

Title: Learning Community: How to Manage Issues Before They Manage You

Presenters: Kevin Preister, Erik Tilkemeier, James Kent Associates

Presentation: 45 minutes, 10 min for Q & A, total time: 55 min

Presentation Theme: Strategies for Building Project Understanding and Support in Local Communities

Summary:

Too often, project managers are surprised by citizen resistance and unable to prevent opposition groups, rumors and misinformation from negatively affecting project approval. Residents often feel frustrated, misled or uninformed about potential energy projects and their effects on community life. Through similar controversies in the oil and gas industry and public land management, methods have been developed to understand early and with intention diverse community interests, and to incorporate community interests into project communication, design and mitigation. In a host of different settings, we have learned ways to identify and resolve citizen issues in their emerging stage of development, forestalling project disruption, minimizing the effects of NIMBYism, and optimizing the project's social and economic benefits. The science of community reveals the informal systems of caretaking and support by which a community functions. Once a company is tied into this system, ample opportunities emerge for aligning project and community interests. This presentation will review several case studies and present key concepts for understanding how citizen issues affect project development activities. Strategies for building support and dealing with opposition groups will be outlined.

3 Learning Objectives:

1. Participants are more aware of the importance of working with informal systems in communities to avoid surprise, resolve project issues and build support.
2. Participants learn about key community dynamics that occur during an unmanaged project development phase and their debilitating effects on fair reviews from citizens.
3. Participants learn concepts that improve community interface strategies in order to prevent disruption, optimize project benefits, and build a "moderate middle."

Most interest to:

Project Developers, Project Managers, and Investors