

LINDA – Fieldnotes – Thursday, January 24, 2008

Subject: Listening to Haja's radio show  
Location: my office  
Time: 6:01-6:31

[Haja just told me about this radio show, and I found that I could listen online. I typed notes as I listened, which leaves out a lot, and I also attempted to record using the recorder. I am afraid that the sound of my typing may be too loud. Afterwards I edited my typos, and looked online to find the correct spellings of people's names.]

84p

[Haja had some trouble connecting to his guest by phone. Maybe half of his time he was not able to get her]

Good evening, this is Harlem 411  
Haja [introduces self]  
Beatrice Sibblies  
Patricia ? [possibly Patti Jacobs]  
Community Board 10  
Rezoning of 125<sup>th</sup>  
Strategy, regarding some upcoming hearings by the planning commission on the rezoning

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Good evening Sister Sibblies  
Um, good evening Sister Sibblies

[no response]  
Columbia expansion  
People in Harlem are up in arms about rezoning

616

Recently I  
Record Shack, approx 35 yrs  
Brother Sikhulu scheduled to be evicted in March of this year  
House of Prayer  
Part of a very, very large spiritual community that has churches throughout the nation, it was I believe, once the church of Daddy Grace [?]  
Principals of that church have been trying to get Brother Sikhulu out

51

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Fire at a store [next to the Record Shack]  
Controversy around Brother Sikhulu  
Coalition to Save Harlem  
Going to be doing something Sunday, at 10:30am, in front of the House of Prayer, to protest

I have Sister Sibblies on the line, I believe

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Sister Sibblies?  
[dial-tone sound]  
Ok should have her shortly

Plan by the city,  
To turn the corner, into something that would look, pretty much like what 42<sup>nd</sup> street looks like at this time  
And people in the community believe that there is a certain landscape to Harlem, sky scape, if you will, that has been in existence for a number of years, and the people are content, pretty much, that we should have that corridor, as it is, and no skyscrapers, or condos that can't be afforded by people in the community

We are aware of the gentrification in the community,  
Almost when you turn around  
There is a new condos going up  
And who can afford those condos?  
There's an upsurge of people to buy those condos  
And that's ok, but, don't displace the people trying to maintain their lives  
With some dignity

Training taking place tomorrow at the state office building here in Harlem  
Hearing on January the 30<sup>th</sup>, January the 30<sup>th</sup>, I think that's next Wednesday  
Begins at about 9:30 in the morning  
This particular hearing is *critical* for people in the community  
Too many times we get the information at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour  
We're imploring people to get out to Aaron Davis Hall and *participate* in the city hearing commission  
And get out [to the protest] and support Brother Sikhulu Shange and the Seafood House on 127<sup>th</sup>

One of the things  
Have we *ever*, have we *ever* had an economic toehold here in Harlem? I mean I've heard about the Harlem Renaissance but have we ever had an economic toehold on []

Sister Sibblies,  
[no response]  
Land, as Malcom X said, is the basis of all power. We need land to build ourselves, to sustain ourselves,  
One of the things the kids used to say, the young people used to say back in the day,  
We move from the rural areas  
Grandparents, great grandparents, great grandparents  
Looking for a better life  
Looking for a life [that isn't so hard]  
But we had LAND.

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We had something, something that was part of our development, part of our heritage, something that was ours. And in the cities, it's pretty much that we, we, we, we *rent*, we *lease*,

Eminent domain, the municipality can take our homes and set them aside for, you know, the better good of the public?

And put up buildings?

I mean it has *happened*, in the past. What is it, Seneca Village, in the 1800s, that was once a thriving village of African Americans and the municipality took it over, and there's hardly a marker there now.

We are kind of a transient people, you know, it kind of seems

Ok Sister Sibblies are you there?

Sibblies: I am right here.

Ok good to talk to you again.

Background

Thank you for having me on your show... chair of committee [?] been on the board about 3 years now

Brought to our attention by some committee members

**125<sup>th</sup> River to river**

These discussions only taken form in the last year

Rezoning proposal submitted a year ago, Dec 2006

People were really shocked that the views in the report are not the views [in the community]

Just so your viewers know, there is a process with a [large project like this]

Haja: is that the Uniform Land Review Process?

S: the ULURP process. Also for Columbia, our community said no,

H: and what were those conditions?

S: those conditions [faint voice, then dial-tone]

H: hello? Well we're going to go on

As you heard, rezone

She mentioned that the community board is against it

And she was going to give us the conditions that the community board is set in terms of our position to the rezoning of 125<sup>th</sup> street

As I was saying before we are pretty much, we have moved from place to place

At one time in Harlem we were down in Wall Street, we had communities down there

Later we were in Hell's Kitchen, a lot of people lived there

At the time I think it was called Sam Won Hill, because a number of black soldiers who had fought in the Spanish, the Cuban war, I think it was the Spanish-American war? []

We have been pretty nomadic, in moving from place to place. So it's in our interest

Sister Sibblies are you there? Sorry we lost you

S: Before you lose me again I just wanted to [say the dates and times of the events]

Wed 9:30 until, the last person speaks

24  
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Once the last person speaks, that's when they wrap up.  
Absolutely critical that you talk about people being nomads in this country, it's important that we make a stand  
So many times we say as individuals our voice doesn't matter  
And that's absolutely not the case  
The board echoed our requirements  
Each person's voice does matter  
Even though the odds might feel extreme  
The system requires

Strategy training session at 1pm from 1-2:30 at the state office meeting  
And the state commission is having the hearing at the Aaron Davis Hall all day, please come, early in the morning, that's when you have a chance of speaking

Number one, Harlem is a village. 125<sup>th</sup> street is our main commercial corridor. What happens when you cut out the heart [of ?]? It dies. Losing what's special about Harlem. There should be no increase in residential density from Lenox to St. Nicholas. It should remain a commercial corridor. We should work on getting [high-quality] jobs [rather than] service jobs. We need to maximize those opportunities for affordable housing [rather than] luxury housing. Third, arts. Fourth, local businesses. With rents escalating a lot of these businesses are going out of businesses. We need to maintain the local flavor of Harlem. Those are the four major topics.

H: What is the plan, for 125th street. What would it look like?

S: Just imagine, 86<sup>th</sup> street. The north side of the 125<sup>th</sup> street. Lenox and Frederick Douglass, 200[something] feet, 29 story building. ON the south side those buildings will go up to 19 stories. The view of the community board is that there should be no building higher than the Theresa building. [so you don't feel like uptown is] midtown

H: How tall is Theresa?

S: Crown 160 ft, top of the building 130 ft

H: wasn't there a protest for state office building?

S: don't build on failure

H:

S: when you get your turn to speak, what you have to say becomes part of the permanent record in the city of New York. When the final documents are being prepared, We'll give you advice on how to structure that testimony. Key issues, rich background, give you more color as to where this testimony fits in this process,

H: where will this, where will

S: room,

8<sup>th</sup> floor, state office building

Start at 1, to 2:30

Bring your mother sister brother

H: you have to get ID to get in, right?

1401

S:

H: ever been a time in the community where we've really had an economic toehold. [] Do we have something to look at?

S: I always say I need to read more history, because if you

To give the community more ownership of 125<sup>th</sup> street

To give art organizations more ownership of 125<sup>th</sup> street

To give businesses more ownership of 125<sup>th</sup> street

Long-term residents

There are going to be so much fewer opportunities to control our neighborhood

H: ok, we're getting ready to wind up. One of the things [] one of the times when we had more economic clout was the time of Adam Clayton Powell, and I need to read up on my history as well, how he stood on development. Where are our public officials now?

Senator Perkins, Congressman Rangel, our religious institutions

S: I will say that Council Member Dickens says that she will be backing the views of community board 10. But we live in a democracy, and you get what we pay for.

Downtown residents. How many of your listeners are going to pick up the phone and call their congressperson's office? Maybe because some of those people pick up the phone, and go to their office, and wait in their office.

H: ok I have to stop you there. [asks for number to Community Board 10]

S: give me one [moment]

The community board office is 212, 749, 3105.

H: You hear that, community? You got to get out. This is your time to get out and get involved, and make your voice heard. It's time to reclaim our community.

[thanks to Sister Sibblies]

[she gives thanks]

H: ok this has been

On the campus of City College, and we have been talking with Beatrice Sibblies  
Chair of the economic development committee

We hope that you have heard what's been said,

And understand that this is a very, very, very important issue

You should take the time to come out and hear what's being said

Without knowledge there's no power

We definitely want to put up whatever resistance to what is not in our favor

Please take the very best of care, and stay strong, and go forward.

[end of Haja's show]

Mocha Marie

Event announcements

Talk at church

Civil service tests

Availability at a Catholic high school

Scholarships at Harvard

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Movement events calendar, harlem411.com

Up next is sister Yasmin with guest ?

Street Talk  
First in business,  
Next in labor

[https://www.whcr.org/SHOW\\_PROFILE/harlem\\_411.html](https://www.whcr.org/SHOW_PROFILE/harlem_411.html)  
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HARLEM 411

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