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4 GULLAH/GEECHEE

5 CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

6

7 PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

8

9 JUNE 9, 2009, 6:30 P.M.

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16 THE TURNER HODGE COMMUNITY CENTER

17 SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 MS. CYRIAQUE: Good evening and welcome.

3 Those of you who are sitting in the back, come  
4 forward. You're sitting at our eating table.

5 Welcome to the second meeting of the  
6 Gullah/Geechee Heritage Corridor Commission  
7 here in Georgia. Mr. Haynes, would you like to  
8 do the evocation?

9 MR. HAYNES: Good evening. I'd like to  
10 say welcome to the Turner Hodge Community  
11 Center at the beginning. It's not as cool as  
12 we'd like for it to be. It's supposed to help  
13 to turn the air conditioner on early. It's not  
14 the best, but she's done a great job. Let's  
15 bow our heads and pray.

16 (Prayer)

17 MS. CYRIAQUE: We'd like to welcome you to  
18 our second public engagement meeting. I'm  
19 Jeanne Cyriaque, and this is my associate,  
20 Jamal Toure, and Jamal and I are both  
21 commissioners with the Gullah/Geechee Heritage

22 Corridor Commission.  
23 And I'd like to give you a little  
24 background about why you're here tonight.  
25 Really, the journey to preserve

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2 Gullah/Geechee culture began eight or nine  
3 years ago. It started with a conversation that  
4 involved our chairman, Emory Campbell, and at  
5 least one of our commissions, Marquette  
6 Goodwine and Michael Allen, who is the now our  
7 coordinator with the National Park Service.  
8 And that conversation occurred with Congressman  
9 James Clyburn back around 1999.

10 And at that time, the conversation was  
11 about how we could preserve Gullah/Geechee  
12 culture. And from that initial conversation,  
13 Congressman Clyburn really embraced the idea  
14 that has now led to us being a national  
15 heritage area.

16 In 2004, he first introduced the  
17 legislation to create this national heritage  
18 area which encompasses four coastal state  
19 regions beginning in Wilmington, North Carolina  
20 and extending all the way down to Jacksonville,  
21 Florida.

22 And as you know, that includes the  
23 entire coast of Georgia, but to become a  
24 national heritage area, we first had to develop  
25 a feasibility study to document the culture as

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 we knew at that time.

3 The National Park Service did that study.  
4 Many of you might have participated in some of  
5 the earlier meetings we had around what 2001,  
6 2002.

7 We had some in Savannah, but we learned a  
8 lot from that initial feasibility study, and  
9 what it proved to the US Congress was that yes,  
10 this culture is worth preserving. That was an  
11 important milestone.

12 We wanted to briefly update you on what  
13 what's happened since then. Well, in '04  
14 Congressman Clyburn introduced the legislation  
15 for the national heritage area, but it didn't  
16 pass through Congress initially.

17 So we went back in '06 and finally got the

18 designation. This national heritage area is  
19 one of over 45 national heritage areas in the  
20 country, but what's unique about our heritage  
21 area is that it's the first and only African  
22 American centered story that we are trying to  
23 tell.

24 Since then, we formed a commission to  
25 essentially develop a management plan for this  
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#### 1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 national heritage area. Once you get  
3 designated, and that happened in 2006, we were  
4 all excited because a myth got out into the  
5 community that national heritage areas receive  
6 \$1,000,000 from Congress.

7 Well, I'm here to tell you, it hasn't  
8 happened yet. In '06 and in in this past year,  
9 we just received \$147,000 from Congress to  
10 get the commission started, and to begin to  
11 document all of the sites associated with the  
12 culture in our entire region and all our  
13 barrier islands.

14 The purpose of the commission is to  
15 develop a management plan. Now, y'all know  
16 Congress does not give money just on a hope and  
17 a prayer.

18 We have to prove ourselves. We have to  
19 document, again, why the culture is important,  
20 so here we are today. We have this past year  
21 formed a commission, Jamal and I, along with  
22 three other people represent Georgia on the  
23 commission.

24 And we have a total of 23 active  
25 commissioners for the four states. Once we got  
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2 formed, we contracted with the Denver Service  
3 Center to develop our management plan.

4 So most of the money that we have got to  
5 date is to go towards the management plan, but  
6 the management plan will really be our  
7 blueprint for what we want our corridor to look  
8 like. And an important part of doing the  
9 management plan is to engage the public once  
10 again in defining what you think is important  
11 about Gullah/Geechee culture.

12 So we developed a strategy to do several  
13 meetings here in Georgia, and this is our

14 second one. It's good to see some people came  
15 again, who were at our first meeting at the  
16 Ralph Mark Gilbert Museum a week ago. So this  
17 is our second one, and we want to reach out to  
18 the various communities in South Chatham  
19 County, and I'm sure they are all represented  
20 here.

21 I know some of the folks here. I know  
22 Jamal knows others. And the purpose of our  
23 gathering tonight is to hear from you. So  
24 we're going to turn the mic over to you. What  
25 we'd like you to talk about tonight, in your

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2 own words, are the sites and aspects of  
3 Gullah/Geechee culture that are important in  
4 your community.

5 So we want people to engage us and tell  
6 us, from your perspective, what you think we  
7 should preserve in this culture. And if you  
8 could, as you get the mic and speak, just say  
9 your name.

10 We have to document all of this. We have  
11 a court reporter here. And if you can, just  
12 phrase your question or comments as best you  
13 can. And with that being said, Jamal, would  
14 you like to add something before we start?

15 MR. TOURE: Yes -- yes. Good evening to  
16 you, a lot of you we saw -- again, we were  
17 at the Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum  
18 for the first meeting, and I have to do an  
19 acknowledgement.

20 And that's, we have the Chairman of the  
21 Board for the Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights  
22 Museum, so happy to see him here tonight, and  
23 that is Dr. Billy Jamerson who is to my left.

24 Again, we thank you for allowing us --  
25 again, that was the first meeting in Georgia,

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2 not just Savannah, but that was the first  
3 meeting. And the meetings are going to be  
4 throughout the corridor.

5 We're going to have five additional  
6 meetings, excuse me, four additional meetings  
7 now, and it's important for the people to come  
8 out.

9 Again, we have the Ralph Mark Gilbert

10 Civil Rights Museum -- that is Dr. Jamerson,  
11 and we also have Geechee Kunda Coleman from  
12 out of Liberty County. Again, this is about  
13 meetings where the people come.

14 And again, we want to hear your voices,  
15 but one of the things tied to that, I'm not  
16 about to put her on the spot, but one of the  
17 things, Vaughnette Goode-Walker to come forward  
18 and share some information with regards to  
19 where we are right now, because this is an  
20 asset.

21 And I don't want some of you to think or  
22 feel that if you're from other areas, that  
23 you're not supposed to talk about it. This is  
24 all meetings. Even if you come down to Camden  
25 County, you can come to Camden County and also

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 bring up points with regard to places that you  
3 remember or you recall. You can bring it down  
4 to Camden County, because again, all this is  
5 going to be recorded, and it becomes a part of  
6 what we're looking at with regards to the  
7 management plan.

8 So I think some folks -- and one of the  
9 things that I found out earlier is that some  
10 people are thinking that only people from  
11 PinPoint and Sandfly and Montgomery can  
12 actually come to the meetings.

13 So I had tell them no. Anyone, Coffee  
14 Bluff, White Bluff because that's what we began  
15 to hear, so folks out at Coffee Bluff and White  
16 Bluff thought that they couldn't come to the  
17 meeting. No. This meeting is for everyone,  
18 And we'll turn it over.

19 MS. GOODE-WALKER: Well, I would just like  
20 to say welcome everyone to the Turner Hodge  
21 Young Community Center. Okay. This is our  
22 community house.

23 And I start with the ancestors whose  
24 shoulders we stand on. I thank them,  
25 especially this man, Robert Young, whose vision

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 this was.

3 I've had people come in this building  
4 asking me, look like people live out here. Of  
5 course they do. Of course they do.

6 My grandfather came in 1928 and some of  
7 these elders, who are here with us today, are  
8 descendants of elders who came from Ossabaw  
9 Island

10 We have -- I'd like to acknowledge Hanif,  
11 who is the head of the Ossabaw -- tell me  
12 what --

13 MR. SHAKA ZULU: Heritage -- Ossabaw  
14 Heritage.

15 MS. GOODE-WALKER: Ossabaw Heritage, so  
16 this is all a part of it, but I wanted you to  
17 come to Montgomery.

18 This was a very special request of mine,  
19 because I do love this place. And it is  
20 something that is here for the community. I  
21 will tell you, you picked up some of its  
22 history when you came in.

23 It was built in roughly 1947, '48 for and  
24 by the black people who lived in this  
25 community. And it has been reinventing itself

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2 year after year, and most recently five years  
3 some of the members of the community took it on  
4 again.

5 And we have had renovations, and they ran  
6 it for three years, and now we're back at  
7 another point. We're being considered for a  
8 little red school house by the board of  
9 education, while they're cutting they're  
10 adding, so this might be a good thing to.

11 No school bell will go on the top. This  
12 used to be the EOA Center at one time as well,  
13 but it's open. It's for this community. We're  
14 about to dedicate a new playground in the back.

15 Mr. Haynes is the President of the  
16 Montgomery Community House Association, and he  
17 helped -- with his help, we were able to get  
18 this equipment in the back. So I'm really  
19 proud of it and I welcome everyone here.

20 And if you have any events coming up, I  
21 give shameless plugs all around to please  
22 contact us here at the community center. We  
23 have a five acre backyard out here with a  
24 playground and a ball field on the other side.

25 We've even have a church across the street

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 that will marry, if you want to get married.  
3 We've got everything. That's Beulah Baptist  
4 Church, and they have been our neighbors  
5 through all of this, and they go back as far  
6 as the Bond family coming over to PinPoint.

7 I will say this afternoon, y'all didn't  
8 get no food at the civil rights museum, but  
9 y'all will get fed. Y'all get some Gullah crab  
10 in this tonight. Welcome to the Montgomery  
11 Community Center. Thank you.

12 MR. TOURE: And that's a part of it. Last  
13 week in Savannah, we had Mayor Pro-Tem Edna  
14 Jackson. We had County Chairman Pete Liakakis,  
15 along with we had a representative from John  
16 Barrow's office.

17 In addition, we had an individual from the  
18 National Park Service. We wanted to basically  
19 get what they would say -- the officials out of  
20 the way.

21 Here at Montgomery now is coming home,  
22 it's coming to the people. But one thing I  
23 want to emphasize also, one of the things that  
24 happened, so that's why the civil rights  
25 museum, we felt that that was fitting for that  
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2 to be in that locale.

3 Now we're amongst the people. But one of  
4 the things that happened, and one of the myths  
5 with regard to our culture and our history,  
6 that when they talk about Gullah/Geechee  
7 culture in Chatham County, the focus is on  
8 Sandfly, PinPoint.

9 Tell folks huh-uh. You have Montgomery.  
10 You have Grimball Point. You have Isle of  
11 Hope. And even when we will be at Isle of  
12 Hope, you see a lot of our culture leaving.

13 In addition, you have Wilmington Island, a  
14 lot of our culture leaving. Also, we have  
15 Tybee Island. There are a lot of folks don't  
16 realize, that's why right now one of the things  
17 at the civil rights museum, one of the  
18 gentlemen left out of there.

19 He then said when we were outside, he said  
20 he remembered walking along West Broad Street  
21 and he said it was the aroma. The aromas were  
22 the things that got him because he started  
23 talking about all the restaurants on West Broad

24 Street.

25 That's when I told him, I say, that's what

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2 you're supposed to say that inside in the  
3 meeting. That's when the stenographer is here.  
4 That's when the court -- that's when we had the  
5 videographer. That's when you're supposed to  
6 now begin putting that out, so we can begin to  
7 hear.

8 We ain't hear it, because Brother Hanif  
9 and I talked about the seeking, that there are  
10 areas here that folks go seeking. This is the  
11 opportunity for you to bring that out.

12 And what we're going to do, we're going  
13 now going to turn it over to you. You now will  
14 have a greater time, a greater opportunity to  
15 get out the things that are important with  
16 regards to our culture.

17 And this is not the first -- this is the  
18 first, but we'll be back again. This is not  
19 the only time, but we're going to make a point,  
20 because we're going to come back to the people.  
21 You need to bring it out, put it on video and  
22 also on the written word.

23 And I guess now I need to move over and  
24 get the mic so then that way those who want to  
25 have words that way on the videographer, we can

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 at least make sure we get everything. He's the  
3 genealogist, the expert genealogist at that.

4 Actually, he's probably related to all you  
5 in here. I'm totally honest with you. The  
6 floor is now open.

7 MR. KADALIE: Why I'm here --

8 MS. CYRIAQUE: Introduce yourself.

9 MR. KADALIE: My name is Modibo Kadalie  
10 from Riceboro, Georgia. All right. I remember  
11 when this first started out, and I do have a  
12 concern. The concern is the general direction,  
13 and the lack of direct grassroots input into  
14 the movement, and the setting of priorities for  
15 this particular project.

16 Now, I've seen people coming down to  
17 preserve stuff. And when come down, they don't  
18 even know what to preserve. They end up  
19 preserving plantation houses with gardens, and



20 they don't even look at where the people were  
21 working.

22 They don't even know where the places are.  
23 And so my concern is, I said to Jamal, where  
24 are the other two commissioners? And I  
25 understand that Jamal started out as an

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 alternate --

3 VOICE: Still an alternate

4 MR. KADALIE: -- still an alternate.

5 VOICE: You're not on the commission? I  
6 thought you were on the commission.

7 VOICE: Is he a commissioner or is he an  
8 alternate?

9 MS. CYRIAQUE: He's an alternate  
10 commissioner --

11 MR. KADALIE: So he's an alternate. See,  
12 that's the kind of thing. The other  
13 commissioners are not here, you know, and those  
14 kind of things we're going to have a problem  
15 with down the line in setting certain  
16 priorities as we move forward with this  
17 project. I wanted to say that and I want to  
18 say something else later. Modibo Kadalie,  
19 M-O-D-I-B-O, K-A-D-A-L-I-E -- and I say  
20 K-A-D-A-L-I E from Riceboro, Georgia.

21 MS. BROWN: Do I have to stand up? Hi.  
22 My name is Elaine Brown and I live in Savannah  
23 now. And I just want to echo this, because I  
24 think we don't want to just be celebrating a  
25 history of slavery, unless we acknowledged that

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2 slavery is a part of this history.

3 And I'm concerned about the goals of the  
4 commission, and so-called preservation, I don't  
5 know how we're going to preserve what's already  
6 been gentrified.

7 I don't know what kinds of goals we can  
8 talk about when we don't have a serious agenda,  
9 and I think we need to have people involved in  
10 this who have that kind of commitment to the  
11 bigger history.

12 We're glad that the Congress was able to  
13 finally say that there was a Gullah/Geechee  
14 corridor which is the same corridor that  
15 Sherman identified in Field Order Number 15,

16 and we all know, this is not the first time  
17 we've heard about this swath of land.

18 I don't think so, Brother Jamal, but  
19 you're the historian here. I'm yielding always  
20 to you in. But in any case, the bottom line is  
21 now we have this opportunity.

22 It would be terrible to waste it and not  
23 get down to real business, and talk about if we  
24 are going to preserve land. We need to start  
25 by land acquisition.

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2 You talk about Tybee Island. Tybee Island  
3 is white people right now. You're talking  
4 about the places that you grew up in these  
5 various islands and so forth; these places have  
6 been already gentrified.

7 You can't even preserve them. The blood  
8 is running through and nobody is even the  
9 commenting on it. I think the commission has  
10 to have serious goals and not frivolous ones.

11 I'm not prepared to have plantation life  
12 celebrated, and people coming up and down this  
13 corridor to look at people weaving baskets and  
14 playing out a plantation play.

15 So I'm concerned about that, and like  
16 Dr. Kadalie, I'm concerned that we don't have  
17 the kind of representation on the commission  
18 that I think represents the mass of people, the  
19 very fact that the mass of people are not even  
20 here, because it takes a car to get here, might  
21 be something to consider that we want to have  
22 broader, inclusive -- more inclusive meetings,  
23 and accessible more to those people.

24 So I think the criticism has got to be  
25 addressed, before we start wandering down the

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2 lane of what little site we may or may not I  
3 want to preserve. I want to preserve all of  
4 Savannah, since that was built and occupied by  
5 so many of our peoples, and I'll tell you,  
6 Savannah is one big site, you know, that kind  
7 of thing.

8 I'm being a little bit not sarcastic, but  
9 I'm trying to highlight the point. So I hope  
10 that the commission is going to seriously be  
11 serious about it.

12 And again, I echo the fact that I think  
13 that Brother Jamal, whom I've never known  
14 anyone knows the history better, and I'm pretty  
15 smart myself in that sense.

16 I think that we should have him as a  
17 commissioner and that the commission should  
18 have been here fully represented.

19 MR. TOURE: I guess I might put some folks  
20 on the spot, since I'm looking around no one is  
21 saying anything. What are the things y'all  
22 remember in the community, because that's one  
23 of the things, and I have to go around and get  
24 some background.

25 Just as Jeanne Cyriaque mentioned, there  
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2 was a special resource study done. There were  
3 two meetings here in Chatham County, and both  
4 meetings were inside Savannah.

5 And what occurred with regard to the  
6 meetings is that they came out with the  
7 publication, the book is actually a  
8 publication. We went up to Ft. Moultrie in  
9 Charleston. There the person who worked on the  
10 study, and went around photographing some of  
11 the areas, I went up there and saw the shots.

12 I said wait a minute. Savannah is left  
13 out. How is that being left out? They went to  
14 Sapelo. They went to St. Simons, and that's  
15 where she had the shots -- didn't have any  
16 concern about what was going on in Chatham  
17 County.

18 Then when I done asked the question, it  
19 was like oh, oh well. You know, we -- I didn't  
20 have time. Then I basically had to force her  
21 when the Georgia Sea Island Festival was going  
22 on, which is always in June, to come up here.

23 And it started storming. We rode around.  
24 I had her take a shot of the First African  
25 Baptist Church. I told her, we got to get out

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2 to PinPoint Sandfly, but because it was  
3 storming, so again what occurred is that our  
4 story in Chatham County did not really get  
5 told.

6 The stereotypical thing got out. Does  
7 anybody want to talk about the first black

8 church in North America, you know First Bryan  
9 and First African, but what happened, they  
10 never got out about the other locations.

11 That's a part of what's going on. When  
12 you are looking at some of the maps in some of  
13 the areas, folks are pinpointing where certain  
14 things were.

15 So that's also one of the things,  
16 especially Montgomery, PinPoint, Sandfly  
17 wherever you were from. This is the time to  
18 put it out there, because if not, we're going  
19 to come back to the same thing whereas we'll  
20 have some of these places left out.

21 Sister Vaughnette is here on MLK  
22 Boulevard, that's West Broad Street and  
23 Anderson. There was a free men building that  
24 was over there, but it's now being wiped out,  
25 being torn down. No one in the city pretty

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2 much knows about that. And it's because people  
3 are not talking, not sharing.

4 That's what going to happen a lot now. We  
5 know that the oyster factory, you know, they  
6 got plans for the oyster factory here. That  
7 needs to come out. What's going on? What do  
8 you remember about the oyster factory? What  
9 went on with regard to that, you know, where  
10 did you go to do the baptisms at, and things  
11 like that.

12 We want put it out there so that we know.  
13 So that's what I'm saying, I'm going to put  
14 folks on the spot. My good friend, you know, I  
15 ain't going to say me and him had the  
16 conversation.

17 MR. SHAKA ZULU: Greetings everybody. My  
18 name is Hanif Shaka Zulu. To family and  
19 friends a lot of people know me as Herman  
20 Haynes. I'm the President of the PinPoint  
21 Betterment Association, also of President of  
22 the Ossabaw Heritage Association.

23 The heritage -- Ossabaw Heritage  
24 Association was a group that was organized by a  
25 group that was invited to Ossabaw Island by

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2 Ms. West about two or three years ago.

3 And our journey back to the Island, it was

4 the first time for many of us, and a lot of us  
5 grew up on the Island and remember the old days  
6 on Ossabaw Island.

7 I can't tell you a lot about Ossabaw  
8 Island, because I didn't grow up over there,  
9 but the PinPoint community, we're working  
10 diligently to preserve our heritage.

11 As a matter of fact, the PinPoint  
12 Community was one of the first in Chatham  
13 County to be recognized as an historic  
14 district, and in addition to that, we have an  
15 oyster factory in PinPoint.

16 As a matter of fact, there are two oyster  
17 factories in PinPoint. The first oyster  
18 factory in PinPoint was built and organized by  
19 John Anderson -- John Anderson, my  
20 great-great-grandfather, which was from Liberty  
21 County.

22 And -- say again? Yeah. The Andersons  
23 are still in the community. The Harris  
24 Vaughn Crab Factory was bought out by a  
25 corporation from out of state. They paid a

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2 million and a half dollars for the piece of  
3 property, on the waterfront, just off of Moon  
4 River.

5 And it is one of the concerns -- of my  
6 concerns that the PinPoint community, which the  
7 future of PinPoint with these people sinking  
8 that amount of money into the community, and we  
9 don't know exactly what direction they want to  
10 go in with our community.

11 There's so much about PinPoint. On the  
12 historic side, we have the historic Sweetfield  
13 of Eden Baptist Church. That's a church that's  
14 an off-shoot of the Hinder Me Not Baptist  
15 Church that was organized by Ben Bond, Sr. on  
16 Ossabaw Island.

17 We have several baptisms sites in  
18 PinPoint, and I was telling my friend, Jamal, I  
19 can remember many of my family members, and my  
20 children and I am, when we were baptized into  
21 the church, it was a must that before you get  
22 your right to fellowship, you had to go in the  
23 wilderness and pray for 30 days and 30 nights.

24 For me it was kind of difficult. I  
25 couldn't watch TV. You couldn't sleep in your

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2 bed. I mean you didn't have all the comforts,  
3 but you had to be uncomfortable. And before  
4 you was accepted, you had to have a dream, and  
5 you had to tell your deacon or whoever about  
6 your dream.

7 And on that dream, you would be admitted  
8 into the church. You just didn't get into the  
9 church and say I'm a member of a church.

10 MS. MTENJI: Serious ritual.

11 MR. SHAKA ZULU: Say again.

12 MS. MENTJI: Serious ritual.

13 MR. SHAKA ZULU: And we have several  
14 baptism sites in PinPoint, where individuals  
15 weren't baptized in the swim pool. They were  
16 baptized on the ebb tide or the high tide and that  
17 came like once a month or every 30 days.

18 And I think the reason for that was, when  
19 you got baptized the high water would wash your  
20 sins out. But in addition to all of that, you  
21 know, the crab factory, the cemetery, the  
22 Hinder Me Not Baptist Church, PinPoint, we --  
23 and danger, even though we have the  
24 association, we organized trying to slow the  
25 momentum down of the growth around us,

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2 construction, and we're reaching out to the  
3 Gullah/Geechee corridor, because as a part of  
4 this corridor, we have a lot to offer as far as  
5 the history of PinPoint, the history of  
6 Montgomery, Sandfly and White Bluff.

7 And I'm just thrilled to be a part of  
8 what's going on in Chatham County right now,  
9 because with PinPoint, it's one of the last  
10 predominantly black communities that's on the  
11 waterfront that's still owned by black people,  
12 you know.

13 You heard Johnny Mercer sing about Moon  
14 River, but PinPoint have one of the best views  
15 of Moon River in this area.

16 And -- but there's so much, there's other  
17 people who might would like to comment on  
18 PinPoint while we're here. I don't want to  
19 call anybody out but, you know, those of you  
20 here don't be afraid to just stand up and talk  
21 about old memories.

22 We talk about gathering fruits and food  
23 and all that stuff back in the day. With the  
24 oyster factory and crab plant, we used to  
25 provide seafood to Chatham County and  
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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 surrounding areas.

3 Now, we are in the community that used to  
4 provide the service. Now we have to buy  
5 seafood from other people outside of the area.

6 MS. MTENJI: I don't need the mic. My  
7 name Imani Mtenji. I'm not from here. I am  
8 an implant from St. Louis.

9 VOICE: You're a returnee.

10 MS. MTENJI: Pardon me.

11 VOICE: You're a returnee.

12 MS. MTENJI: Yes, a returnee, yes. I like  
13 that. As a matter of fact, I might be from  
14 this area --

15 VOICE: Returning.

16 MS. MTENJI: Yeah, people mistake me for  
17 their relative. I tell them all the time, I'm  
18 so happy your auntie is nice. I don't want to  
19 get beat down for something I don't understand.

20 But I just have a little suggestion here,  
21 because I'm cultural life educator, and I'm  
22 interested to know histories like what you're  
23 telling.

24 So one of my ideas is, you know again,  
25 sort centering around celebration, because

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 people like gatherings and celebrations. They  
3 like live things.

4 It would be nice, you know, to have  
5 something like annually or semi-annually where  
6 you would have what is called a living exhibit,  
7 because you were talking about family members  
8 that were still here, the Andersons --

9 MR. SHAKA ZULU: Right.

10 MS. MTENJI: -- and have those families  
11 try to get together, you know, and present some  
12 sort of exhibit; photographs, footage, you  
13 know, or stories, or even demonstrations, you  
14 know, of things like what you were talking  
15 about, the oyster factory, you know, the crabs,  
16 you know, all that kind of stuff.

17 That might be -- and then probably in the

18 midst of that, try to get the schools involved,  
19 try to do exhibitions, show on that particular  
20 day that the schools can come out and actually  
21 see something like that and get to ask the  
22 questions to the family, you know.

23 MR. SHAKA ZULU: That's -- that's -- I'm  
24 glad you mentioned it. That throws me off to  
25 another tangent, but we've been working in  
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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 PinPoint, working with the -- well, working  
3 with Patty Bolen and Patty McIntosh, working on  
4 blueprints for a successful community.

5 And what was mentioned was the same idea  
6 that you just proposed. Once we get the  
7 blueprint completed, we would start an annual  
8 PinPoint heritage festival.

9 What we do now, and it's not -- it's on a  
10 large scale, but we don't include some of the  
11 things you were talking about, like displays.

12 We do have a PinPoint reunion every two  
13 years, where the community and family members  
14 all just get together and celebrate life. But  
15 that's a good idea you presented.

16 What we could do is have that celebration  
17 in conjunction with that, you know, because a  
18 lot of the guys like my brother and Deacon Dog  
19 we called him, I grew up under these guys, and  
20 we didn't have, during the day, the luxury of  
21 our family, our mothers and fathers going out  
22 and buying toys for us.

23 And we were very into ingenuity. We  
24 created our toys. We would raid the crab  
25 factory and get the tops of cans and lids for,  
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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 you know, the oysters and the crab and make  
3 little push-cars, and scooters. We would take  
4 cans like you get your tomato cans or oil cans  
5 and --

6 MS. MTENJI: You still know how to  
7 engineer that stuff?

8 MR. SHAKA ZULU: Yeah, they do. I do. I  
9 mean, when I came on the scene, I remembered a  
10 lot of what we made what pluffers. I don't  
11 know if y'all are familiar with a pluffer, but  
12 we would get a whipping because we would steal  
13 our mom's broom handle, shave it down to make



14 the handle for our pluffer.

15 We used chinaberry and a piece of bamboo  
16 or piece of hose. If it didn't sound loud  
17 enough -- we talked about that just recently  
18 where we would take a coke bottle, or some kind  
19 of bottle and break it off, and put it on the  
20 front of it, tape it on, and you would be  
21 surprised how it would amplify the sound.

22 Whoever made the loudest sound had the  
23 best pluffer. And one of my older cousins, we  
24 were talking about it. Also, we had a softball  
25 team. I wasn't old enough to play on the

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 softball team at one time. We used to play  
3 against White Bluff and Candler Park guys.

4 They were always saying, how do you guys  
5 hit so good? And my cousin would say well, we  
6 play half rubber. And half rubber is a game,  
7 you take a half of a rubber ball, cut a rubber  
8 ball in half, slice it in half.

9 Again, you got that broom stick you got a  
10 whipping for, the mop handle, and you got a  
11 pitcher and a catcher. You had a team. It's a  
12 big sport in Savannah now. I thought it  
13 originated in PinPoint.

14 I don't know where half rubber came from.  
15 I thought it originated in PinPoint because  
16 that's where I first seen it. And when I went  
17 into the military and traveled around the  
18 world, I'd talk about half rubber -- are you  
19 talking about stick ball? No, not stick ball  
20 -- half rubber.

21 And that's when we told them, we say we  
22 play half rubber. That's why we could see so  
23 good and we could focus on the ball.

24 But on the serious side of PinPoint, we  
25 also had a Rosenwald school --

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 MS. MTENJI: Uh-huh.

3 MR. SHAKA ZULU: -- in PinPoint, and those  
4 are some of the areas, the historic sites that  
5 we would like to try to preserve within our  
6 community.

7 MS. MTENJI: That's what I'm saying,  
8 school groups, if you had a day where they can  
9 come out and see all this -- if you had to do

10 it for a week to get them out, because  
11 education is the key.

12 You get them involved, because a lot of  
13 the children -- some of the children I talk to,  
14 they're aware of the fact that they're Gullah  
15 or Geechee or both, but they're not sure about  
16 the all ramifications that go with that, you  
17 know.

18 So you have to find a way, you know, a  
19 really lucrative way and having something  
20 active, even like them making some of stuff and  
21 doing it, saying these are the kinds things we  
22 did, the kind of things we made, you know.  
23 This is what we did. A lot of people are  
24 interested in that kind of activity, so --

25 MR. SHAKA ZULU: And we welcome ideas, if  
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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 anyone has any constructive criticism or ideas  
3 that you'd like to share with us, we'd be  
4 welcome to it.

5 I'd like to commend Ellen Harris, from NBC  
6 for working with our community, and working in  
7 our blueprint in achieving the historical  
8 status, along with Vaughnette, Sister V, and  
9 the Turner Hodge Association down here.

10 Just working together as a community -- at  
11 one time we did have an organization. It was  
12 Sandfly, PinPoint, Montgomery and where the  
13 three communities just came in and worked  
14 collectively just trying to hash out and work  
15 on community problems within our community, and  
16 White Bluff, and other areas.

17 But I'm going to shut up now and let  
18 someone else offer their opinions. You know,  
19 if I'm called on later, I'll come back but  
20 again. But again, PinPoint is a beautiful  
21 area.

22 For those of you who don't know where  
23 PinPoint is, it's southeast of here about half  
24 a mile. And again, my main concern right now  
25 is what's going to happen with the old AS

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 Vaughn oyster factory.

3 One of the representatives from that group  
4 attended our second blueprint meeting. And of  
5 course, she wasn't specific on what their goals

6 were, but she said that our goals would be  
7 concurrent with those of PinPoint. But again,  
8 someone sinking a million and a half dollars on  
9 a piece of property just for a museum or  
10 something else, I'm skeptical about what's  
11 going on with that. Brother Jamal.)

12 MR. TOURE: Thank you, brother. One thing  
13 I want you to know, they played half rubber in  
14 Curry Town in the city --

15 MR. SHAKA ZULU: They came out here and  
16 got it. Well, they came by here when they  
17 played against the PinPoint Rams. I saw those  
18 guys. That's where they got half rubber.

19 MR. TOURE: When we talk about our  
20 culture, we're not just talking about Chatham  
21 County. We're talking about things also like  
22 y'all just heard, Tybee, Liberty County, goes  
23 down to McIntosh County.

24 And half rubber also -- there's some who  
25 say that half rubber in Savannah, but guess

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 what, you got folks up in South Carolina in  
3 Charleston that say that half rubber started  
4 there in Charleston. So you see how you  
5 Gullah/Geechee people are. Just to let you  
6 know, and you did bring some points about how  
7 property taxes is affecting people also, with  
8 regards to the retention of property.

9 That's something else. At some point  
10 someone might want to discuss that; how has it  
11 affected property taxes, retention of land  
12 especially with the development currently  
13 in proximity of where you are.

14 MR. GRANT: Gregory Grant, originally born  
15 and raised in Savannah, now I live in  
16 Walthourville, Georgia.

17 As I mentioned in the meeting in Camden  
18 County at Camden High School, if this  
19 commission cannot or persuade someone to save  
20 the land, all we're going to have is a memory.

21 And we know what the history of this  
22 country is toward the history of black people.  
23 There will be none.

24 Also, on places as in Hilton Head where we  
25 have people who cannot even visit the

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 gravesites of their ancestors because it's  
3 behind a locked gate. This commission needs to  
4 find some kind of way to include where we can  
5 go visit our ancestors, on a regular basis,  
6 when they want to, not on a permit basis when  
7 the moon comes up, or as saying goes, on a blue  
8 moon.

9 And for those who do not know, a blue moon  
10 is when you have a full moon, two full moons in  
11 one month. So you don't have them that much.

12 Earlier this year, we've heard a lot of  
13 discussions on Ellis Island and talking about  
14 preserving the hospital there. And it's kind  
15 of unique that just last week the President was  
16 at a prison talking about conditions at a  
17 Holocaust prison.

18 Okay. My question is, will this  
19 commission do anything about the Holocaust of  
20 black people that is right here in this county,  
21 for anyone who goes across the bridge to go  
22 to Tybee Island.

23 There's not even a plaque there to let you  
24 know that the creek that you're crossing, the  
25 name of that creek means quarantine station,  
0037

#### 1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 that we have ancestors buried probably up on  
3 the Highway 80, and there's nothing even there  
4 to respect them.

5 There's not even a plaque there for them  
6 to say that we were actually there. We have  
7 people today that are still profiting off of  
8 the wealth of the 1860s, because I know for a  
9 fact I am still in shambles from 1860, so I  
10 know someone is making money.

11 When you sit here and look at the history  
12 of this country or this state, where they had  
13 the land lottery in the 1830s and the 1700s  
14 where they invited people from South Carolina  
15 and North Carolina to come and get land, where  
16 they were selling thousands of acres of land  
17 for little or nothing, that was when the  
18 increase of our ancestors got here.

19 There's needs to be something done to  
20 preserve this. If we can't preserve land, then  
21 we have nothing. Once again, land is the hope.  
22 Thank you.

23 MR. HAYNES: Thank you. I'm Bill Haynes,

24 PinPoint, retired architect. I had no  
25 intention of speaking this evening. I feel  
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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 like I have been around long enough to see a  
3 lot of things happen.

4 I went away and spent 20 years in Indiana,  
5 and I sometimes tell the story. People ask me,  
6 do you want move back to PinPoint? Yeah.

7 And they come out and see me out at  
8 PinPoint -- oh, I don't know that this is  
9 PinPoint. But I want to ask a serious question  
10 and talking about land, property, some of us  
11 recently have been talking about heirs  
12 property.

13 It's a real touchy thing. Have any of you  
14 been involved in it recently, thinking about  
15 it? We're trying to do something to get our  
16 family property in a position that someone else  
17 can't have it.

18 The county wanted to widen a road. They  
19 took some property from the Vaughn estate or  
20 heirs. The money is sitting there in the bank  
21 now.

22 I was bugged when they wanted to do it. I  
23 had to find out. When I asked for the money to  
24 put it in to pay taxes, I can't get the money.  
25 So we have some money sitting there we can't

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 -- we don't even have the access to. So unless we  
3 can -- there are some people working on some  
4 things some over in South Carolina, I  
5 understand.

6 I think that's some information we could  
7 share, share with each other. It affects most  
8 of us in here maybe.

9 MR. BACOTE: Thank you. Brothers and  
10 sisters, my name is Jim Bacote. I am from  
11 Liberty County. I hang out at a place called  
12 Geechee Kunda. I am also the co-chair of the  
13 Georgia Geechee council.

14 We are glad to be a part of this meeting.  
15 And I must say that it's commendable that the  
16 commission is reaching out to find out some  
17 sense of direction from the people. But I  
18 think we need to go back a little further than  
19 that.

20 I think that we need to go all the way  
21 back to Liberty County, during the inception of  
22 this whole feasibility study. You were asking  
23 what should we do and how should we do it.

24 I did a survey in Cross Roads and Byer Bay  
25 and Sand Hill in Liberty County, and no one

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 from the study ever came there. Liberty  
3 County, this is where two thirds of the  
4 generational wealth that still exists among the  
5 wealthier people in Georgia came from. Okay.

6 So I think with all due to Jeanne, I  
7 accept Jeanne as an expert. I know Jeanne has  
8 worked hard with us people here, so Jeanne, you  
9 Geechee. We accept you, but I think that we  
10 need real representation.

11 I think we're off to a bad start when we  
12 -- in other words, this appears to be just a  
13 game. We're going to run rough-shod and change  
14 the rules as we go. We use our criteria to  
15 pick the commissioners and the experts, and  
16 then say okay, we got what we want, so we're  
17 going to win this game anyway.

18 So we're now we're asking the people what  
19 they want. I think we really need to rethink  
20 it. And it's okay to be celebratory with our  
21 ideas, but we've got to deal with the reality of  
22 it, that during the course of our enslavement  
23 and the enrichment of other people, a terrible  
24 psychic trauma occurred that created unnatural  
25 beings.

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 As a matter of fact, it created two  
3 unnatural beings; the unnatural beings of us,  
4 the thought that we were inherently inferior  
5 and worthless, and the buffer people, this  
6 unnatural being that really, after a point,  
7 believed that they were superior and worthy of  
8 calling my granddaddy at 95 a boy.

9 I think that unless the commission is  
10 going to go all the way back and celebrate this  
11 one thing, but to really use our knowledge of  
12 the culture to effect a change in the mindset  
13 of the current generations, young and old, and  
14 hopefully we can infuse it in the coming  
15 generation, not just among the Geechee people

16 but the buffer people and everybody because  
17 this is it.

18 This is African American. This is the  
19 scene of the crime. So unless we're going to  
20 use this commission thing as the scene of  
21 healing, as well as the scene of the crime, I  
22 think that I would have to call the entire  
23 commission a sham, a worthless sham, created to  
24 enrich the National Park Service and other  
25 entities that don't have nothing to do with us,  
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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 no thoughts of us, but just to use us as they  
3 have traditionally don, and see something we  
4 got.

5 They want it and they don't want to pay  
6 for it. So let's just keep on them track,  
7 okay. Other than that, I'd say if it weren't  
8 for people like Jeanne and Jamal, I would say  
9 hey, I want to denounce it.

10 I would say it's a worthless waste, but  
11 after talking with Jamal and listening to  
12 Jeanne, I feel that there is hope, but it is up  
13 to us. The commission only has the power that  
14 we give them, okay, so let's make sure they do  
15 something worthwhile. Don't just have us happy  
16 that we Gullah --

17 VOICE: Right.

18 MR. BACOTE: -- and that we acknowledged,  
19 you know, because we ain't here to gain the  
20 acknowledgement from another people. We're  
21 here to learn, to acknowledge and love one  
22 another like we were taught to do. Okay. Love  
23 y'all all y'all. Thank you.

24 MR. TOURE: The property taxes here on  
25 this side Chatham County --

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 MR. GOODE-WALKER: I'd like to speak.

3 MR. TOURE: I'll recognize you back -- I'm  
4 sorry. No problem. It's your house. I  
5 accidentally locked her out --

6 MS. GOODE-VAUGHN: This is the peoples'  
7 house. On the question of property taxes in  
8 this area, I said earlier my grandfather came  
9 here in 1928. I live down the road, and I'm  
10 third generation Montgomery at this point.

11 And property taxes are closing in on us,

12 to answer the question. It's -- it's almost to  
13 the point where it makes you feel like you're  
14 just working for taxes. And I was talking with  
15 my mom just recently.

16 She had the refrain, death and taxes,  
17 that's what certain. What has happened in  
18 Montgomery in particular this, as I told you  
19 earlier, was the heart of the black community.

20 And now we're surrounded by homes that are  
21 a lot more expensive than the homes that we  
22 built initially. So fortunately for me, I'm  
23 right next door to the Montgomery Baptist  
24 Church, which will never go away. They would  
25 go there to buy horses in 1890 -- I like to

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 tell these stories, and on the other side of me  
3 is what was the heirs property.

4 It's cut in three pieces. I don't know  
5 what's going to happen. It could be developed.  
6 I could come home one day and all the woods  
7 next door to me could be gone.

8 And the property taxes keep going and keep  
9 going up. We had a family who was living out  
10 here Whitfield Avenue about, I guess three  
11 years ago.

12 And all of a sudden this family was gone,  
13 and three houses, maybe four were built in the  
14 place of that one house, and those houses each  
15 one were valued at \$250,000.

16 So imagine what happened down the road,  
17 you know, where I am. So it just keeping  
18 happening, and that's one of the ways I think  
19 that these black communities are losing their  
20 homes, because you cannot afford -- you can  
21 afford to own your house.

22 We own the house. We own the land, but  
23 it's the paying to stay on the land. So that's  
24 -- I think that's a valid question that  
25 Mr. Haynes asked about the heirs property too,

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 because I've looked for at least 10 years now  
3 for each one of those heirs. And they're only  
4 two.

5 They're usually -- and I love this --  
6 they say they're up in New York. Well, where?  
7 You know, and then when you contact them, they



8 don't want to sell it to you, because it might  
9 help you, you know, do something with your  
10 property.

11 But if somebody other comes along, they  
12 will sell it. And they will sell it for  
13 whatever they will pay for it, and not even for  
14 what it's worth usually, you know.

15 So there's a lot of that that goes in our  
16 communities, and we need to seek out people who  
17 look like us to sell them our property. If  
18 you've got some property to sell, look close.

19 Get your relatives together, get them to buy  
20 it. I mean, that's what we used to do.  
21 That's what used to happen, you know.

22 And I just think that it's important that  
23 we all, you know, talk about this. Maybe the  
24 commission can help us, especially with that  
25 whole concept of property taxes and that. Then

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 I think that would be good thing. And when  
3 you're thinking about saving places, you're  
4 sitting in one.

5 MS. BROWN: I wanted to say because I'm  
6 like you, I'm not from here. I'm from  
7 Philadelphia, but I'm a black person from  
8 America, but I belong here with everybody.  
9 We're talking about private property.

10 I think the important thing about what you  
11 are saying is we can't have this struggle  
12 alone. In other words, this commission has a  
13 job and we can support that you have that job  
14 that probably should be held anyway.

15 You shouldn't have to figure out how to  
16 get the money. You're not going to find it  
17 anywhere. As far as \$1,000,000, \$1,000,000 for  
18 what they got, they got that for a song.

19 MR. SHAKA ZULU: Right.

20 MS. BROWN: It was almost free. So don't  
21 get excited by some white folks and \$1,000,000  
22 because that's cheap. They sold it cheap, and  
23 I want to insert into the record that you have  
24 Harris Neck. Look at the horror of what's  
25 happened in Harris Neck.

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 And you have a lot of other areas like big  
3 swathes of land -- talk about where people came

4 to visit their relatives dead. I'm not trying  
5 to visit the dead, y'all. I want the whole  
6 land back, because it belongs to us.  
7 So you shouldn't even have to be  
8 struggling talking about how to get the money.  
9 This all should come back, because we do have  
10 something that's called number Field Order  
11 Number 15.

12 That did go into law and was completely  
13 violated by President Andrew Johnson, and all  
14 the presidents since then that stand in  
15 continuing violation of the -- of that law.

16 The last thing I want to say is in  
17 Brunswick, where I did live at one point, you  
18 have other areas. Like you talk about the  
19 water there where you are and does Clarence  
20 Thomas' come to your -- that's okay.

21 I had to say it -- had to. So anyway,  
22 when you talk about sitting on the water having  
23 life on the water, around in the Brunswick  
24 area, let's look at St. Simons. The entire St.  
25 Simons has been taken and ripped up, ripped

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#### 1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 away from the Gullah people who were living  
3 there.

4 I know one lady, you know, Kadezah still  
5 has her piece of property there. And they are  
6 doing everything to undermine paying a good  
7 money for that property.

8 She's like the last little piece of  
9 property that black folks have on St. Simmons.  
10 And then I look at the ocean and the port,  
11 which I believe all the blood that runs in that  
12 port, in Brunswick and in that area, I think  
13 these are the kinds things we need to talk  
14 about seizing.

15 We shouldn't even have to pay a lot this  
16 stuff. This stuff should be rededicated back  
17 to us as native lands to be rededicated. These  
18 lands are clearly ours.

19 And I think that should be in the record,  
20 and there are other areas as well all over just  
21 Georgia. I can't speak for South Carolina,  
22 North Carolina and Florida, but good God  
23 Almighty, I'm just saying here I wanted to put  
24 those words, Brunswick and St. Simons and  
25 Harris Neck into the record in terms of land

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 that really should -- is clearly ours, not to  
3 count the whole swath of the corridor, but  
4 that's -- that's a bigger conversation we can  
5 always have.

6 But that's where I would like to go with  
7 it, and I think we have to stick to this theme  
8 and not get too sidetracked, as Brother Jim  
9 Bacote says on the -- on the question of  
10 celebrating, because we honor our ancestors.

11 We don't honor our ancestors, we -- that's  
12 how we got here, and it goes all the way back.  
13 It's not because we played half ball in North  
14 Philly, just so you know.

15 So in North Philly in the hood, we was  
16 there, you know. Negroes Philadelphia like to  
17 pretend they weren't slaves, but we been there  
18 since 1600s Negroes been in Philadelphia.

19 I don't think we got it from PinPoint, but  
20 nevertheless, it's like fried chicken, you  
21 know. So I just want to say to both of you  
22 that I hope that, in this record that you're  
23 keeping so carefully, with this court reporter  
24 that we will have a memory that we have to get  
25 down to business.

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 And we can use this opportunity that we  
3 have. We got a black president. We have an  
4 opportunity to present this as the brother just  
5 said just a minute ago, you know, we're talking  
6 about Buchenwald, let's talk about the blood  
7 that runs through this corridor.

8 So let's not get too crazy about, you  
9 know, celebrating and dancing and the  
10 singing. We're still in the slave quarters,  
11 and we don't need to be dancing and singing.

12 I know I'm proselytizing and preaching  
13 now, and I don't need to do that, but I want to  
14 insert it in the record.

15 The specifics of other lands in this one  
16 state that I'm familiar with, in terms of  
17 rights that we should have had that were  
18 quickly, just absolutely stolen, and that isn't  
19 even like back in the, you know, after 1865 and  
20 so forth.

21 I'm talking about recent times, World War

22 II and so forth, so that people cannot visit  
23 their relatives on Harris Neck. And the theft  
24 of Harris Neck has -- making it into a bird  
25 sanctuary is just one more insult.

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 And then there's Darien and the  
3 gentrification going along on the water there.  
4 So you're right. If you don't hold on to that  
5 water, you better get a fortress going because  
6 that water feud is about the end of the game in  
7 Savannah, all along the river, blah blah.

8 So I think we should acknowledge all of  
9 these areas and hope that we can unite around  
10 saying let the commission have to say, wait a  
11 minute, the people are calling for something  
12 else. And I think when we do that, when we  
13 the people call for something else, the  
14 commission has no place to go to honor -- at  
15 least to honor what we call for and not ignore  
16 us.

17 That's all I want to say on those areas of  
18 Georgia that have been stolen.

19 MR. BACOTE: Tell them your name.

20 MS. BROWN: My name is Elaine Brown. I'm  
21 with the Geechee Council. I've got a lot of  
22 other stuff going on.

23 MR. BACOTE: Dr. Elaine Brown and  
24 Dr. Kadalie, you are the spokespersons for the  
25 Gullah/Geechee Council.

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 MS. BROWN: I became a doctor. I'm an  
3 honorary doctor.

4 MR. BACOTE: You're a doctor of  
5 Gullah/Geechee culture.

6 MR. TOURE: I guess I'm going to put folks  
7 on the spot. What's the condition of the  
8 waterways here; what's the condition of the  
9 riverbeds here, because some areas of the  
10 Gullah/Geechee corridor that there are roads  
11 there that some folks have been asked to leave  
12 the communities that they live in, forcing them  
13 to leave and causing folks also to sell  
14 property.

15 That's based on pollution of the water,  
16 how's the oyster beds; how's the crabbing,  
17 which are a part of our communities.

18 Again, people are not realizing again we  
19 have to look at the broader picture, not just  
20 an individual community.  
21 So I'm just curious and throwing it out  
22 there. I want you to speak on that. Someone  
23 could even speak on their community where  
24 they're from water. We're not just talking  
25 about Daufuskie. We need to have someone from  
0053

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 Daufuskie to say something. We've got some of  
3 the Daufuskie people -- I'm not trying to put  
4 somebody on the spot.

5 MS. GOODE-VAUGHN: I did want to say  
6 something earlier. You mentioned Tybee. There  
7 is one black family from Tybee, Walter Brown  
8 and his family. He's still fighting to save  
9 the land. And he might -- he was supposed to  
10 come tonight.

11 I invited him so that he could go on  
12 record and hopefully come to other meetings,  
13 but the amount of taxes, the amount of land, he  
14 has about four acres, all wooded area now.

15 And his father had a cement factory, one  
16 of the only black families on Tybee, and some  
17 of their family is still down there.

18 So, you know, that's -- and where is the  
19 brother that talked about the graveyard. I  
20 spoke with Cullen Chambers, who is the head of  
21 the historical society on Tybee about that.

22 He was before they started the Chatham  
23 County Historic Preservation Commission, and  
24 Mr. Haynes and I serve on that commission.

25 He talked about -- I asked him about this  
0054

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 cemetery, the slave burial ground. It's  
3 nothing short of that.

4 And he said that the sign -- you can see  
5 the sign coming over to Tybee. There's a  
6 marker going over there -- going over to Tybee,  
7 I mean, but I've never seen it, but there's no  
8 sign coming from Tybee.

9 And so I asked him at that meeting on  
10 record, you know, what about the slave  
11 burial ground, and he said, well, it's a  
12 private owner.

13 Well private, you know, who's Mr. Private?

14 What's his name? You know, we need to find out  
15 those kind of things. When they tell us it's  
16 private property, what does that mean?

17 If it's private property and there's a  
18 slave burial ground there, it's no longer  
19 private property --

20 MS. BROWN: That's right.

21 MS. GOODE-WALKER: -- it becomes something  
22 of interest, you know, to this community. And  
23 Lazaretto Creek does mean pest house, and  
24 that's where -- it's Italian for pest house,  
25 where they off-loaded them.

0055

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 If people tell you that slave people came  
3 into those docks down on River Street before  
4 they were dropped off on Tybee, they're wrong.

5 And they often talk about it being on the  
6 west end of Tybee -- Tybee now has a north end  
7 and a south end, and you never hear about the  
8 west end. Where is that, you know?

9 So it's a lot of that, and the same thing  
10 out here at Montgomery where, you know, we have  
11 the cemeteries that are in with the churches,  
12 and that's a fortunate thing, but again the  
13 upkeep of these cemeteries, the history.  
14 There's one, Sweetfield of Eden that is, you  
15 know, that is kept up by the church there.

16 So, you know, those are things that we  
17 definitely need to preserve on. I didn't mean  
18 to talk on and on about Tybee, but I think I  
19 just wanted to mention it.

20 I guess I wanted to say that's just white  
21 folks now -- no, it's not. There's a brother  
22 out there fighting and he's fighting a pretty  
23 lonely battle, because nobody knows there's  
24 black people on Tybee.

25 And again I remind you, what were we doing

0056

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 all those years? We were working as domestics.  
3 That's what the black people who worked in this  
4 community -- my grandfather worked 50 years as  
5 a domestic.

6 He came here for that reason for that  
7 work, you know. Pat Bacote, was sitting here  
8 from Geechee Kunda, is my cousin. Her  
9 grandfather and my grandfather were brothers.

10 Her grandfather was the first to come here in  
11 1924, from what he called up the country, up in  
12 Sylvania, Millhaven, Goloid, Georgia.

13 So a lot of this -- this was the big city.  
14 This is where they came to make it, you know,  
15 and came to work. They said that one of the  
16 railroad -- a rail splitter. We don't know  
17 about that.

18 It's a lot of that. But anyway, it's  
19 just, you know, trying to get through this log  
20 jam of the history. And I know -- I'm going  
21 stop before I hurt and need a chiropractor  
22 behind me. y'all needed to get with a  
23 chiropractor.

24 MR. TOURE: Oh, definitely. And one of  
25 the things that what happened with regard to  
0057

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 tybee, that historical marker was taken off of  
3 Lazaretto Creek. A lot of folks would go  
4 fishing and move the marker.

5 Some of us went looking for the marker and  
6 then it was a struggle. And it's on before you  
7 get on Tybee. So yeah, they removed the  
8 marker. That becomes one of the things.

9 MS. GUMB: Hi, I'm Wanda Gumb. I'm what  
10 they call Generation X. I was born here in  
11 Savannah and it's almost saddening to hear  
12 this story.

13 I have never heard this story. I know  
14 about Gullah and Savannah and PinPoint, all  
15 these different areas around here. What we're  
16 failing to do is be a community.

17 You know, it's heartbreaking. I look at  
18 my children and I think about my grandchildren,  
19 and we're not going to have a place to call  
20 home. I'm not going to be able to bring my  
21 children home. I'm going to bring them to some  
22 subdivision, not the land that my grandfather  
23 plowed, not the cotton that my  
24 great-grandmother lost her fingers picking.

25 MS. BROWN: That's right.

0058

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 MS. GUMB: That is the important thing  
3 here, what we're losing; not what they're  
4 putting here, what we're losing. And if we  
5 don't come together, because back in slavery,

6 we talk about being slaves, we came from  
7 different countries. We came from different  
8 nations.

9 We fought each other. That's what we've  
10 got to stop doing, fighting each other and come  
11 together as one unit. Like she said, buy her  
12 land if her family cannot buy it. Buy his land  
13 if his family cannot buy it.

14 Mother if your daughter don't want to do  
15 what you want her to do, give it to a family  
16 that will keep it.

17 Some of our generation don't care.  
18 They're about the dollar, because they are of  
19 the world. They're not living in the world  
20 like we have and like I was taught.

21 They're living of the world. So if  
22 they're not going to do it, don't give it to  
23 them. Don't let it end up being heir property  
24 to someone who doesn't care.

25 Give it to the ones who do care, who would  
0059

#### 1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 preserve these lands and areas. I was just  
3 talking to my friend back here.

4 I said, you know, materialistic things,  
5 they don't exist in my world. I take my  
6 children on nature walks. I take them to the  
7 museums here. We walk out to the piers and  
8 pick up shells and look at the crabs and look  
9 at all these things.

10 And now, all these private properties and  
11 the subdivisions coming in, you can't even see  
12 what God has to offer. All we're seeing is  
13 what man has to offer.

14 Nothing that they can build, 1.5 million  
15 dollars, 2.6 million dollars, is ever going to  
16 create what He's already created. Right,  
17 right, and that's what I'm seeing being  
18 destroyed here.

19 Nature is being destroyed. A lot of these  
20 people, if you go to this young man's land, you  
21 see what God has created. You go to that  
22 subdivision over there and you see what man  
23 has created, what plants he has put there.

24 We're taking away from our own livelihood,  
25 our own natural resources, things that were put  
0060

#### 1 MEETING DISCUSSION



2 here before we were put here.

3 Before we were put here, all of this was  
4 put here. It was put here first for a reason,  
5 but we as people are destroying it. And I  
6 believe that we as a people -- I don't care if  
7 you're white. I don't care if you're black,  
8 Chinese, Puerto Rican, yellow, green, orange,  
9 purple; if you don't come together and work  
10 together as one unit, it's going to fall apart,  
11 like it has continued through all these years.

12 So as I say to my seniors, please write a  
13 will, because you're not going to be here in 20  
14 years to speak your voice to know where we came  
15 from, and what you're trying to offer.

16 You're not doing this for you. Most of  
17 them have already lived their lives, you know,  
18 and just want -- you want to preserve it  
19 because you want your children and  
20 grandchildren to see the beauty that you once  
21 saw.

22 The love in a neighbor -- I don't even  
23 think a lot neighbors know what the word means  
24 to be a neighbor, you know. I grew corn, I  
25 gave you my corn. You grew potatoes and gave  
0061

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 me your potatoes. I run sheep -- we don't do  
3 that no more.

4 What you got for me? What you got for me?  
5 That's the world today, and that's where we  
6 need to stop. Really, that's where we really  
7 need to stop and just learn to give with an  
8 open heart, because a lot of the land that we  
9 have was created by brothers and sisters and  
10 friends and family.

11 They kicked them off the plantation. They  
12 had nowhere to go. You help me in my fields  
13 and I'll give you that field. Their families  
14 have come and created foundations for us, and  
15 what have we done -- destroyed the foundation.

16 In any institution, anything, that share  
17 -- you destroy the foundation, it's gone. You  
18 destroy the foundation of this church and it's  
19 gone.

20 You destroy foundation of this land that  
21 these people are trying to preserve and it's  
22 gone.

23 MR. TOURE: Initially, you had said you

24 didn't need the mic.

25 MS. MTENJI: Okay. I want to piggyback

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1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 off the very first statement you made, Sister  
3 back there --

4 MS. GUMB: Wanda.

5 MS. MTENJI: -- Wanda, the first thing  
6 that she said that I -- is still ringing in my  
7 head is she said I've never heard this story.  
8 And I work in the Chatham County School System.

9 I don't know if anyone else here is on  
10 staff in any of the school systems, but as much  
11 -- and I'm what you call a substitute teacher.

12 I that hate term. I make the kids call me  
13 an associate, because I'm there to do what  
14 the teacher can't do because the teacher is not  
15 there, and I'm in partnership with the teacher.

16 At any rate, as much as I possibly can, as  
17 cultural life educator and as a forklorist, I  
18 try to weave a lot of that into the curriculum  
19 as much as I can. And when I do that, I've got  
20 four minutes. Wait a minute, you didn't limit  
21 anybody else.

22 As much as I possibly can, I try to weave  
23 history, you know, and the culture, and the  
24 comments I get over and over again is that one,  
25 the students will say I never heard this

0063

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 before.

3 I talk about the history of Savannah as  
4 much as I know. I talk about history of  
5 Georgia and the Carolina as much as I know, and  
6 I connect that to African history, you know,  
7 and they'll say I never knew. I, you know, am  
8 a tour guide.

9 I formerly worked at the Owens-Thomas  
10 House. It is one of the only sites in Savannah  
11 that the slave quarters and the service  
12 basement is up for view, and most of the  
13 educators and the students know nothing about  
14 it and they study Georgia history.

15 And here Georgia history is just sitting  
16 right downtown and they know nothing. The  
17 teachers don't know anything about it. So by  
18 purpose, I would just say a lot times when  
19 we're doing a schedule, you know, I'm working

20 at the Owens-Thomas House that day.  
21 What's the Owens-Thomas House? So that's  
22 my opportunity to tell them what it is, you  
23 know. So, you know, blow-by-blow it just comes  
24 back. It just bounces back. She's working  
25 at the Owens-Thomas House, even though they  
0064

1 MEETING DISCUSSION  
2 haven't been there, they know what it is.  
3 So we've got to find some viable ways of  
4 weaving education in this, in terms of the  
5 youngsters coming up. They don't know these  
6 stories, so we got to find ways.  
7 And celebration wasn't so much my word, I  
8 need to use another word, it's preservation.  
9 You know, if we have some preservation, you  
10 know, conferences, conventions, you know,  
11 something that makes active living history,  
12 living legacy, so that they can know this.  
13 We've got to find ways to do this as much as  
14 possible.

15 MR. TOURE: Well, that's when I was  
16 telling her four minutes --

17 MR. KADALIE: I was waiting to hear --

18 MR. TOURE: Well now, I hate to be the one  
19 to bring this up right now, and be the one  
20 that's four minutes, Imani, we are renting this  
21 facility, and we now have to turn it over to  
22 another aspect.

23 We are going to have other meetings that  
24 are going to be down in Liberty County. They  
25 will be in Brunswick, St. Simons. I hate to be  
0065

1 MEETING DISCUSSION  
2 the one to do it, but  
3 MS. CYRIAQUE: The schedule is in the  
4 newsletter. We have four more meetings coming  
5 up beginning next weekend with the Georgia Sea  
6 Island festival. You're welcome to come to  
7 any of them.

8 MR. KADALIE: I was just making sure that  
9 I hadn't finished.

10 MR. TOURE: Dr. Modibo Kadalie hadn't  
11 finished. You can come to the other meetings,  
12 if not --

13 MR. HAYNES: Dr. Kadalie to be continued.

14 MR. TOURE: We would like to thank  
15 Ms. Vaughnette with regards to allowing us to

16 use this facility. The other commissioners,  
17 one is Jeanne Cyriaque; Althea Sumpter, she's  
18 in the Atlanta area, Charles Hall, who lives  
19 on Hilton Head but has a tie to Sapelo, in  
20 addition to myself and Deborah Mack who are  
21 here in Savannah. Dr. Deborah Mack is here in  
22 Savannah.

23 So those are the other commissions for  
24 Georgia. Again, we'd like to thank y'all for  
25 allowing us to come here, and now it's time

0066

1 MEETING DISCUSSION

2 for y'all to yam, that is for y'all to eat, and  
3 Sister Sula --

4 MS. GOODE-WALKER: I'd just wanted to  
5 thank Sister Sula Bond and recognize our repast  
6 and a shameless plug for the Telfair tonight,  
7 our second annual Juneteenth Celebration is  
8 coming up on the 19th. Naomi Tutu is they  
9 youngest daughter, baby daughter of Desmond  
10 Tutu is our speaker, the Second African  
11 Baptist Church on June 19th, and on Saturday  
12 June 20th at the Owens-Thomas House, I'm going  
13 to have a jumping the broom ceremony, something  
14 that you probably all know. Please come and  
15 join us from 10:00 to 1:00, all events are  
16 free.

17 MR. TOURE: All right. We'll now turn it  
18 over. You'll have an opportunity to talk, mix  
19 and mingle, and again we're going to have -- we  
20 have one of our deacons here. We'll continue  
21 with the blessing of food. Thank y'all for  
22 coming out. Come to the other sessions, come  
23 to the other sessions, make sure you come to  
24 the other sessions.

25 (Concluded at 8:00 p.m.)

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2

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C E R T I F I C A T E

4 G E O R G I A :

5 C H A T H A M C O U N T Y :

6

7

I hereby certify that the foregoing  
8 transcript was taken down, as stated in the  
9 caption, and the questions and answers thereto were  
10 reduced to typewriting under my direction; that the  
11 foregoing pages 1 through 66 represent a true and

12 correct transcript of the evidence given upon said  
13 hearing, and I further certify that I am not of kin  
14 or counsel to the parties in the case; am not in  
15 the regular employ of counsel for any of said  
16 parties; nor am I in anywise interested in the  
17 result of said case.

18 This the 13th day of July, 2009.

19

20

21 \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Dore, Certified Court

22 Reporter, B-2041

23

24

25