Rhode Island D.E.M.

Environmental Equity in the clean-up of Contaminated Properties in RI 3/12/07

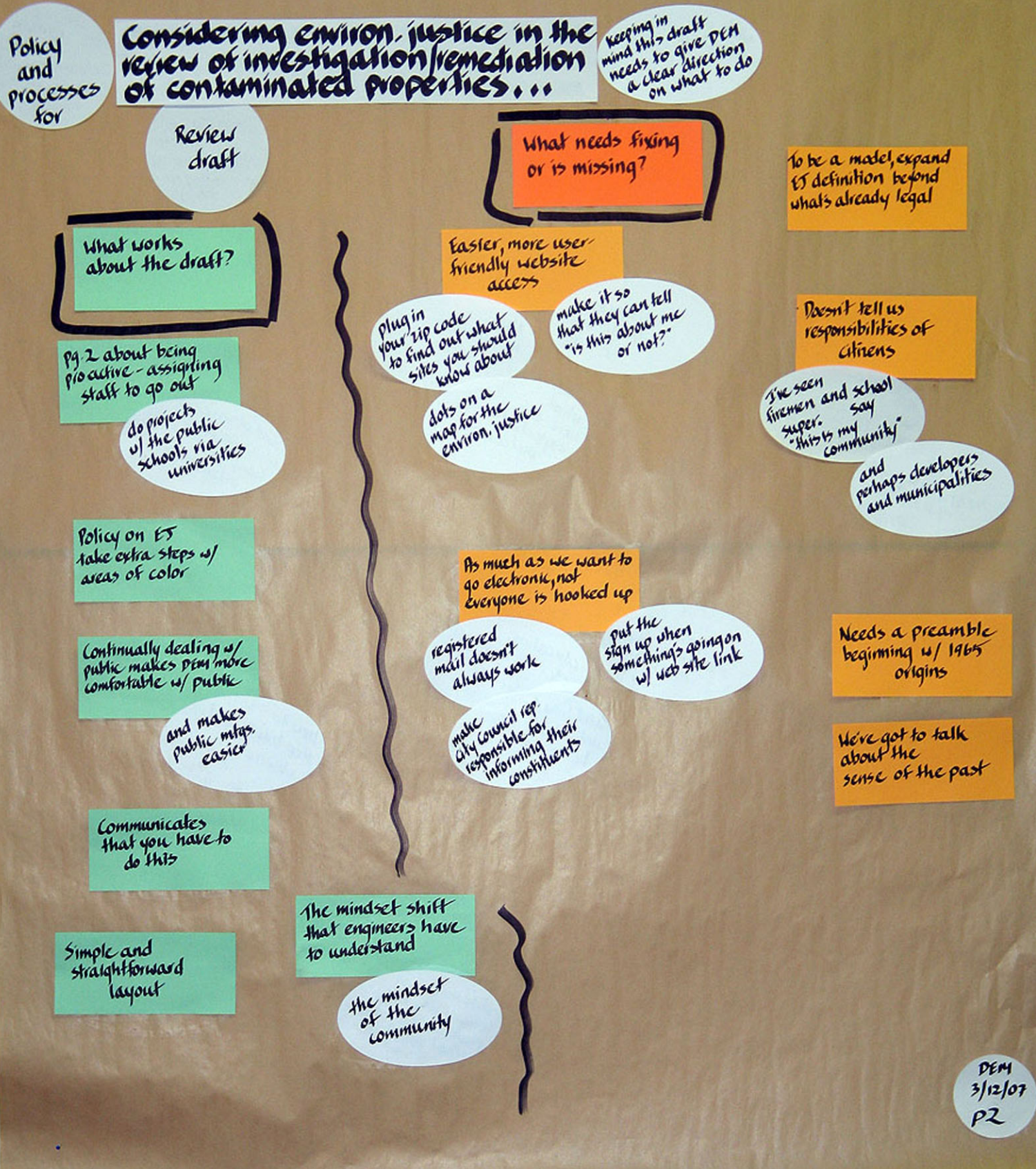
Policy and processes document

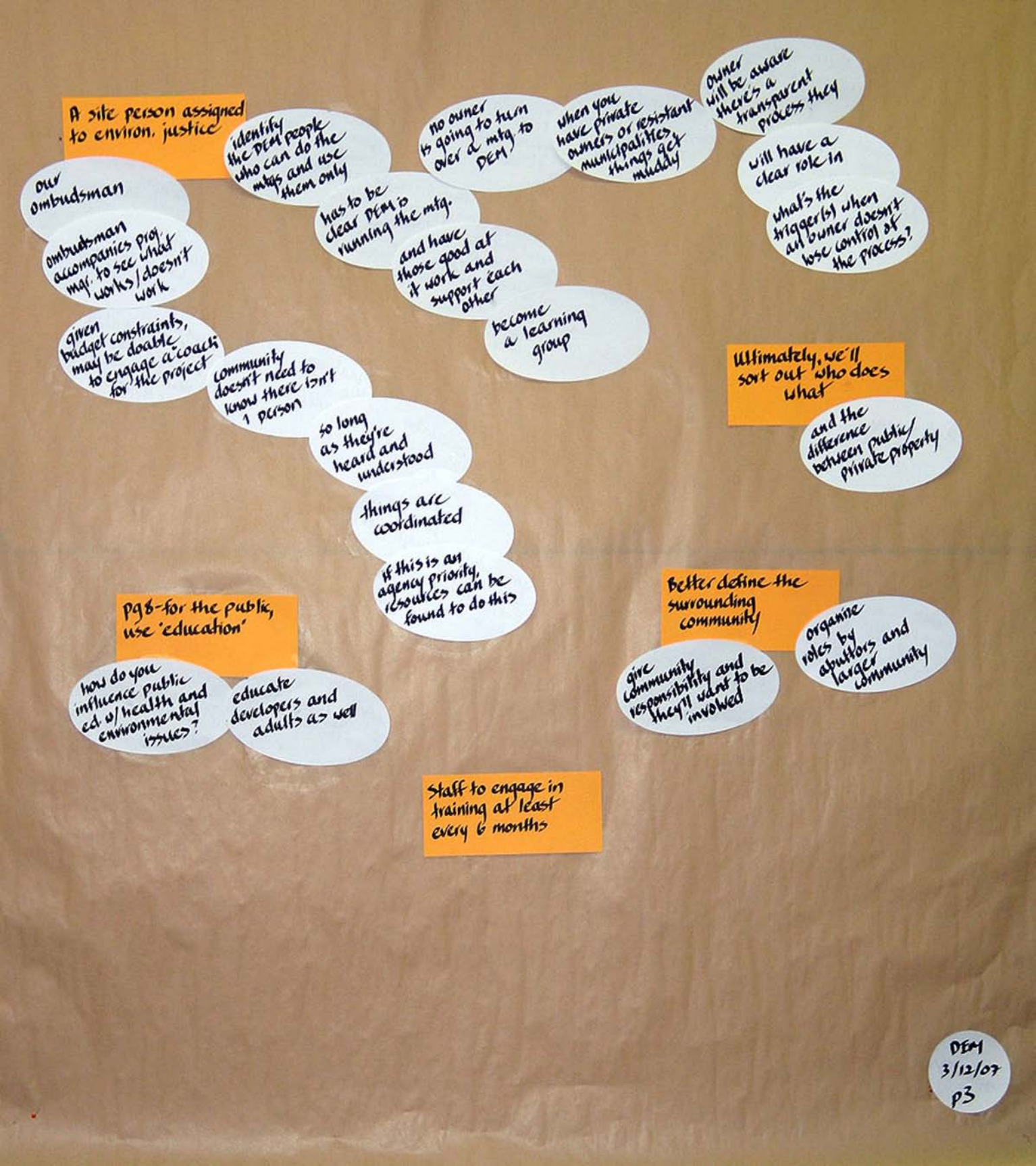
Going public...

- neighborhoods
- professionals
- municipalities

Healthy communities grant... build a network for this project?

General outreach and network building


Policy and processes for
Considering environ. justice in the review of investigation/remediation of contaminated properties...
keeping in mind this draft needs to give DEM a clear direction on what to do
Review draft
What needs fixing or is missing?
To be a model, expand EJ definition beyond whats already legal
What works about the draft?
Easier, more user-friendly website access
Plug in your zip code to find out what sites you should know about
make it so that they can tell "is this about me or not?"
Doesn't tell us responsibilities of citizens
pg. 2 about being p/o active - assigning staff to go out
do projects w/ the public schools via universities
dots on a map for the environ. justice
I've seen firemen and school super. say "this is my community"
and perhaps developers and municipalities
Policy on EJ take extra steps w/ areas of color
As much as we want to go electronic, not everyone is hooked up
registered mail doesn't always work
put the sign up when something's going on w/ web site link
Needs a preamble beginning w/ 1965 origins
Continually dealing w/ public makes DEM more comfortable w/ public
and makes Public mtgs. easier
make City Council rep. responsible for informing their constituents
We've got to talk about the sense of the past
Communicates that you have to do this
The mindset shift that engineers have to understand
Simple and straightforward layout
the mindset of the community
DEM 3/12/07 P2


A site person assigned to environ. justice
our Ombudsman
identify the DEM people who can do the mtgs and use them only
has to be clear DEM is running the mtg.
no owner is going to turn over a mtg. to DEM
when you have private owners or resistant municipalities, things get muddy
owner will be aware there's a transparent process they will have a clear role in
what's the trigger(s) when an owner doesn't use control of the process?
ombudsman accompanies proj. mgr. to see what works/doesn't work
and have those good at it work and support each other
become a learning group
given budget constraints, may be doable to engage a coach for the project
community doesn't need to know there isn't 1 person
so long as they're heard and understood
things are coordinated
if this is an agency priority, resources can be found to do this
Ultimately, we'll sort out who does what
and the difference between public/private property
pg 8 - for the public, use 'education'
how do you influence public ed. w/ health and environmental issues?
educate developers and adults as well
Better define the surrounding community
organize roles by abuttors and larger community
give community responsibility and they'll want to be involved
Staff to engage in training at least every 6 months
DEM 3/12/07 p3

Bringing the policy and process to the public

Questions for the meeting

How to best reach the target?

Municipalities ?

Which entities in municipal gov't can best reach EJ communities?

How does this policy benefit the municipality's own redevelopment efforts?

How will this benefit your community?

What your concerns? Expense?

How does the process work?

do we understand what a municipality goes through in developing a property?

How does a municipality judge or approve a project?

What are the municipality's responsibilities?

What are the limits?

Professionals ?

we are thinking about professionals broadly here

lawyers, architects, engineers, environmentalists, etc.

What are expectations of all parties early in process

What happens when there are breaks in timeline?

How does Community access to professionals/ experts?

Community/ neighborhood ?

Get people who are already involved - organization or area leader

Do questionnaire to elicit community concerns

what to you think is dangerous in your community?

and then move into specific environmental issues

how to connect this issue to their life

Pre-education for community members so the residents come in prepared - English + Spanish

don't just show up w/ the draft and ask for comments

Pre-education (cont'd)
- Jobs w/ Justice Annual Meeting (Feb)
- ECRI
- pre-meeting of community leaders/ ~~selectmen~~

people w/ trust and a big reach

Be realistic: few people will understand what we're talking about

get people to understand the terms before hand

how to spread the word: Public Service Announcements fliers in stores, laundromats

eg, there are degrees of what "clean" means

risk= hazard + outrage

once you reach outrage, the process blows up

by giving the community a chance to act vs. simply react

to reduce outrage

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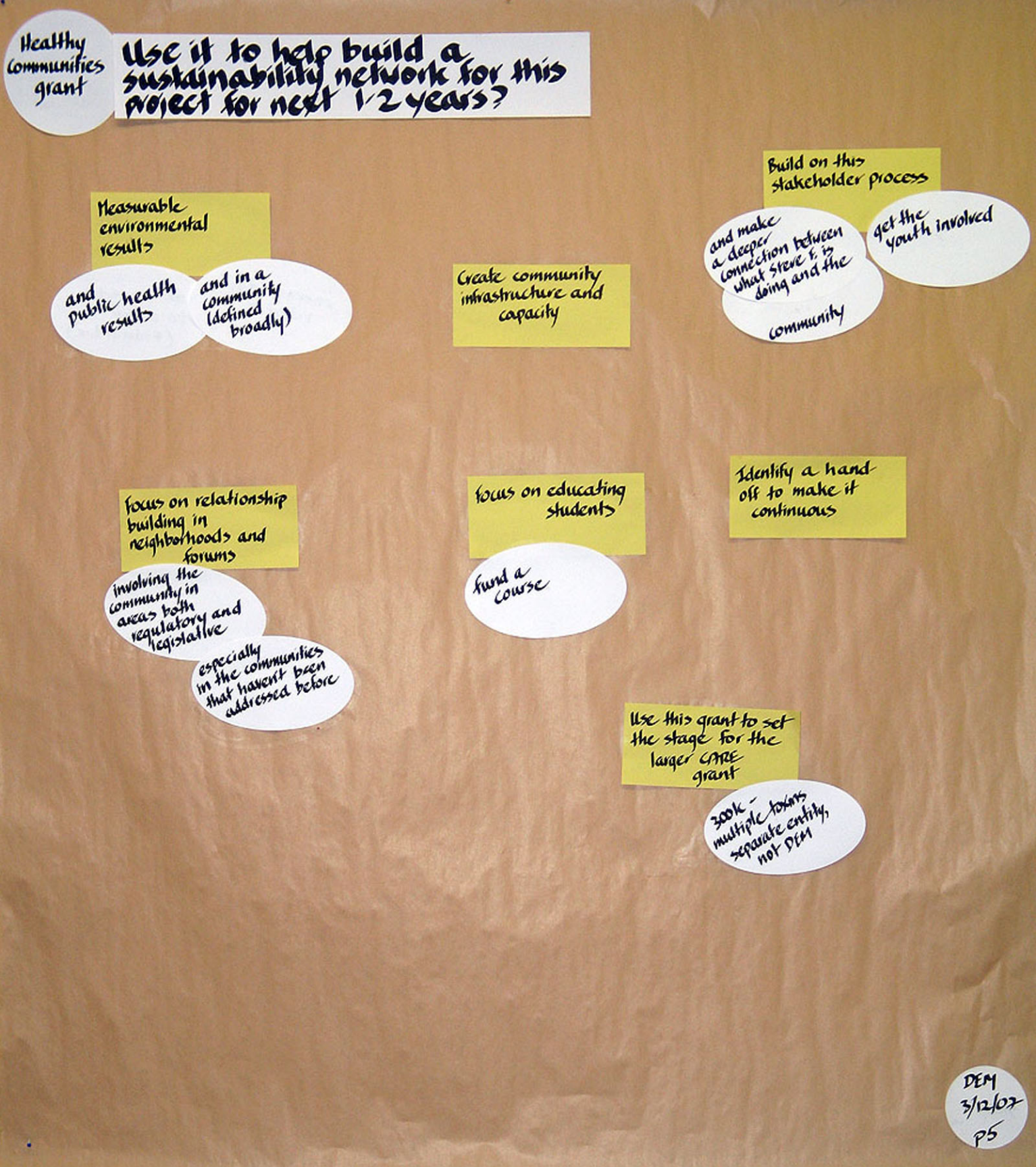
Healthy communities grant
Use it to help build a sustainability network for this project for next 1/2 years?
Measurable environmental results
and public health results
and in a community (defined broadly)
Create community infrastructure and capacity
Build on this stakeholder process
and make a deeper connection between what steve f. is doing and the community
get the youth involved
focus on relationship building in neighborhoods and forums
involving the community in areas both regulatory and legislative
especially in the communities that haven't been addressed before
focus on educating students
fund a course
Identify a hand off to make it continuous
Use this grant to set the stage for the larger CARE grant
300k - multiple toxins separate entity, not DEM
DEM 3/12/07 P5