

The Community Perspective-Getting started, founding principles and results

Community members took steps to form a local environmental organization F.R.E.S.H Inc. Fernald Residents Environmental Safety Health

- Became a 501c3, non-profit organization with Articles of Incorporation filed with the State of Ohio and IRS.

Define what group structure you want your organization to have:

- As an organization you learned to channel the anger into positive action working towards a solution.
- Form a Board that is involved and works with members.
- Define purpose and remain focused. What are the issues and concerns that brought the group together?
- Hold public meetings and invite the opponent, local officials and agencies.
- Members must educate themselves on the issues so they may inform the community. the elected officials also understand and talk with the opponent.
- Recruit in-kind contributions such as consultants, lawyer, accountant
- Contact people who are educated on related issues.
- Provide speakers related to the issue
- Use the media-they can be your best friend
- Align yourselves with similar groups at other sites and national organizations. Share information and work together when possible.
- Do not allow a national group's agenda to overshadow your goals

How to build a relationship with the opponent or agencies?

- Economically best to invite the community to have a seat at the decision making table than hiring a lawyer.
- Respect each other.
- Get the company to empathize with your fears and concerns. Remind the opponent of their responsibility to human health and the environment and safety of workers.
- Legitimize your fears and issues with tools related with issues.
- Speak of the core values to the issue you want to resolve.
- Maintain working relationships with your opponent, local and elected officials
- When visiting your local and federal officials, have a clear message and a solution.
- Work with legislators to get laws passed

Fernald Community Alliance

F.R.E.S.H. Achievements using these principles:

1. Convinced company to recognize and protect human health and the environment.
2. Company removed the sources of contamination, cleaned up and restored the site
3. Requested and received an Emergency Warning system.
4. Requested and received a public water system.
5. Legislation: Federal Facility Compliance Act
6. Protected Green Space.
7. The Fernald site is now a preserve with a Visitors Center / History/ Reading room

