

Panel: Building Consensus for Reuse Planning: Cleaning Up the Other Mess

Presenter: A. Bruce Dotson, Associate Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning, University of Virginia

Title: Agencies and Communities: Parallel or Converging Planning Practices

Abstract: The dictionary¹ definition of “parallel” is “extending in the same direction, everywhere equidistant, and not meeting”. Agencies and communities involved with contaminated sites have their own distinctive cultures and practices which frequently position these entities in parallel. They “extend in the same direction” in the sense that they are each working ultimately for site remediation and reuse but they frequently do so independently (“everywhere equidistant”) and fail to come together (“not meeting”) at critical junctures. These parallel cultures will be characterized and three junctures where convergence is essential will be identified. Determining future land use, implementing institutional controls, and long term site management are three places where agencies and communities must come together for their mutual benefit. Suggestions of ways to encourage these convergences are proposed. The Central Chemical (Hagerstown, MD), Sharon Steel/Midvale Slag (Salt Lake, UT), and Barber Orchard (Haywood County, NC) cases will be used to illustrate a range of points about convergence.

¹ Merriam-Webster <http://www.merriam-webster.com>