

2. How We Worked

Facilitated Process

The Multi-Stakeholder Group has faced typical difficulties in making the most effective use of group time and talent. Most large groups whose members represent diverse points of view often struggle to keep personal beliefs and values intact while maintaining mutual respect and overall progress. We did create subcommittees on speakers, principles and maps. The bulk of our efforts, however, involved meetings of up to 30 people who sought ways of attaining agreement on what we would offer to county leaders and citizens.

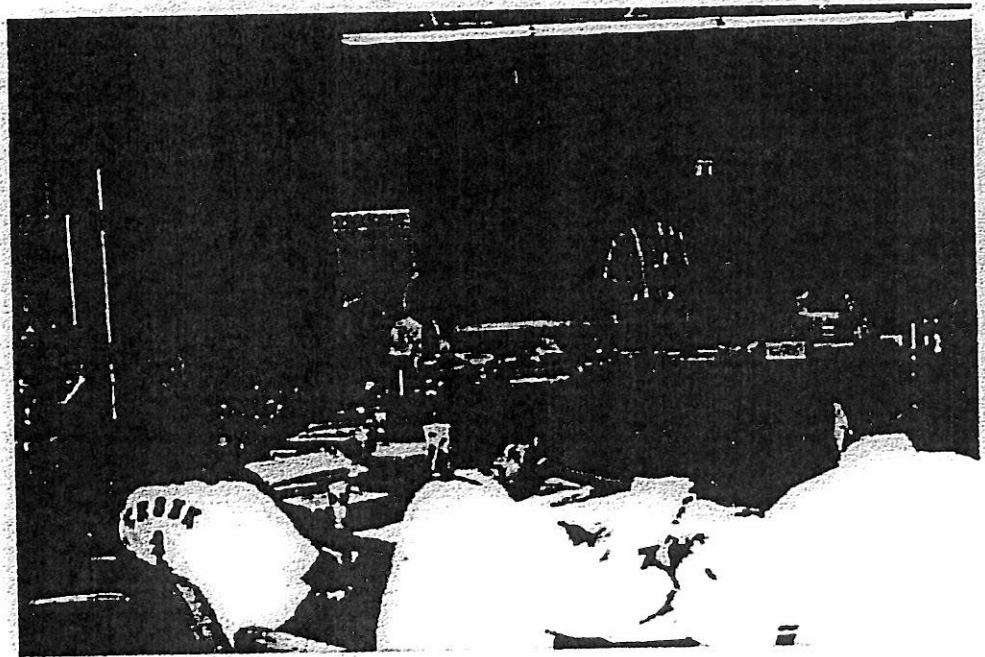
These realities led us to retain two facilitators. Herb Marlow assisted us in the early stages in 1995 and 1996 to define our mission and guiding principles, and to establish the ground rules under which we would operate and reach decisions. There followed a period in which we met and deliberated in a more self-directed manner, with helpful voluntary facilitation by Jono Miller. Jim Stansbury was retained in March 1997 to assist us in attaining an important milestone, the submission of this Status Report. At his first workshop, he asked each one of us to define what would allow us to say, when our work was concluded, that our efforts were a success. Here are some of the diverse answers provided:

- *"There will be a balance of competing interests reached."*
- *"All players, interests, and parties participated."*
- *"We came to a conclusion of a long range vision for our eastern lands that all or almost all were comfortable with."*
- *"Consensus on how to manage development in the County which will preserve the quality of life which we believe is so important for our future. Sustainable development is the key."*
- *"Our work guides the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners in adopting a plan that preserves biological diversity and natural resources, and guides future sustainable development that serves our population, both present and for the next 100 years."*
- *"That the entire group supports the outcome."*
- *"That the proposal will be noticed by elected officials and staff, and the community."*

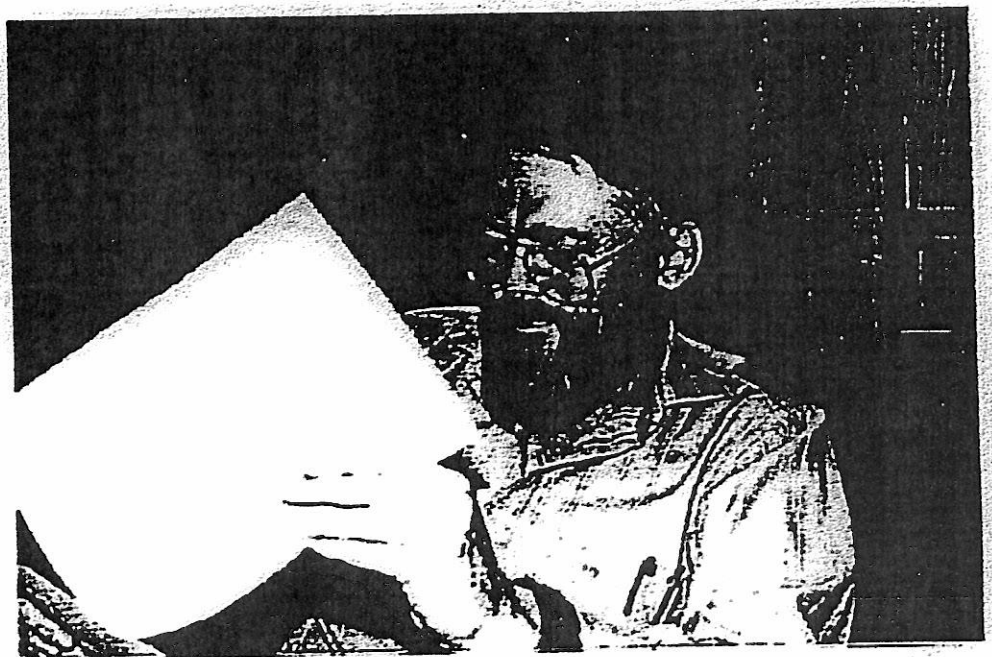
RECORDERS MEMO: LEGIBILITY OF WRITING,
TYPING OR PRINTING FOR REPRODUCTIVE
PURPOSE MAY BE UNSATISFACTORY IN
THIS DOCUMENT WHEN RECEIVED.

supporting votes. In this manner, the MSG attained a group consensus on content that reflected at least a "3", and usually an average greater than "4".

RECORDERS MEMO: LEGIBILITY OF WRITING,
TYPING OR PRINTING FOR REPRODUCTIVE
PURPOSE MAY BE UNSATISFACTORY IN
THIS DOCUMENT WHEN RECEIVED.



MSG Members test for consensus



Jono Miller helped the group to stay on track in the absence of professional facilitation