

## Next Stage 3 課題文

Kids love to skateboard. Sidewalks and handicapped access ramps are perfect for skateboarding, from the kids' perspective. In Randolph, the downtown sidewalks were particularly good for skateboarding because the town is built on a slope, the sidewalks making a natural hill for the skateboarders. The town had gone to some trouble to put in new sidewalks, ramps, and other pedestrian amenities, and the facilities were in perfect shape for the sport. The skateboarders were having a great time. Part of the joy of the sport is the showiness of it—so being right downtown with a ready-made audience met their needs perfectly.

All was not well, however. Elderly pedestrians didn't like risking life and limb when they walked out of a store only to find themselves in the middle of a skateboard stunt ramp. Store owners complained. To make matters worse, skateboard wheels often left grooves in new and expensive sidewalks, so the town was faced with damage to its brand new infrastructure improvement project.

The Selectboard, faced with citizen and business complaints and the threat of costly damage to town property, took action. They quickly passed an ordinance banning skateboards on all sidewalks in town. The penalty for infractions would be a ticket, much like a traffic violation ticket.

The skateboarders, with the help of a few sympathetic adults, did not stand still for this infringement on their rights to enjoy public amenities. They organized and petitioned to change the law. After all, if the town's concern was the downtown area, why ban skateboarding on all sidewalks in town? Furthermore, if the town wanted to support their interest in this type of recreation, then perhaps construction of a skateboard park would be one way to do it.

After several meetings with the young skateboarders, the Selectboard voted to amend the law so that only the downtown sidewalks would be off-limits. Since that time, the town has also built a skateboard park, which has been very popular since it opened in 1998.

In this example, we have illustrations of many different needs and all the community actors. It begins with the need for recreation. Some young people want to skateboard—it's their way of relaxing, rejuvenating; it's fun. We all need to take time to play, to enjoy life, especially the children. So these individuals take action to meet their need for recreation by turning the downtown into their playground. This action comes into conflict with the individuals and business organizations in town. Older people need to feel safe on the sidewalks. If they don't feel safe, they don't shop downtown, and so the business owners lose customers. These individuals and a few organizations (businesses) contact the local government to fix the problem. The local government, in turn, takes action to constrain the activities of the kids who were meeting their needs in a way that was annoying and a safety hazard for others. The original action has now gone full circle—individual action provoked an organizational reaction, which in turn helped initiate a government action that regulated individual action. All the community actors were involved in the situation in their own particular way.