

Forging the Necessary Unity

On Tues., May 20, 2008, Community Board 11 received explanations of the East end segment of the 125th Street so-called Rezoning, from a mouthpiece of the City Planning Commission. What she put forward, with a slideshow, was a monstrosity of intimidating, technocratic architecture that could have come from the drawing boards promoting the fantasies of Nazis like Albert Speer and Hermann Goering, or closer to home, the worst of Robert Moses. When Coalition to Save P.S. 105 chair Gwen Goodwin asked who the developers, investors, financiers and architects of this scheme were, she baldly replied that that was secret. Amazed at the incredible admission, renowned Harlem Tenants' organizer Nellie Hester Bailey asked her to confirm that she actually said that in answer to the question, and she confirmed that yes, it is a secret! In other words, the Harlem Rezone is a actually a conspiracy so massive that to call it criminal understates its scale and force. They know who we are, but we don't know who THEY are. Does "democracy" really come down to allowing people to vote for puppet politicians, while behind the scenes a gang of financial dictators, whose very identities are protected from public knowledge, call all the shots (double meaning initially unintended)?

And we're not kidding, here. Let us take a moment to remember that Nellie Hester Bailey's husband was unspeakably butchered by the gangster-landlord combination. Routinely, high finance moguls commit heinous atrocities, here and around the world, to eliminate resistance, and set examples of terror to deter others. How else did they convert Native Peoples' land their "property"? How much of their "wealth" was sweated out through racial slavery and discrimination. They are at war, all the time, and we at the bottom are as sheep among wolves.

Peoples' Power vs. Divide and Rule

Harlem, and by extension the entire population, is facing powerful attacks from the heaviest concentration of exploitative money and corrupt politics. It is unprecedented. We the people are more powerful than these interests are, since we are the source of whatever power they have. Our

unity, therefore must be based on resistance to their divide-and-conquer strategies, which begins with making a pact to resist complicity, at least to some degree.

Unity and diversity

The call for unity implies that those who are to unite start out with diverse visions. Unity therefore must be based not so much on a consensus of what we are for, as on a consensus of what we are *against*.

The hook and the worm

In the current situation, we have to stand against any rezoning that could be carried out by the current city government, in both its executive and legislative branches. **Once we start dickering about the "jobs" or "affordable housing" or other deal-sweeteners of a rezoning, we are discussing the price at which the community will be sold, rather than the principles. And automatically, we would be sabotaging unity.** We should not bite the hook, even if some or all politicians assure us the worm is delicious. Furthermore, the chief way that we become divided would be over the deal sweeteners which are designed to do just that. Forget about jobs in which people are promised benefits for "work" destroying the community.

Divisive Promises of Jobs and Housing

This is what they always promise. They leave us with nothing, then we're supposed to think they are doing us a favor to promise to compensate with a pitiful fraction of what they steal. Housing has been made unaffordable. Forget about affordable housing, which is already touted as if it is normally a rare exception. The real estate forces behind the rezoning are at war against affordable housing, and against the people who need it. **The biggest exploiters have exported and automated so many jobs, permanently as long as they rule, that they no longer need most of us to work creating their profits, and they now want us dead.** Any compromise concessions they offer now are in accordance with Henry Ford's cynical boast that he could "hire half the working class to kill the other half." "Why should regular people be able to afford a

place to live, when we're not supposed to continue surviving?" they reckon.

Eminent Domain: Robinhood in Reverse

Eminent Domain is now Robinhood-in-reverse, taking from the poor to give to the rich. Eminent domain is now applied to take community based businesses and properties, and turn it over to the financial oligarchy. A very different government would apply eminent domain to dispossess oppressive profiteers and monopolizers, and to convert their usurped property to public ownership, restore it to its rightful owners who build and operate all this wealth, to put human needs before profits.

Politicians Buy Loyalty

After the Harlem rezone, the community-selling politicians must be driven from office, whatever it legally takes. No demands, benchmarks or thresholds should be made, except their immediate resignation and an end to their careers in the public trust. Meanwhile, they must be continually hounded wherever they go, rather than given platforms to "explain" and to buy people off set them against each other in rivalry to curry favor, while nevertheless united in loyalty to the paymaster. With unity behind the establishment, people united are almost always defeated. Some think they can serve two masters, but generally not when push comes to shove, as now with the Harlem rezone. As a humorous Jewish saying goes, "with one tuchas, you can't dance at two weddings."

Support Anti-Rezone Litigation

When important issues are at stake, you either have a full-scale revolution, or you end up in a court. With revolution not very likely in coming weeks, court action, driven by organized popular pressure on the streets, in voting booths and vote-counting sites(!), and in all venues, is essential to oppose the Rezoning and all acts of community destruction. Support all litigation aimed at stopping the Rezoning.

The Three Scoundrels Must Go!

The three main disgraces to the Harlem political community, Inez Dickens, Melissa Mark-Viverito and Robert Jackson must be driven out, whether through de-facto recall, impeachment, constant hounding or voting them out. Whatever works. Zero tolerance, zero approval.