

Most Key Informant participants referred to this movement toward more public participation in decision making in roles of input in which government seeks more public information in the decision making. Participants expressed a concern, not just for the lack of participation, but for the loss of vital information that cannot be accessible in other sources.

> "So, like you could have government coming up with a program or an initiative and the community disagrees with it. And government has all the data and the information, or they think they have. The community has a different idea because of the cultural history." (Key Informant)

The "Check In the Box"

While participants recognize a movement toward more public influence, there are clearly flaws that still exist in the decision making process. Often participants spoke of public participation in which the public is invited to share its views, but there is no

transparency to indicate the impact or consideration that public input has been received. This form of participation would be, according to Arnstein's ladder, consultation in which public input is sought with no power associated to that process. Participants often describe this form of participation as a "check in the box."

> *"But too often, what we see is a reclamation of a decision that is presented as a done deal. And there might be an opportunity for comment, but the decision makers are saying, 'Look, we have to put a little check in the box that we have talked to the public about it, but we know what we are already doing'."* (Key Informant)

Influence Through Non-Government Organizations

Participants described the influence of public found often in non-government organizations through consultation and lobbying activities. Most Key Informant participants were linked with non-government organizations and therefore saw the role of non-government organizations as influencing government in the decision making process. However, some Key Informant participants saw the role of non-government organizations as flawed, when they work against each other for their own interests.

Some participants indicated that often with public participation there is inequality with certain groups having more influence than others. Participants expressed concern for what they saw as an unequal distribution of power that did not reflect the group's representation of the interest of the general public. The power of these groups seems to result from their personal connection with members of government, as well as their ability to influence public opinion and resources.

"And one of the problems is that now, some of the groups have found that if they squawk enough and use the media, they can get their limited and very often not even a widespread viewpoint in the forefront. And so this is part of the process . . . So they are using the public participation process in order to gain grounds for their own advancement, shall we say. More for their own good, than for public good." (Key Informant)

While some participants were critical of the influence of non-government organizations, in general, participants described the public participation through non-government organizations as instrumental to challenging government and presenting a voice for community. Non-government organizations provide a crucial role in influencing and challenging government, as a source of information for government, in their lobby activities, in their public education and, in their connection with other organizations and institutions (other non-government organization, communities and academic institutions).

"Well, when I see change in the work that I do . . . I don't expect government to lead the people, that's why I do public education. Being on the (Committee) is as much a public education process as trying to influence government . . . and I think in a lot of cases the public is much more ready to accept the (Committee's) recommendations than government is" *(Key Informant)*

"We (non-government organizations) always try to work cooperatively whenever possible . . . and that doesn't mean that a community group may not be working at odds with us or we may be working at odds with a community group . . . I think if every group tried to do everything, then nothing would get done . . . (it has been) . . . suggested that there should be one umbrella environment group for PEI. But the danger with that, is that if there is only one environmental group, then the government only has to say "no" once, rather than thirty or forty times . . . Accountability for government and for the groups themselves. You know, I think that there is reasonably good communication between all of the groups of the province. And there is a PEI environmental network that helps to let each environmental group to know what the other group is doing." *(Key Informant)*

Political Connectedness

Islanders are well connected to their politicians. It may stem from the geographical size or the small population of PEI. This political connection can be advantageous and detrimental to effective public participation. Clearly the advantage is the accessibility of elected officials to their constituencies. This strengthens representative democracy when elected government is connected to those whom they represent. However, it challenges effective public participation when individuals and groups have unequal influence in a decision making process.

> *"And the PEI emphasis is good, because here we are so small and so tight . . . You can practically stand on a hill and see both sides. So that is what is special here. The other thing that is special here of course is how intimately people are connected to government. There is no other province where your average citizen will know most of the politicians by their first name. It just doesn't exists anywhere. I am amazed at it you know. And I am amazed at how accessible they are. If I wanted to get a hold of Pat Binns (the current Premier of PEI), I could do it. I don't want to, but you know. Try that in Ontario. How long will it take you? You'd get his second, third-hand, sub-lieutenant after about three weeks."* (Case Study Government Advisor)

The Politics of Land Use Issues

Associated with the theme of political connectedness is the theme of the politics of land use issue. Politics and land issues are inseparable. According to many participants, political leaders have too much discretion in land decision making. This was evident in the Case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility, and key informant participants reiterated this concern.

For many participants this relationship between politics and land silenced the public through political patronage and they expressed concern for the ability of public to participate. As some participants indicated, the public was silenced for fear of being

97

reprimanded by government.

> *"Again, first people need information, and then they need to feel that if they do something then it is going to make a difference. And I guess the third thing is that if they do stand up and say something, they are not going to get beat up. Beat up in a whole bunch of ways . . . I think people have to look and say, 'If I get up and speak, am I going to lose my job?' People all of a sudden before the election decided that they can't speak out on issues because, 'I may be out of work next year'. So part of it, that people have to feel free enough in a society to voice their opinion."* (Key Informant)

The Experiences of Key Informant Participants Summarized

From the results, it seems that public participation in Prince Edward Island government land decisions is in a process of transition. This is consistent with the transitory state of public participation in society as described in the section on Historical Development of Public Participation in Chapter 2. This process has moved in theory, from a view of government as the expert, to a view that sees the public having valuable information as described by some participants. Given this, one cannot ignore the prevalence of decision making that excludes the public from sharing power in the process, as described by most participants.

Key Informant participants spoke less about how they experienced public participation and more about how they saw public participation in Prince Edward Island government land decisions. In general, it seems that public participation exists in land decisions through two means: a "check in the box" and through non-government organizations.

It is difficult to assess whether these forms of public participation are effective based on the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2. Certainly, public participation described as a "check in the box" suggests no real power associated to the

public. Indeed, this form of public participation may be considered consultation based on Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation.

The role of non-government organizations may in fact be an effective form of public participation if they represent the interests of those most affected by a decision. Based on the conceptual framework of effective public participation, non-government organizations could be considered effective public participation to the extent that they engage in an open process. By this, I suggest that non-government organizations and their actions in the decision making process that are open and accessible to those most affected by a decision, therefore community-based and community-driven, may indeed be an effective means for the public to influence decision making. Also, if non-government organizations involve the public in the political process and provide opportunities to educate the public either in the issue at hand or in the political process, then again, they may indeed be effective forms of public participation. Through such a process, empowerment would be likely to result in terms of inclusion, education and shared power. If these elements existed then non-government organizations may indeed be a form of effective public participation.

However, some participants expressed concern that some non-government organizations were provided a level of power in government land decision making that did not reflect their representation. To the extent that this inhibits participation of those members or groups of the public that should have influence in the decision making, then non-governmental organizations also have the capacity to inhibit effective public participation.

The results indicated that government land decision making in Prince Edward Island is highly influenced by political factors. Those who have influence in the decision making process have the ability to sway public opinion as in TARRP or have a direct influence with government as described by some participants. Also, Key Informant participants described the political connectedness of Prince Edward Island. While accessiblity of elected officials is crucial to the success of representative democracy, political connectedness that inhibits marginalized and disempowered groups fails the basis of democracy. Finally, the influence of political factors in decision making impacts effective public participation considerably in political patronage. When there is a fear of political patronage, then the public is silenced. In this environment the public is not free to challenge government in decision making and effective public participation cannot exist.

The themes that emerged from Key Informant interviews indicated that public participation is in transition. Public participation as it exists today is often token or influenced by non-government organizations. Influence in land decision making is achieved in a political process in which those groups that can sway public opinion or who can influence government have more power in decision making than other, less politically powerful groups. This is consistent with the Resource Mobilization Theory, those groups who have sufficient resources to create public awareness can influence government decisions particularly when the political climate is unstable, such as an election period.

Public Participation in Prince Edward Island Government Land Decisions - A Summary

Table 2

Common Themes of Case Study Participants and Key Informant Participants: Public

Participation in Prince Edward Island Government Land Decisions - A Summary

| Participant Group from which Theme Emerged | Themes Parallelled | | |
	Knowledge	Political Decision Making Results in Exclusion	Power of Organization(s)
Case Study	The Resource of Knowledge	Exclusion in the TARRP Decision	The Role of TARRP as a Source of Public Participation
Case Study Community Members **Case Study Government Advisors**	Missed Opportunity for Shared Knowledge and Experience	Exclusion of Community Members	
		Exclusion of Government Advisors	
Key Informants	The Value of Local Knowledge	Check in the Box	Influence of Non-Government Organizations
		The Politics of Land Issues	Political Connectedness

The experiences of both groups of Case Study participants are reflected in those of

Key Informant participants. This suggests that there are common themes with public

participation in provincial government land decisions. Parallels can be drawn between

the Case Study and Key Informant participants in three areas.

101

First, parallels can be drawn in the area of knowledge, between the themes of the Resource of Knowledge with the theme of the Value of Local Knowledge. Community Member participants expressed a missed opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences in the decision making process. In addition, Government Advisors expressed a missed opportunity to inform the public of the details of the Waste Watch Management facility. These experiences are reflected by Key Informant participants expressing concern of the loss of valuable local knowledge when the public is excluded in the decision making process.

Second, parallels can also be drawn with the influence of political factors in decision making and the implications for excluding the public. Both Community Members and Government Advisors expressed exclusion in the decision making process. These experiences are reflected in Key Informant participant's themes of public participation as a "Check in the Box" and the Politics of Land Issues. The consistency between the experiences of Case Study participants and the theme of Politics of Land Issues is reflected in the secrecy in the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch decision at the Cabinet level.

These findings suggest that public participation lacks real influence in decision making unless it is public initiated participation. This is important, for it may indicate the most effective public participation is initiated by the public because there are insufficient opportunities to haver real influence through government initiated opportunities.

Finally, a third parallel can be drawn illustrating the power of organizations in Provincial Government land decision in Prince Edward Island. This parallel can be

drawn between the theme of the Role of TARRP as a Source of Public Participation with Key Informant participant themes of the Influence of Non-Government Organizations and the Political Connectedness. TARRP as an organization was able to influence Government to reverse the decision to sit a Waste Watch facility in its community. This is consistent with the ability of organization to have influence in Government decisions as expressed by Key Informant participants. It may also be reflective of the concern of some participants that non-government organizations and special interest groups have too much influence in the decision making process. If one considers that the present state of Island waste management is delayed and has taken a considerably different path than planned, then one could consider the efforts TARRP, as a non-government or special interest group, as influencing government contrary to the interests of the general public. However, it should also be considered that the implications for the general public with the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch decision may be viewed as less severe than what the community of Tracadie Cross interpreted as a threat to health and livelihood.

In reference to the parallels between TARRP as a Source of Democracy and the Key Informant theme of Political Connectedness, it seems that the political connectedness of the Island was reflected in the experiences of Case Study participants. The influence of TARRP with Government can be illustrated in the regular attendance of Government, both elected and civil servants to TARRP meetings, as well as their ability meet with the Premier of Prince Edward Island. This is not meant to diminish the efforts of TARRP, only to present some contextual consideration to interpret the level of influence achieved by TARRP.

The parallels between both Case Study and Key Informant participants suggest that there is a current pattern in public participation in which public influence is most often achieved in public initiated participation. These concurrent themes present the experiences in public participation in Provincial Government land decisions of the participants. In the next section, I present what public participation should be, based on the opinions and perspectives of the participants.

What Public Participation Should Be

Participants were asked their opinions and perspectives of effective public participation. Is it necessary? What is effective public participation? What should be the goal of public participation? From these questions, general themes of what is effective public participation emerged. In general, participants considered both government and public initiated participation as necessary for effective public participation. Three general themes emerged: collaborative decision making, community mobilization and public education.

Collaborative Decision Making

The decision making process. For those participants who expressed public participation, in part or in whole, as those opportunities created by government, effective public participation was considered in terms of a collaborative decision making process. For some participants, the process was described as a dialectical decision making process in which government and community negotiated their needs to reach a mutually acceptable decision.

"Consulting before the actual decisions are made...Why don't they do that before hand? Consult the people first, come to decisions, go back to the table, "What do you think of these decisions?" (and public could respond) "Well, we don't think this is good. This isn't a good decision." Go back and try to improve on that decision. Just consult people first." (Case Study Community Member)

The role of the players. For most participants, the decision making process is described as one of negotiation, but the final power in the decision making process still rests in the hands of Government. In this sense, the role of Government (elected government) is to represent the interests of the public though which public interest (general or special interest) is unclear. The role of civil servants is described as one in which they inform government and work with the public as a resource. Finally, the role of the public is to inform government of their needs.

Many participants describe the role of Government as final decision makers in the decision making process. It seemed that this process described was the balance between the public having power and influence and still having a competent Government that represents the interests of the public.

"The successful politicians retain good contact with communities . . . But they get so wrapped up in their Cabinet portfolio or their constituents . . . you have to see this to believe the parade of people that go through their offices when they have office days in their ridings . . . I think that a lot of politicians keep in touch with their constituents. I think the case of the bureaucrats is much more difficult . . . and in the past we have had some people with a ministerial portfolio, that really didn't have a clue of what was going on and therefore bureaucrats had free rein . . . it takes away from the democratic functioning of government because theoretically these people are representing the people and they are no longer representing the people, you have the bureaucrats running the show." (Key Informant)

"Well, there should be (public participation) because the government are our only representatives. And if we don't make out minds and our needs known to them, they'll just go ahead and do what they want to do all the time . . . So if you don't participate, well you can't blame Government, can you, when they do things you don't like. You can blame them anyway, even if you do participate. But ideally you should get involved so that you can have your say. It's not easy, but I think that's the way it should be. " (Case Study Community Member)

Public Initiated Participation

While most participants described the role for public as informing government of their needs and perspectives, some participants suggested that the role of the public was more fundamental to public participation. The role of the public outside the decision making process is twofold. For some participants, as described earlier, it is a process of informing government of the needs of the community to push government toward change.

"We could say, well at the time of . . . the Royal Commission on Land Use, that is in 1972 . . . if that report had followed . . . Gee, it would have been so much easier today. But there is all of this problem that you can't do it if the public isn't ready for it. And sometimes government can be a leader, but it can also be a leader if the public is willing to have it as a leader. Government can only lead where people are willing to be lead. " (Key Informant)

The role of public participation outside the decision making process is also described as necessary in monitoring the actions and decisions of government. When government is challenged in its activities, public groups also bring these issues to the awareness of the general public, in turn educating the general public and keeping the actions of government in the public eye.

"If the public is simply content to elect a government and then sits back and says, 'Ok do your worst or best'. Probably the worst thing you can do with any government is elect them and set them out there and leave them totally alone. They will immediately become very secretive. Essentially the bureaucrats will take over the government. So if you elect them and keep the spot light on, make them earn their money. " (Case Study Government Advisor)

<u>Public Participation as Education</u>

In describing public participation, many participants spoke of the need for public

education. However, there existed a tension between two forms of public educations

and, thus this theme can be further divided into two, very different forms of public

education. The first sub-theme, educated public, is connected with public initiated

participation, and indicates that public participation, initiated by the public, can only

occur when there is an educated public. The second sub-theme, educate the public, refers

to public participation actions with the purpose of educating the public regarding an issue,

toward the goal of creating public support.

<u>Educated public.</u> Some participants described public participation as public

education in which an educated public can inform the government of its needs which is

necessary for either participatory decision making or influencing government decision

outside the decision making process. An educated public is a form of public initiated

participation, but with a long term focus. Public participation aimed at creating an

educated public was described more as a process of social change. Participants described

public participation in this form as addressing injustices and educating the public through

the participatory process.

> *"Take the example of the dump at Tracadie Cross. You're faced with something,
> so you have to act. Then you act and then you reflect, and then you do research,
> and then you evaluate, and then you go into your next phase. That would be the
> ideal citizen participation. It's a process, and in that process everybody is an
> actor and everybody is a learner . . . it's the people themselves going through the
> critical process, learning and developing in solidarity aimed at more learning and
> transformation."* (Case Study Community Member)

An educated public can direct government in decision making. Creating an

educated public has implications for sustainable land decisions. When issues of sustainability are relevant to the public, they are more likely to be relevant to the government.

> *"Well, it has nothing to do with the government. Sometimes public participation has nothing to do with government. If people come out and learn about forests and treat their own forests better, to me, that is public participation. You do get to a certain point where things change very quickly."* (Key Informant)

Educate public. The subtle difference in the wording of these themes illustrates the subtle difference that intent plays in public education as public participation. In this form of public participation, public education is seen as necessary, as ultimately the decision impact on the public and must be accepted by the public. Unlike creating an educated public that is meant to empower the public with knowledge in general, educating the public is often informing the public of an issue. It also has the potential to become a lower form of public participation based on Arnstein's ladder when the public is educated by decision makers to achieve acceptance of a decision.

> *"It is a very complicated issue. It sounds so simple to say we want more public participation. Usually what you really mean is you want more public participation to support what you are going to do."* (Case Study Government Advisor)

Educating the public was also presented, not in terms of educating public to gain support, rather as the role of government to educate the public to support its ability to participate in decision making. In this form of public education, the goal is to challenge the assumption that the public cannot participate in technically difficult decisions. Rather, many participants suggested that no information was too technical for the public and it was the role of an effective government to ensure that this information was not only

108

accessible, but understandable to the public.

> *"... there is no information so technical that it can't be presented to the public, and if you can't communicate technical or scientific information to the public, then you should not be in a role to do that ... Government occasionally assumes that the public is stupid ... Well, that is a real dangerous assumption to make ... they (public) have the capacity and the ability to understand."* (Key Informant)

Is This Effective Public Participation?

The views presented by participants regarding effective public participation in collaborative decision making is consistent with the framework of effective public participation presented in Chapter 2. In this form of public participation, the public would hold power at the level of partnership according to Arnstein's (1969) ladder, in which government and the public share generally, equal power in the decision making process. This view of decision making is suggestive of a proactive form of decision making and indicates that the decision making process can be empowering, where the public is empowered in the decision making process. The extent to which resources are equally distributed and accessible to the public would suggest the extent of instrumental and intrapersonal empowerment experienced in the actual capacity, ability and sense of influence in the decision making process (Rich et al., 1995).

Participants described this collaborative decision making process in which the public take an active role in the process. This would be consistent with the conceptual framework of effective public participation presented in Chapter 2 in creating a partnership decision making process in which the process is transparent to the public.

The resulting decision of this decision making process is one that is mutually acceptable, therefore likely to be a sustainable decision. Such a decision would represent

multi-stakeholder interests and thus be consistent with the conceptual framework of effective public participation. These multiples interests are represented by government, representing the interests the general public and public participation would ensure that those members most affected by the decision were included in the decision.

Also, in this emerging view of effective public participation presented by participants, the public participates in both a proactive participatory manner (informing government of opinions and needs) and reactive conflictual manner (public influence). In this sense, public participation is not dependent solely on the opportunities created by government. Therefore the advantages of community mobilization continue to be important in the view of public participation presented by participants. Individuals, organizations and communities continue to be empowered through gaining knowledge and skills from community mobilization. Again, this is consistent with the conceptual framework of effective public participation presented in Chapter 2. From this framework, public participation must include government and community initiated opportunities to influence decision making. It must also continue to be a source of individual and community empowerment.

Some participants suggested that the act of public initiated participation itself was indeed the most effective form of public participation. For some participants, it is the ability to create an informed, even empowered public, that is the goal of public participation. When the public is informed and empowered through the ownership or acquisition of knowledge, then the public has accessed a great resource and hold power in that knowledge. This perspective of community initiated public participation may have

less certainty in arriving at an empowering decision. However, the process and long term result of creating community capacity, through gaining skills and knowledge, is likely to be an empowering process.

Finally, when public participation through public education is initiated to gain support, then there is indeed little public participation. This is reflective of non-participation in the form of therapy, based on Arnstein's (1969) ladder. It is not for certain whether this was the intent of this view, but suggesting that public do not have "the" knowledge may stem from a need to create awareness of an issue that may not have a great deal of public interest. It may also suggest the view that the perspectives, interests and knowledge of the public is not relevant to the decision making. The former would be consistent with the conceptual framework of effective public participation through empowering the public with the knowledge necessary for its participation in the decision making process. If, however, the latter is the intent of this view of public education, in that public need to be educated "to buy into" a decision, then such a view is not consistent with effective public participation and is likely to be disempowering.

Clearly the overarching theme emerging from interviews with participants was the view that the public has the power in public participation. Participants describe effective public participation in the ability of those most affected by a decision to have influence in that decision, and these opportunities often come from the public. While, it is clear collaborative decision making is considered effective public participation, the prevailing view is that government cannot be forced into providing opportunities for the public. When government presents opportunities without the desire to have public participation,

the result may be a distrust and disengagement of the public in other participatory activities. The motivation for government to hear the voice of the public stems from public pressure. This pressure comes from the public identifying and bringing an issue into the public realm.

Although the perspectives presented by participants were able to be identified as either government or public initiated participation, they were not presented in such categorized manner. Rather, participants often described effective public participation in terms of the roles in which the public, elected and appointed government must play for effective public participation.

Whether public participation is initiated by government in collaborative decision making or initiated by the public through mobilization creating social change and educating the public, the roles of the players are consistent. Elected government has the ultimate decision making power. They are informed by the public to enhance its capacity to represent general and specific interests. The role of the appointed or civil servants is to inform and support both elected government and public in decision making. The central role of the public is clear in the emerging perspectives of public participation. Influence in the decision making process comes from public, an educated public. The public as a collective builds capacity in learning from experiences in decision making, in combination with a long term public education process in which there is mutual teaching within the public based on its participatory experiences.

Chapter 5 Outcome Recommendations and Conclusion

If there has been one part of this research that has not been subject to my constant critical analysis (or anxious doubt) it has been the purpose of this research. From its inception, my goal for this research has been to promote more effective public participation in Provincial Government Land Decisions. This chapter brings the results of the previous chapter into the context of Prince Edward Island to meet this goal for creating change.

In the previous chapter, the results of this research were presented, suggesting the present state of public participation in provincial government land decisions, while in a state of change, has not reflected the idea of effective public participation as suggested in the literature. Graham and Phillips (1998) suggest that public participation has progressed to the level that they propose the term citizen engagement is more reflective of the current state of public involvement in governance. The experiences of the research participants suggest that this is perhaps optimistic.

The findings of this research paint a picture of public participation in Provincial Government land decisions as one in which there is a struggle between the idea of public participation and the practice of this ideal. Participants describe public participation as in a state of change, but one in which the public is still consistently excluded from real opportunities to influence the decision making process. Effective public participation in Prince Edward Island land decisions is generally found in public initiated opportunities, through community mobilization or through the influence of non-government organizations. Finally, participants paint a picture of the political nature of Provincial

Government land decisions in Prince Edward Island, in which politics influence whose voice is heard in the decision making process. The results also set a map for the future of public participation in Provincial Government land decisions. This map is grounded in the current reality that public influence is still most effective from an adversarial role with opportunities to influence created by the public, but it is set on creating change in which the public can have real shared power through collaborative decision making and educating public on creating change.

In the following section I present the outcome recommendations of this research. I developed these recommendations to address barriers to effective public participation in provincial government land decisions in Prince Edward Island. These barriers were drawn from the research results. The recommendations have evolved from the literature, but also from discussions with participants and other Islanders.

The recommendations are directed in general to government and the public. Some of the recommendations are explicitly directed to government or the public. They have been distributed to the provincial Cabinet, as well as several interest groups that are stakeholders in land decision making in Prince Edward Island. The intent of these outcome recommendations is not that they will be readily accepted by those to whom I have distributed these recommendations for consideration. The purpose of these recommendations is to raise the issue and present one of numerous solutions. Perhaps they can serve to provoke debate and even create awareness about issues that immediately challenge effective public participation in provincial government land decisions in Prince Edward Island.

Outcome Recommendations

The outcome recommendations address the issues and concerns presented by participants throughout the interviews. These recommendations stem from suggestions or alternatives presented by participants and previous research. In total six issues are addressed. This is where theory, experience and context meet to create change.

<u>Seeking Public Involvement</u>

The issue of seeking public involvement is often presented as a challenge for effective public participation. In this research participants spoke of the challenges for government in identifying which interests should be represented in the decision making process. This challenge is twofold. The challenge is not only who to involve, but also how to reach out to these communities. In addition to this, one participant identified that many of the communities of Prince Edward Island, like Tracadie Cross, are not incorporated and this poses an entry issue for Government.

While I would ideally propose that the decision of who to involve in the decision making process be driven by values such as justice, with the many competing influences in government decision making, I have little faith in values as a motivation for engaging the public. Thomas (1990) proposes a pragmatic approach to identifying which public to involve based on government's desire to avoid conflict and inform decision making. This is reflective of the functional and political motivations for government to create participatory decision making as suggested by Duffy et al. (1996). In addition, a number of participants indicated what piques public interests are issues that threaten the livelihood and health of communities. Issues that affect the health of a community may

serve as a key question in guiding which communities to involve in a decision making process.

To address the issue of non-incorporated communities seeking key informants or leaders of the community is advantageous. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) identify areas central to community asset building. It is through these avenues that communities can be reached. In rural Prince Edward Island, churches and schools are the heart of the community and are natural entry points.

The Provincial Government has numerous resources to draw upon to facilitate identification and invitation of stakeholder groups for public participation. However, certain government departments do not traditionally work with communities and may not have the skills, the infrastructure and resources to access community knowledge (Grant, 1994). Government departments involved in land use decisions should be assessed for their capacity (skills, resources and structure) to access public participation and impeding barriers should be addressed.

The Provincial Departments responsible for Environment, Agriculture, Forestry and Tourism must begin to build the capacity of civil servants in outreaching with communities. Such capacity building can begin with an identification of the existing resources, personal and tangible, that facilitated working with communities. From this, areas to improve become evident and a priority to address through skills development within the department or linking with other governmental resources.

Creating Equality in Access to Information

The role of knowledge and education was a central theme in this research. In particular Case Study Community Member Participants expressed empowerment through gaining and accessing knowledge. Unfortunately this is impeded in Prince Edward Island as it is the only province in Canada without Freedom of Information legislation.

Freedom of Information Legislation is important for effective public participation for two reasons. First, it provides the public with formal power. This formal and therefore legal power exists in the legislation of the rights of the public to access public information. Secondly, in legislating freedom of information, there is a legitimization of this right in the public eye. Freedom of Information legislation is currently being developed. However, until such legislation is in place, public has no formal power to seek information.

Freedom of information legislation must also follow with information that is accessible for the public. Accessibility, in the ability of the public to access information in a timely manner and without undue financial barriers. Accessibility of information also suggests that the language and content of public documents should be comprehensible. This ensures equality in access to information.

The development of Access to Information Legislation must contain clear guidelines for the rights of public to access information. It must also contain provisions for providing information that is accessible in content. Often materials produced by government departments are cautious of illiteracy, low levels of literacy and language barriers. These issues must also be taken into account when drafting Freedom of

117

Information Legislation.

Promoting Public Initiated Participation

The results of this research suggest that public participation from a multi-stakeholder perspective incorporates both government initiated and public initiated participation. Often participants spoke of public participation as a process in which change comes from a public educated in the public issue and working to create change. However, in a society where public protest is labelled "civil disobedience" there are many negative connotations to grassroots organization.

The opinions and perspectives of participants represent the diverse view of public participation that can exist. Therefore, I suggest that a movement toward more effective public participation must incorporate such a perspective of public participation. Community initiated participation will continue to be at a disadvantage because community groups often lack resources (e.g., financial resources) necessary to create change. Change created particularly in terms of influencing government through gaining public awareness, support and influence consistent with the Resource Mobilization Theory.

The inherent disadvantage of public initiated participatory opportunities can be minimized in creating more equitable access to resources. It is therefore recommended that a source of resources for small grassroots organization be created. These resources could be in the form of a number of small bursaries, not to fund, but to support grassroots organizations. The resource contribution may also be in distributed to larger, province wide organizations to utilize for various initiatives specifically to facilitate effective

public participation, or to facilitate grassroots organizations seeking support from these larger, province wide associations. The purpose of this distribution of resources is not to suggest that Government fund all groups that disagree with all of their decisions. It is, however a way in which Government can seek to create a more just participatory decision making process, in recognizing that there is evidence that real opportunities have not been created by Government for collaborative decision making. It is also not meant to diminish the need for more participatory decision making.

Connecting Multiple Levels of Organization

A common theme for participants in their experiences, and in their view of what public participation should be, is the role of non-government organizations for influencing government. In addition, participants spoke of the role of learning from other groups and organizations in creating an educated public. This resonates with the literature that describes the role of community organizations as one of creating a voice for the community and as a means to share that voice, as well as providing practical education on creating change (Graham et al., 1998).

More effective public initiated participation can be enhanced by strengthening the networks of grassroots organizations and more formal land use organizations in Prince Edward Island. Enhancing and building on the existing networks of local organizations would be beneficial in its ability to promote communication and sharing or tangible and intangible resources. Again, I draw upon the Kretzman and McKnight's (1993) asset-based community development model as a means of drawing upon the strengths, the resources that already exist in organizations and communities in Prince Edward Island.

There is some caution in creating more connection in organizations. Public organizations while connecting, ultimately compete for the public interest and the power to influence government. Therefore, enhancing the natural links of these organizations must come from the organizations, who understand their needs in this competitive context. Caution must also be taken not to loose the independent voice and interest of these organizations in this process of networking. As one participant indicated, it is more difficult for Government to refuse 40 groups than one umbrella group.

This networking should continue to be relatively unstructured though providing a means for mutual learning and networking. However, it should be explored whether there is a desire by organizations to create more opportunities for shared resources and communication. Some actions should be taken to assess interest. Perhaps, this can be undertaken by government departments active in community development. In recognizing that many community organizations are extremely limited in any financial resources, there should be some sharing of costs or in-kind donations by both community organizations and government.

Creating Transparency in Decision Making

Often participants spoke of the efforts of the public to share their views and opinions, only to have decisions made bearing no resemblance to public suggestion. The issue of transparency is important. As occurred in the case of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch Facility, the ultimate decision whether to sit the Waste Watch facility in the community of Tracadie Cross was done in secrecy. The public is still unclear of the factors used to arrive at the decision to situate and finally not situate the Waste Watch

facility in the community of Tracadie Cross.

The implications are great. This process promotes distrust of government decision making (Graham et al., 1998). If there is to be a movement toward more participatory decision making, whether the public participated in the process of not, there needs to be transparency in the decision making process. Without transparency there is a lack of accountability.

To promote more effective public participation in Provincial Government Land decision, there must be transparency in the way at which decisions are arrived. At the risk of further bureaucratizing the decision making process, transparency can be no less than thoroughly documenting the decision making process. Transparency, whatever the means, must be accessible to the public. This will not only provide the public with the an understanding of the decision making process, but it will provide a source for accountability of Government.

The processes for significant land decisions must be documented and accessible to the public. In this recommendation, significant land decisions may be determined much the same ways as is suggested that the need for public participation is assessed. This may be included as regulations in the Freedom of Information act, or it may simply be reflected in departmental policy.

Mandating Power to the Public.

While government can be motivated to share power in decision making for functional and political reasons, there are also democratic motivations for creating more effective public participation (Duffy et al., 1996). As one participant indicated, elected

officials have considerable influence in the role that public participation has in Government decision making. When elected government values public participation in the decision making process this transfers to decision making at all levels of Government.

There needs to be a balance between recognizing the role of the public as legitimate in the decision making process and predefining the role of the public. Opportunities for public participation should be variable and flexible (Graham & Phillips, 1998; Morell, 1999). While it is clear from the results of this research that there is value in a broad view of public participation that is not predetermined, there is also a need for adding legitimacy to the role of public in the decision making process.

Taking from the suggestion of CORE (1994), government should formalize the role of public participation. It is suggested that the Provincial Government formalize the role of the public in decision making, but not the extent that there is one method of public participation. A predetermined form of public participation may breed complacency, and is not reflective of the diverse capacities of communities. The formalized role must be broad but identify some level of power for public.

It is suggested that the Provincial Government formalize the role of public participation in the decision making process through an official statement or broad policy identifying the right of the public to participate in decisions that impact their lives. This formalization is intended not to predetermine the role of public in the decision making process or the method of public participation. The purpose of this formalization is for Government to clearly state its position on the place of public participation in decision making, whether the public has a place in decision making and if so, is this a consultative,

partnering, or constantly negotiated in what CORE (1994) identifies as good faith.

Summary

These outcome recommendations address effective public participation at both the government and community levels of participation. While most recommendations presented require change with government, this is expected, given the area of the research. None of these recommendations need be financially expensive. I draw often on the work of Kretzman and McKnight (1993) in their asset based approach to community development. The presentation of these outcomes recommendations identifies some of the challenges to effective public participation in Prince Edward Island Government land decision, and present some considerations for addressing these challenges. Through various forms of feedback, these recommendations are likely to change, true to the nature of collaborative decision making.

Conclusion

In this research, I approached the issue of public participation with the goal of understanding people's experiences to work toward more effective public participation in provincial government land decisions in Prince Edward Island. From this qualitative inquiry, I have learned of the challenge toward creating more effective public participation.

The results of my research show an understanding of effective ways of working toward more equitable power in decision making, but the application of this theory is challenged. As a result the public is still, consistently excluded from sharing the power in decision making, as illustrated in the case study of the Tracadie Cross Waste Watch

facility and in interviews with Key Informant participants. The results of this research also revealed a broad view of effective public participation in which participants describe collaborative decision making, community mobilization and creating an educated public as effective public participation.

From this research, I have developed outcome recommendations to learn from the experiences of these participants. Six outcome recommendations for both government and public have emerged: seeking public involvement; creating equality in access to information; promoting public initiated participation; connecting multiple levels of organization; creating transparency in decision making; and mandating power to the public.

While the nature of this research is to take a critical look at the current state of public participation in Prince Edward Island land decisions, most participants were cautiously optimistic about its future.

> *"I don't think I would live here if I didn't think things could change. This is a small place... that is the interesting thing about small places, they change very quickly. You know you can't sort of move the province of Alberta very quickly, it is a big beast... These things can happen again. It doesn't take that many people getting involved and I see such a potential for this place, it is incredible. And lately, what I see such a potential for this place it is incredible and lately what I see, we are sitting on a cusp and we can't decide whether we are really going to go nasty, or we are really going to start fixing things up"* . (Key Informant)

In this study participants, Case Study and Key Informants, Government Advisors and Community Members expressed their experiences in government land decisions to provide a picture of public participation in Provincial Government land decisions in which the influence of public is improving, with much improvement to follow.

This research has explored public participation at multiple levels, from personal

124

feelings of influence to theoretical debates in democracy. Public participation has been explored and discussed in the experiences of Islanders involved in Provincial Government Land decisions from the depth of a case study to breadth of multi-stakeholder key informants. From this, a view of effective public participation emerged grounded in the experiences of these participants.

This research has pointed to several future research possibilities. Of particular interest in this research was the emphasis that both case study community members and decision makers placed on the role of outside experts in the efforts.

Also, considerable information can emerge from exploring examples of effective public participation in the decision making process. What may be of particular interest for future research is exploring what are the impacts and outcomes for communities involved in more participatory decision making. For example, if the outcomes of a more participatory decision making process were similar to those that derived from community mobilization and grass roots organization, then would the model of effective public participation presented in this research still be a model of "effective" public participation, or would such a model move to a more participatory decision making process?

A third, but certainly not final, research possibility would be a further exploration of the various levels of participation in the decision making process, the power accorded to these levels of participation and the implications for empowerment and disempowerment. For example, in the Case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility, case study decision maker participants, had some level of decision making power, and they also, by definition, were a form of public participation. These participants were also

disempowered in the decision making process. So the question remains, what are the implications of empowerment and disempowerment at various stages in the decision making process (e.g., normative and formative). Will this have implications for their future public participation? How often does this occur and what are the implications for working toward more effective public participation when such an occurrence is left unchallenged. Particularly in areas, such as Prince Edward Island, where there is a limited number of people who engage public participation activities at such a level and intensity as would be required by such a committee?

These are only a few of the many questions that have surfaced in this research process. While public participation is often research, there remains, what seems to be endless areas to consider, particularly because of the evolving nature of public participation in society.

Public participation will continue to evolve as long as the public and government continue this dialectical process of challenging the status quo. Undoubtedly, land issues too will remain contentious issues for Prince Edward Island. This thesis has explored the intricate relationship between these two issues from those who have personally experienced this relationship. In exploring public participation in Provincial Government Land Decisions on Prince Edward Island, it is my hope as a Community Psychologist, that this research will result in more effective public participation. Perhaps more public participation in Provincial Government land decisions will lead to more sustainable land decisions this is my hope as an Islander.

Appendix A

An Overview of the Research Process

Data Source	Sampling Procedure	Data Gathering Method	Result	Feedback
documents: *The Report on Site Selection* (Island Waste Management Commission)	n/a	n/a	case story of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility	n/a
The Guardian	articles from September 1998 to September 1999	n/a	case story of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility	n/a
TARRP Position Paper	n/a	n/a	case story of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility	n/a

127

case study community member participants	purposeful sampling participant initiated contact	in-depth, open ended interviews (interview guide - Appendix B)	the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility what public participation should be	individual case report case story of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility summary of sections: experiences of case study participants what public participation should be outcome recommen- dations

case study government advisor participants	purposeful sampling identified by key informant	in-depth, open ended interviews (interview guide- Appendix B)	the case of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility what public participation should be	individual case report case story of Tracadie Cross Waste Watch facility summary of sections: experiences of case study participants what public participation should be outcome recommen- dations

| key informant participants | purposeful sampling - intensity sampling

Identified by Key Informant | in-depth, open ended interviews (interview guide- Appendix B) | public participation in provincial government land decisions - some context

what public participation should be | individual case report

summary of sections:
the state of public participation in provincial government land decisions - some context

what public participation should be

outcome recommen-dations |

Appendix B - Interview Guides

Case Study Community Member Interview Guide

1.   Please tell me about your experiences with the Tracadie Cross Landfill issue?

2.   What role did citizens have in the provincial government decision to situate a landfill in the community of Tracadie Cross?

3.   What were your greatest rewards/challenges with your involvement in the Tracadie Cross Landfill issue?

4.   What is effective citizen participation?

5.   What should be the goal of citizen participation?

6.   Why should there be citizen participation in government decision?

7.   What are the benefits/challenges to a decision making process that includes citizens?

8.   How do you promote more effective citizen participation in provincial government land decision?

9.   Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Appendix B Continued
Case Study Decision Maker Interview Guide

1.   Please tell me about your experiences with the Tracadie Cross landfill issue?

2.   What was the role of the public in the provincial government decision to develop
       a   landfill in the community of Tracadie Cross?

3.   What have you as taken from your experience with the Tracadie Cross landfill
       issue?

4.   What is effective public participation?

5.   What should be the goal of public participation?

6.   Why should there be public participation?

7.   What are the benefits/challenges to a decision making process that includes the
       public?

8.   How do we promote more effective public participation in provincial government
       land decisions?

9.   Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Appendix B Continued
Key Informant Interview Guide

1. Please tell me about your experiences with public participation in provincial government land decisions.

2. Taking from your experiences with various issues and groups, how have communities become engaged in the decision making process with regard to provincial land decisions?

3. What is effective public participation?

4. What should be the goal of public participation?

5. Is public participation needed? If so, why?

6. What are the benefits/challenges to a decision making process that includes the public?

7. How do we promote more effective public participation in provincial government land decisions?

8. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Appendix C
In-depth Interview Analysis Framework

	I. Case Study						II. Key Informants			
	A. Community Members			B. Government Advisors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Background *Please tell me about your experiences with (the Tracadie Cross landfill issue or public participation in provincial government land decisions)* Key Concepts Empowerment Social Cohesion Community Who is involved? (At the individual, group and community levels) What resources were available and who had access? What feelings are the participants expressing and what is the context of that expression?										

134

| Decision Making (questions varied here but were centred on decision making and the participants involvement)

What was process of decision making process in terms of chronological events?

What are the relationships? Who is involved? (At the individual, group and community levels)

What resources were available and who had access?

What feelings are the participants expressing and what is the context of that expression?

How did the people and communities experiences this process? Was there an impact (emotional, behavioural) an effect on them?

Key Concepts
     Empowerment
Social Cohesion										

Opinions and Perspectives *What is effective public participation?* Does the participant's conceptualization of public participation include all four forms of empowerment? With whom does the final decision rest? Is this conceptualization government or public initiated? In what ways are the public included? What influence or power is associated to the public? Are there values associated with this conceptualization? *What should be the goal of public participation?* Does this include empowerment? Are there values associated with this conceptualization? *Is public participation needed?* *What are the benefits/challenges to a decision making process that includes the public?*									

136

Future Directions for Prince Edward Island *How do we promote more effective public participation in provincial government land decisions?* Are there specific areas of the present decision making process to be changed? Are there any cultural factors that need to be considered? What relationships would exists? Where is the influence or power in the participation? What resources are accessible and who can access them?										

Appendix D
Telephone Scripts

Telephone Information Script for Case Study Participants

Hello [Insert Name],

My name is Billie-Jean Flynn. I got your name from [Insert Name]. They indicated that you would be a good person to approach to participate in my research project. I am a student at Wilfrid Laurier University, in the Community Psychology program. I should also mention that I am an Islander. For my Master's thesis I am exploring citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island.

I am calling, because I have received your name as a potential participant. I am calling to ask if I might be able to send you some information about this research project, and I wanted to ask if I may call you in a few days to discuss the possibility of you participating in this research project.

When would be a good time to call back?

Thank you for your time!

Bye.

Appendix D Continued

Telephone Information Script for Key Informant Participants

Hello [Insert Name],

My name is Billie-Jean Flynn. I got your name from [Insert Name]. They indicated that you would be a someone to approach as a potential participant in this research project. I am a student at Wilfrid Laurier University, in the Community Psychology program. I should also mention that I am an Islander. For my Master's thesis I am exploring citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island.

I am calling, because I have received your name as a potential participant. I am calling to ask if I might be able to send you some information about this research project, and I also wanted to ask if I may call you after you have received the information to discuss the possibility of you participating in this research project.

When would be a good time to call back?

Thank you for your time!

Bye.

Appendix D Continued

Telephone Recruitment Script for Case Study Participants 2

My name is Billie-Jean Flynn. I had recently contacted you about participating in my research project. I am a student in Wilfrid Laurier University's Community Psychology program, and a citizen of Prince Edward Island.

My Master's thesis explores citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island. The purpose of this research is to develop a detailed understanding of the level and forms of citizen participation in government land decisions and work with research participants to develop recommendations to improve this process.

Part of this research involves the development of a case study of the recent conflict over the proposed landfill in the community of Tracadie, Prince Edward Island. This is why I am contacting you. I am seeking participants for this research, from both the community of Tracadie and the provincial government, who have been involved in the Tracadie Landfill issue.

The research takes two distinct stages, the development of the case study of the Tracadie Landfill issue and, the development of outcome recommendations that will serve to improve citizen participation in government land decisions. The intention of this research is to work collaboratively with participants in the development and use of the research findings. It is for this reason that participants have a very active role in the research and research process.

As a participant in this project, you would be asked to take part in an interview with myself, lasting approximately 1 1/2 hours. The focus of this interview is reflected in the interview guideline attached, but the goal is primarily to understand the forms, processes, and level of citizen participation in the Tracadie Landfill issue from your experiences. After the interview, you will be asked to provide feedback on the themes that emerge from your interview and of the case study (which would be developed from the interviews of all case study participants as well as public documents). In addition to this, you would also be asked to provide feedback on outcome recommendations to promote improved citizen participation in land decisions on Prince Edward Island. These recommendations will apply to citizen participation on a more general, provincial level, but your input would be important, because these recommendations will developed in part from information gained from the case study of the Tracadie Landfill issue. Your feedback is very important to ensure that your thoughts, ideas, stories and experiences have been properly interpreted and represented.

It is important that you know that In total, your participation time should be approximately 5 hours. It is anticipated that your participation would be required periodically from approximately January to March, 2000.

As a participant in this research project you have rights. You have the right to refuse to participate at anytime, and to withdraw any information that you have shared at any time as well. You will also be asked to provide feedback on the emerging themes of your interview, of the case study, and of the outcome recommendations. While the interviews will be taped, they will be secured in my office at Wilfrid Laurier University or in a filing cabinet at my home on Prince Edward Island. I will be the only person listening to the tapes, your name will not be directly attached to the tapes, and they will be destroyed once I have received your feedback on the emerging themes of your interview.

Do you have any questions or concerns?

Would you be interested in participating in this project?

(If no) Ok. Well, I certainly thank you for considering participating.
Thank you,

Good Bye.

(If yes) Ok. Well thank you very much. Have you read the consent form that I have sent to you? Perhaps we can go through it together to make sure that everything is clear. (Read through the consent letter and ensure that the participant understands the risks, benefits, their roles and rights). Well, for now a verbal agreement is ok for me. Before we begin the interview I will go through the consent form one more time in the case that something has come up that you would like to address. At that time, if you are still willing to participate, we can sign the form then. Would it be a good time to set up an interview time, date and location now?

Well, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself, my advisor, Joanna Ochocka, or Dr.Linda Parker, the Chair of the WLU Ethics Committee.

Appendix D Continued

Telephone Recruitment Script for Key Informant Participants 2

My name is Billie-Jean Flynn. I had recently contacted you about participating in my research project. I am a student in Wilfrid Laurier University's Community Psychology program, and a citizen of Prince Edward Island.

Have you had a chance to go through the material that I have sent you?

(If yes) My Master's thesis explores citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island. The purpose of this research is to develop a detailed understanding of the level and forms of citizen participation in government land decisions and work with research participants to develop recommendations to improve this process.

Part of this research involves the development of a case study of the recent conflict over the proposed landfill in the community of Tracadie, Prince Edward Island. In addition to this, I am seeking 3-5 individuals who would be willing to participate in this project as key informant participants. Their role would be to provide feedback throughout the research process on ideas and outcome recommendations.

The research takes two distinct stages, the development of the case study of the Tracadie Landfill issue and, the development of outcome recommendations that will serve to improve citizen participation in government land decisions. The intention of this research is to work collaboratively with participants in the development and use of the research findings. It is for this reason that participants have a very active role in the research and research process.

It is important that you know that in total, your participation time is flexible and informal. While this makes it difficult to give you a guideline for the amount of time you would contribute to this project, it also means that the amount of time you give is up to you. It is also important that you are aware that there are a small number of participants for this research project. In total, the number of participants will most likely be between 9 and 15 participants (including both case study participants and key informant participants). As I have previously mentioned, I am seeking your participation as a key informant participant, of which the number of participants will range between 3-5.

As a participant in this research project you have rights. You have the right to refuse to participate at anytime, and to withdraw any information that you have shared at any time as well. You will be asked to share feedback on the outcome recommendations as well feedback on other ideas that I might present to you throughout the research process.

Do you have any questions or concerns?

Would you be interested in participating in this project?

(If no) Ok. Well, I certainly thank you for considering participating.
Thank you,

Good Bye.

(If yes) Ok. Well thank you very much, I really appreciate your interest and willingness to become involved in this project. Have you read the consent form that I have sent to you? Perhaps we can go through it together to make sure that everything is clear. (Read through the consent letter and ensure that the participant understands everything). Well, since you are willing to participate in this project, I do need to ask you if you would please sign the informed consent letter and return it to me in the enclosed stamped self-addressed envelope.

Well, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself, my advisor, Joanna Ochocka, or Dr.Linda Parker, the Chair of the WLU Ethics Committee.

Appendix E
Research Information Letters
Research Information Letter for Case Study Participants

The Exploration of Citizen Participation in Government Land Decisions on Prince
Edward Island
Research Information Letter

Dear
My name is Billie-Jean Flynn. I had recently contacted you about participating in my
research project as a key informant participant. I am a student in Wilfrid Laurier
University's Community Psychology program and I am a citizen of Prince Edward Island.
The research project with which I am involved is entitled: The exploration of citizen
participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island.

The intent for this research and its process, is to work collaboratively with research
participants in the development and implementation of the research findings. The
research takes two distinct stages, the development of the case study of the Tracadie
Landfill issue and the development of outcome recommendations that will serve to
improve citizen participation in government land decisions. These recommendations will
apply to citizen participation, on a more general, provincial level.

Given the nature of this research project, your participation may be an opportunity for you
to share your ideas and experiences with other participants, and have a considerable role
in the development of recommendations that may promote a more equitable citizen
participation process in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island.

I am seeking approximately 3 to 5 individuals that are involved in issues related to the
research topic to serve as key informants. The role of the key informants is to help me
and the research be more grounded and more useful. To achieve this, I will contact you
from time to time, ask for feedback on ideas, and input on the outcome recommendations.

If you have any concerns about your participation in this research project, please feel free
to contact me (information provided below). You may also contact my supervisor, Dr.
Joanna Ochocka at (519) 741-1318, or Dr. Linda Parker, the Chair of Wilfrid Laurier
University Ethics Committee at (519) 884-0710 extension 3131.

I will be very happy if you choose to become involved in this research project. Please
contact me through telephone or email. I can be contacted at (902) 894-3624. I am also
accessible at all times through email at: flyn1997@mach1.wlu.ca .

Thank you for your time,

Billie-Jean Flynn

144

Appendix E Continued
Research Information Letter for Key Informant Participants
The Exploration of Citizen Participation in Government Land Decisions on Prince
Edward Island

Dear [Insert Name],

My name is Billie-Jean Flynn. I had recently contacted you about participating in my research project as a key informant participant. I am a student in Wilfrid Laurier University's Community Psychology program and I am a citizen of Prince Edward Island. The research project with which I am involved is entitled: The exploration of citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island.

The intent for this research and its process, is to work collaboratively with research participants in the development and implementation of the research findings. The research takes two distinct stages, the development of the case study of the Tracadie Landfill issue and the development of outcome recommendations that will serve to improve citizen participation in government land decisions. These recommendations will apply to citizen participation, on a more general, provincial level.

Given the nature of this research project, your participation may be an opportunity for you to share your ideas and experiences with other participants, and have a considerable role in the development of recommendations that may promote a more equitable citizen participation process in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island.

I am seeking approximately 3 to 5 individuals that are involved in issues related to the research topic to serve as key informants. The role of the key informants is to help me and the research be more grounded and more useful. To achieve this, I will contact you from time to time, ask for feedback on ideas, and input on the outcome recommendations.

If you have any concerns about your participation in this research project, please feel free to contact me (information provided below). You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Joanna Ochocka at (519) 741-1318, or Dr. Linda Parker, the Chair of Wilfrid Laurier University Ethics Committee at (519) 884-0710 extension 3131.

I will be very happy if you choose to become involved in this research project. Please contact me through telephone or email. Until December 10, 1999 I can be contacted at (519) 886-8110 (please call collect) and then as of December 11, 1999 I can be contacted at (902) 894-7274. I am also accessible at all times through email at: flyn1997@mach1.wlu.ca .

Thank you for your time,
Billie-Jean Flynn

Appendix F
Informed Consent Forms

Informed Consent for Case Study Participants

The Exploration of Citizen Participation in Government Land Decision on Prince Edward Island
Informed Consent

As a participant in the research project entitled: The exploration of citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island, you would be in agreement that I, Billie-Jean Flynn, can contact you from time to time to seek advice, information, input and feedback on various aspects of this research.

Due to the nature of the research there are potential risks for participants. Complete confidentiality and anonymity cannot be assured. While I, as a researcher, cannot reveal the identity of participants, the issue is such a public issue, and the limited number of potential participants make it impossible for me to ensure complete confidentiality and anonymity. Also, given the fact that I am contacting potential participants through a mutual contact, there is a direct link between potential participants and myself. To minimize the risk, I will not use any names or facts that can identify participants directly. Also, any record of our communication will not be directly linked to your identity. In addition to this, I would be open to exploring other ways to further ensure your confidentiality and anonymity is protected as a participant in this research.

As a participant, your role in this research is voluntary. You have the right to decline participation, to withdraw from the project at any time, and to refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. If you choose to withdraw any information, the information will be destroyed and not included in the final report.

If you have any concerns about your participation in this research project, please feel free to contact me using the information provided below. You may also contact Dr. Linda Parker, the Chair of Wilfrid Laurier University Ethics Committee at (519) 884-0710 extension 3131, or my supervisor, Dr. Joanna Ochocka at (519) 741-1318. Please feel free to contact me through telephone or email. I can be contacted at (902) 894-3624. I am also accessible at all times through email at: flyn1997@mach1.wlu.ca .

Consent

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form and agree to participate in this research.

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Interviewer's Signature

_____   _____
Date   Date

Appendix F Continued

Informed Consent for Key Informant Participants
The Exploration of Citizen Participation in Government Land Decision on Prince Edward Island

As a participant in the research project entitled: The exploration of citizen participation in government land decisions on Prince Edward Island, you would be in agreement that I, Billie-Jean Flynn, can contact you from time to time to seek advice, information, input and feedback on various aspects of this research.

Due to the nature of the research there are potential risks for participants. Complete confidentiality and anonymity cannot be assured. While I, as a researcher, cannot reveal the identity of participants, the issue is such a public issue, and the limited number of potential participants make it impossible for me to ensure complete confidentiality and anonymity. Also, given the fact that I am contacting potential participants through a mutual contact, there is a direct link between potential participants and myself. To minimize the risk, I will not use any names or facts that can identify participants directly. Also, any record of our communication will not be directly linked to your identity. In addition to this, I would be open to exploring other ways to further ensure your confidentiality and anonymity is protected as a participant in this research.

As a participant, your role in this research is voluntary. You have the right to decline participation, to withdraw from the project at any time, and to refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. If you choose to withdraw any information, the information will be destroyed and not included in the final report.

If you have any concerns about your participation in this research project, please feel free to contact me using the information provided below. You may also contact Dr. Linda Parker, the Chair of Wilfrid Laurier University Ethics Committee at (519) 884-0710 extension 3131, or my supervisor, Dr. Joanna Ochocka at (519) 741-1318. Please feel free to contact me through telephone or email. Until December 10, 1999 I can be contacted at (519) 886-8110 (please call collect) and as of December 11, 1999 I can be contacted at (902) 894-7274. I am also accessible at all times through email at: flyn1997@mach1.wlu.ca .

Consent

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form and agree to participate in this research.

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Interviewer's Signature

_____   _____
Date   Date

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153

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