

Consensus Workshop with Muir Commons

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DRAFT Workshop Objectives:

Clarify the meaning of consensus. Understand the definition that is used by Muir Commons.

What parts of the definition are potentially problematic? What does it mean "to stand aside" or "able to live with"? What are good examples of blocking consensus? (Last time I blocked - number of granny flats.)

Review different fallback supermajority voting processes and when they are used by different groups. How does N Street's process work?

3. Clarify the building blocks to reaching consensus. What is Muir Common's status?

- common goals (and strategies)
- common values and principles
- good meeting agendas and facilitation

Review and clarify steps to reaching consensus.

- developing proposals - before the meeting - by committees
- proposals are consensus based
- test proposal for serious objections. Understand why objections exist.
- Secondary objections can be resolved with friendly amendments.
- When time is running out, spend the remaining time on process.

5. Other issues

Agenda:

- 15 minutes Clarify meaning of consensus.
- 15 minutes Fallback supermajority process
- 15 minutes Building blocks to consensus.
- 15 minutes Steps to reaching consensus
- 15 minutes Other issues

From Resource Manual for a Living Revolution

"Consensus is a process for making group decisions without voting. Agreement is reached through a process of gathering information and viewpoints, discussion, persuasion, a combination of synthesis of proposals and/or the development of totally new ones. The goal of the consensus process is to reach a decision with which everyone can agree. Consensus at its best relies on persuasion rather than pressure for reaching a group unity.

Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimity. A group can proceed with an action without having total agreement. In the event that an individual or a small group cannot agree with a given proposal and is blocking consensus, the facilitator may ask if they are willing to "stand aside" and allow the group to act, or if they feel so strongly about the issue that they are unwilling for the group to act. If the individual(s) agree to stand aside, their disagreements are noted in the minutes of the meeting, and the group is free to act on the decision. ..."