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dynamics of individual decision-making forums (Gunton & Day 2003; Moote et al. 1997; Schuett et al. 2001; Wondolleck & Yaffee 2000). Others situate collaboration within a more macro, structural context and draw attention to how these processes relate to broader notions of governance, power, and institutional capacity building (Healey 2007, 2006). By revisiting my previous case study data, this paper reflects my own journey through the literature and subsequent interest in Healey's socio-institutional approach.

Although the work initially expressed a strong interest in the design and facilitation of group

intended as a comprehensive case study, this paper uses previously collected empirical data to illustrate how Healey's approach might provide insight in tandem with existing CNRM theory. It demonstrates how rigidities and mobilized bias within the informal 'institutions' of protected area planning limit the prospects for an efficacious collaborative process.

Theoretical Frame

With strong linkages to alternative dispute resolution and organizational theory, the literature on CNRM has expressed a strong interest in the design of collaborative processes (e.g. Moote et al. 1997; Schuett et al. 2001). It underscores the importance of inclusiveness, accountability, clear ground rules and realistic timelines (Gunton & Day 2003). Attention is also paid to contextual factors that create an environment "ripe" (Bentrup 2001) for collaboration. Inhibiting factors such as rigid organizational norms, the participants' stereotypical perceptions of each other (Wondolleck & Yaffee 2003) and inequities amongst the parties (Gunton & Day 2003) have been raised in the literature, but more attention needs to be paid to how these factors are connected to and reinforced by historical events and power relations. Collaborative processes can actually exacerbate conflict (Walker & Hurley 2004); are vulnerable to manipulation and "capture" (Singleton 2000); and may even be an extension of traditional adversarial politics (Amy 1987). Thus, the evaluation of a problem's "ripeness" needs to attend to the larger institutional context. Healey's (2007; 2006) relational work in the urban planning literature is helpful in this regard.

She argues that collaborative planning would be well served by the incorporation of new institutional theory – its more sociological variants, in particular. Although new institutional theory is generally united by the belief that institutions are more than formal rules and material

that creates inclusive, accountable and fair decision-making arenas; mobilizes a wide range of information, discursive frames and stakeholder networks; and is generally accepting of multiples identities and value perspectives. Healey (2007) uses her case-work on urban governance to explore how collaborative processes stimulate change at the outer levels of her model. This paper represents an initial examination of the opposite question: how do historically driven institutional rigidities mobilize bias and limit the prospects for an efficacious collaborative process.

The Kawartha Highlands Case

The Kawartha Highlands Signature Site is a 37,587-hectare protected area, approximately 200 km northeast of Toronto. It originated in Lands for Life (L4L): a landscape-level planning exercise in the late 1990s. During that process, a local residents group

thoroughly examined for references to the Kawartha Highlands process, from the time the committee was formally established to the government's final decision. Over 150 articles and letters to the editor were included in the database. The timing of the research project also allowed for personal observation of some of the public forums organized in response to Bill 239. Secondary sources and archival government documents were used to connect the controversy surrounding the KHSS-LSC to Ontario's larger history of land use planning.

The data was analyzed using both latent and manifest coding strategies. Manifest content analysis concerns what is physically present and countable within an archival or interview text, while latent content analysis is a more interpretive approach that attends to deeper structural meanings and relationships (Berg 2001). Manifest content analysis allowed for an initial assessment of the magnitude of a theme or issue (e.g. concerns over the design and facilitation of KHSS-LSC), while latent content analysis was used to establish linkages and correspondence to

trees to systematically address potentially contentious issues, and regularly sought input from other local and provincial stakeholders. The process was also characterized by a number of strategic tradeoffs between potentially competing procedural objectives: efficiency, workability, cohesiveness, accountability, transparency, and broad representation. These tradeoffs began with the selection of committee members. MNR staff and the politically appointed Chair wanted to ensure broad representation, while still generating cohesiveness amongst the committee. Stakeholders that fundamentally opposed protected areas were excluded. Since the Province had already decided to protect the Kawartha Highlands, the selection committee asserted that they needed people who would move forward from that decision in a "positive fashion" (Project Coordinator, personal interview). The selection process sought a diversity of interests, while avoiding formal affiliations to identifiable interest groups:

> You are in a bit of a different position if you are making decisions from the standpoint of an organization; they've got their own mandate and…they have to go back to their membership. It's a longer process and that was just inefficient (Project Coordinator, personal interview).

Thus, it appears that efficiency was at least partially achieved at the expense of representation.

Similar trade-offs can be seen in other aspects of process design. Extensive public consultation was a major part of the process, but the committee's work was not wholly transparent. When the process began, the public were asked to identify what they valued about the area: feedback that directly contributed to the over-arching vision statement. Once this initial visioning process was complete, meetings were held *in camera*. Although this decision had obvious implications on the accountability and transparency of the LSC, it resulted in gains in other areas. Closed meetings provided the flexibility to re-open decisions as new information

and coalition groups, both of which are considered to be examples of mobilized bias. By focusing on the roles played by two provincial stakeholder coalitions, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) and the Partnership for Public Lands (PPL), this section examines some of the historical factors that came to weigh on and ultimately destabilize the work of the KHSS-LSC. Although neither group was directly involved in the committee process, both were major actors in the debate surrounding the proposed Recreation Reserve designation and both were involved in the closed-door negotiations that led to resolution of the Kawartha Highlands.

Much of their work was done through the deployment of distinct discursive frames. For the OFAH, the controversy over the Kawartha Highlands was about protecting local autonomy and the enjoyment of local resources. In a front-page article published on July 13, 2000 in the *Peterborough Examiner*, not long after the process started, an OFAH representative was quoted as saying his organization would not want to see the area declared a provincial park, but was pleased with whom the MNR has selected to sit on the committee: “She is familiar with the traditional uses by local users and she holds these near and dear to her heart…We do not want to see some group in Toronto [the provincial capital and largest city and location of the PPL] deciding what uses are best for this area”. The PPL also appealed to broader notions of the public interest. For example, in September 17, 2002 letter to the same paper, their representative notes: “To see [the park designation] go down the drain because [a] few individuals [illegible]

preference to engage in aggressive lobbying and media campaigns – tactics that consistently resulted in the creation of exclusive closed-door negotiation sessions.

SLUP, which began in the early 1970s, can be considered the first major battle in what has come to be known as "the war of the woods". Although it was a largely top-down exercise in integrated land use planning, the process design included extensive consultation after the draft plans were complete. It was during this review period that the various users of Ontario's public lands began to organize themselves into pro- and anti-park coalitions" (Killan 1993: 350). An ENGO coalition (composed of many of the organizations that would later form the PPL) encouraged their members to speak up for the creation of protected areas. In much the same language that would be used in the Kawartha Highlands some 20 years later, one of their key spokespeople warned: "We face the great danger of dilution – the watering-down of the ideal concept of parkland until nothing remains" (as cited in Killan 1993: 344). The OFAH formed its own alliance with the forest industry, as well as the trapper and prospector associations, and adopted their own discursive tactics. For example, in a December 31, 1982 article in the *Globe and Mail* (a major national daily), the expansion of the parks system was framed as completely unnecessary and as a policy decision that would result in "thousands of days of lost recreation". This polarization of the issues ultimately led to an additional two-day meeting in which the Minister personally met some twenty-seven different interest groups. Known as the Guild Inn Session, these closed-door negotiations did little to resolve escalating tensions, but they did set precedent in terms of the governmental response to adversarial politics.

In an effort to build better relations, the 1997 launch of LUP included three citizen round tables that would consult the public and present the government with consensus-based recommendations. The PPL raised some concern with Round Tables' composition, but did not

seem to consider it a serious problem as long as the stables continued to work by consensus (Cartwright 2003). Instead, they focused their efforts on mobilizing their supporters to advocate for additional parks at the various public open houses. The anti-park coalition was also active, so

key to effective collaboration. Perhaps of even greater significance is the governmental response to the presence of such discursive rigidities. Both L4L and SLUP ended with intensive closed-door negotiations with select stakeholder groups – a response that seems to defy Healey's call for transparent governance routines and practices and one that was inclusive of wide range networks and coalitions and one that was replicated in the Kawartha Highlands.

Discussion

As collaborative processes become an increasingly inevitable and invisible component of the institutional apparatuses of natural resource planning and policy-making, their students and practitioners must strive for a robust understanding of their potentials and vulnerabilities. These processes are not immune to adversarial behaviour and careful assessment of the larger political landscape is key to their success (Walker & Hurley 2004). Healey's socio-institutional approach to the study of collaboration helps expose some of these vulnerabilities by providing a vocabulary and analytical frame to ask key questions about the relationships between the formal and informal; the overt and the hidden; and the multiple scales of action. When applied to the Kawartha Highlands case, it opened up new lines of questioning about the role of established networks and coalitions and lingering discursive constructions. Such attention to the role of mobilized bias in collaborative processes ultimately led to a more complete analysis of how Ontario's history with land use planning destabilized a functional – albeit imperfect – Local Stakeholder Committee.

Although the trade-offs made during the design of the KHSS-LSC cannot be discounted entirely, they are not the sole roots of the committee's inefficacy. The Province's original construction of the KHSS-LSC's task as a depoliticized choice between the provincial park and

characterized by persistent pro- and anti-park coalitions. These coalitions have a long history of asserting their position as indispensable actors, but also mobilized bias through the development of rigid and pervasive discourses about the meaning and necessity of protected areas. The additional negotiations triggered by the proposed *Recreation Reserves Act* emerge as a response to the resurgence of powerful coalitions, whose historical behaviour provides few, if any, indications that these were a group of actors ready to put their differences aside to "constructively explore solutions that go beyond their own limited version of what is possible" (Gray 1989: 5). The inflexibility in established networks' discursive construction of the issue, combined with key stakeholders' comfort resulted in a situation in which the KHSS-LSC was unable to affect public policy without the creation of additional planning processes and policy arenas. Although the majority of the KHSS-LSC's recommendations were eventually implemented, the committee's intended role as a coordinator of public input was largely abandoned in favour of a more regionally driven process composed of closed-door negotiations with key stakeholder coalitions. Yet, prominent coalition groups' polarized framing of the issues and tendency to circumvent often established collaborative and consultative processes in favour of closed-door negotiations were not unique to the Kawartha Highlands. Both of these governance practices appear to have been routinized during previous land use planning initiatives, suggesting that bias had not been mobilized in favour of a more grassroots collaborative process.

While I do not attempt to comment on how these forms of mobilized bias might be connected to the societal values and government ideologies discussed in the outermost level, the seeds of this kind of analysis can be found in the existing literature on Ontario's history with land use planning. Other authors suggests that the controversy and resultant policy response during the L4L process was connected to a growing national tension between economic and environmental

values – as evidenced by the wave of violent forestry protests that occurred across the country, and especially in British Columbia, in the early 1990s (Cartwright 2003). The L4L process has also been linked to a general shift towards a conservative, neo-liberal agenda (Marcolongo 2001). These works suggest that linking the overt and immediate dynamics of a specific collaborative 'episode' to larger societal trends is not an unrealistic endeavour, just one that could not be addressed during a secondary analysis of an existing and more narrowly defined

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