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2 GULLAH-GEECHEE CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR:
3 SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC HEARINGS
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June 22, 2009 - Hollywood Town Hall -
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1 (The presentation commenced at 6:30 P.M.)
2 MAYOR HEYWARD: Let's go then to the
3 presentations, because I know that Council is
4 wondering, What's the hot topic tonight? We're not
5 under fire. In fact, we want to hear some good things
6 that's happening in our land. So Queen Quet has asked
7 to make a presentation to Council about the
8 Gullah-Geechee Nation and Gullah-Geechee Corridor. And
9 we will hear her at this time.
10 Is there anyone else joining you?
11 QUEEN QUET: Yes, ma'am. We have three other
12 commissioners here with me.
13 First, let me say, Good evening everybody.
14 (Remarks in Gullah.)
15 So now for the other position that I'm here
16 for tonight, as a commissioner and one of the expert
17 commissioners for South Carolina, for the
18 Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.
19 I'd like to introduce to you several of your other
20 commissioners that actually are natives of Charleston
21 County and live currently in Charleston County, one of
22 which could not join us tonight. That's Mr. William
23 Saunders, who I'm sure many of you know from Johns
24 Island. We also have Attorney Willie Heyward with us.
25 We have Dr. J. Herman Blake, one of our alternates, and
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1 also Nicole Green, also one of our alternate

2 commissioners.

3 And we are all here tonight to let you all know --
4 I know many of you have read over the past several
5 years, probably since at least 2006, you have heard
6 about the Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Act that was
7 then passed into law and signed by President George W.
8 Bush.

9 In 2007, all of us, along with a full body, which
10 consisted of 15 members as a federal commission and ten
11 alternates, were installed as a federal commission of
12 what is called a National Heritage Area.

13 And what I'm going to bring over is just an
14 example of our National Heritage Area, which is the
15 Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. And you
16 will see that the Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage
17 Corridor goes from the Cape Fear area in North Carolina
18 all the way southward to Jacksonville, Florida.

19 (Remarks in Gullah.)

20 So you are right in the midst of the
21 corridor, right at this moment.

22 Now, what is unique about this NHA, as it's
23 referred to in the federal government, is that it is
24 the only one of 50 National Heritage Areas that deals
25 with a culture of people of African descent. So it set
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1 a precedent in not only Gullah-Geechee history, but
2 American history. And the reason it was created is
3 because of the unique abilities of enslaved African
4 people, that what they were able to do to reshape this
5 area and create such a unique culture, that is called
6 Gullah-Geechee, with our own language, our own
7 traditions. And that is what this NHA is here to do,
8 is to educate more people around the world about it and
9 to protect both artifacts, cultural landscapes, as well
10 as the waterways, the tradition of the people, so
11 things that we call both tangible and intangible items
12 or objects or conditions and things.

13 So, you may know of historic buildings here in
14 Hollywood that are very significant to the history of
15 Gullah-Geechee people of Hollywood, that you would want
16 recognized as part of this corridor. But, then, don't
17 forget things like songs, the spirituals. You may also
18 know of other things in terms of agricultural
19 traditions, things that are part of sea work, the
20 mariculture traditions. All of those things can be
21 included.

22 And that's why I was very pleased when Mayor
23 Heyward said, Yes, we definitely want the Town of
24 Hollywood to be active participants in the public input
25 portion of what is called a General Management Plan.

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1 We are in the final phase of public input for the
2 General Management Plan for this particular
3 Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, NHA. So
4 Commissioner Green is going to give each one of you one
5 of these, which is a public comment card. You'll see,
6 as I told other people at other meetings, there ain't
7 too much free in America right now, but this is already
8 paid for, with your tax dollars. You can mail it back
9 to us, free. You don't have to put a stamp on it.
10 Just fold it over, put a tape on it, and send it back.

11 But for those who would like to put in public
12 input electronically, if you'll notice at the top of
13 the card, when you get it, under the words, Comment

14 Card, at the very bottom of this paragraph, the second
15 line, right before the bottom, you will see a Web site
16 there. You can also go on there and find our first
17 newsletter, which we made sure that all of the members
18 of the town council received copies. But you can also
19 see that and refer to it before even filling this out.
20 We do ask you to please fill this out and send it
21 back by the end of this month. Because this will close
22 out the first phase, only the first phase, of public
23 input.

24 You will hear of us coming back to various areas
25 throughout the corridor over the next few months, and

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1 especially in the fall. We would have amassed the
2 input that would have come out of 25 meetings
3 concerning the Gullah-Geechee Cultural Heritage
4 Corridor.

5 And we are a federal commission under the
6 Department of the Interior, that federal agency, and so
7 is a collaborating partner of ours, the National Park
8 Service. So we're working with them to carry out the
9 work that has to be done for what we call the General
10 Management Plan.

11 That plan will then tell us where the funds that
12 were legislated -- understand the word I'm using -- the
13 funds that were legislated would later go, when they
14 are appropriated. But we must complete the General
15 Management Plan and have it done by 2010. It has to be
16 approved by the Secretary of the Interior. Also, it
17 gets signed off on by a southeast regional director for
18 the Park Service, which is in Atlanta, and one other
19 signature. Once it's approved, that plan will guide
20 where funding for this corridor goes and what it's used
21 for.

22 So your input is extremely important. It is vital
23 to this process. It is also unique because, generally,
24 what has happened with other NHAs is, they've dealt
25 with landscapes, they've dealt with buildings. So when

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1 you're talking about dealing with culture, you're
2 talking about the living, breathing folks. You see?
3 So there's more to it than us just bringing out
4 surveyors and looking at what's on the ground. Well,
5 what's inside? And so we want you to share that. And
6 if you want to write something in more detail, you have
7 the address here. If you decide that you just prefer
8 to write a letter, instead of using this card, you're
9 welcome to send in a letter. The address is right
10 there. But we definitely want you to know (remarks in
11 Gullah.)

12 So we still have a great deal of work to do
13 between now and the end of the year. But I'm so
14 pleased that the Town of Hollywood wants to be part of
15 this process with us. Because it is has been a long,
16 long journey. And I'm so pleased to be at this point
17 in time, where we are.

18 So I thank you for giving me the opportunity to be
19 part of your agenda and to bring (remarks in Gullah.)

20 So if you have any additional questions later on,
21 you can contact us. And, again, if you want to reach
22 us, you can go to that Web site. You know exactly how
23 to contact us, all right?

24 Thank you very much.

25 (Applause.)

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1 MAYOR HEYWARD: We know that we have you on
2 the agenda as a presentation, but I will have to ask
3 Council if they have any questions of you at this time?
4 And, also, one person signed up. Katie Zimmerman, was
5 that question to --
6 MS. ZIMMERMAN: It really was more for Queen
7 Quet, so I'll -- I'll wait, because I think maybe --
8 thank you, though.
9 QUEEN QUET: Catch me in the back, Katie. My
10 car be out back.
11 MS. ZIMMERMAN: Thank you.
12 MAYOR HEYWARD: Council?
13 MS. SAUSSER: I have a question. Have you
14 talked to the children in this town yet, as well?
15 Children are so full of wonderful information.
16 QUEEN QUET: So true. I agree with you one
17 hundred percent.
18 MS. SAUCER: I think if you would talk to the
19 superintendent of our schools and let her know that you
20 would like to talk to the children in this area, I
21 think that you would really get some really neat
22 stories and things from the children.
23 QUEEN QUET: I agree.
24 MS. SAUSSER: Because they are so rich in
25 anything like that.

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1 QUEEN QUET: Well, let me answer this
2 question as a commissioner: We have not yet done that,
3 but we are open to that.
4 Now, let me answer the question as Queen Quet.
5 MS. SAUSSER: Okay.
6 QUEEN QUET: I'm coming back. And I'm going
7 to hang out (remarks in Gullah.) So I'll get the
8 chance to talk to them there.
9 MS. SAUSSER: That would be great, yeah.
10 QUEEN QUET: And I'll get to share some
11 things with them, too.
12 Was that a set-up, Mayor Heyward?
13 MAYOR HEYWARD: No, it wasn't. It really
14 wasn't. I wouldn't do that.
15 Any other questions?
16 Thank you for your time. And we certainly did
17 enjoy the presentation. And we know that the Town of
18 Hollywood has a lot of offer as this goes forward. And
19 thank you also for agreeing to come back and talk to
20 our youth during the summer camp.
21 QUEEN QUET: Absolutely. Thank you for your
22 invitation. I appreciate it.
23 COMMISSIONER BLAKE: If I may, I'm also a
24 commissioner. My name is Herman Blake. And I think
25 some of you may know me. I'm also a commissioner

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1 serving with Queen Quet and Attorney Heyward and
2 Dr. Green.
3 I just wanted to inform you that we have some
4 special guests who came tonight because of the
5 presentation. And I think it's their first time in
6 Hollywood, South Carolina. It's Dr. Paulla Ebron, who
7 is a professor of anthropology from Stanford
8 University. And she is here with a group of her
9 students who come each summer and do research. And I
10 just wanted you to know that they were also in the
11 room. There are a lot of distinguished people. But

12 Dr. Ebron has made a long, long trip. She's sitting
13 right here.
14 (Applause.)
15 MS. SAUSSER: Oh, nice to see you.
16 MAYOR HEYWARD: Thank you. Thank you, to all
17 of you. You just never know who will come on your
18 door, will you? We're so delighted to have you in our
19 Town of Hollywood. If we can assist you in any way,
20 please feel free to let us know.
21 (The presentation concluded at 6:48.)
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