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Affordable Housing Push in USVI Continues With Training Session for Developers

Training aims to boost local development capabilities amid housing crisis

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Enterprise Community Partners and the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York (FHLBNY) recently held their second activity as part of the USVI's [Housing Ecosystem Development Grant Program](#) — a training session for current and aspiring affordable housing developers.

Following a roundtable discussion convened in August 2023 for the first five grantees under the program, the training session held on Tuesday at the Emerald Beach resort on St. Thomas was aimed at helping to build capacity and promote growth in the territory's affordable housing ecosystem.

The workshop, titled “Financing Affordable Housing Development in the Virgin Islands” provided training on federal and local affordable housing funding programs for organizations currently engaged in developing affordable housing, and those wishing to do so.

“Increasing the development of affordable homes is at the heart of Enterprise’s goals,” said Jelani Newton, senior director at Enterprise Community Partners. Tuesday’s workshop was aimed at “support[ing] local developers with technical assistance and information resources, helping them to expand this important work.”

Explaining the reason for the intense focus on affordable housing, Peter Grof, community investment officer at FHLBNY, said that “a stable and affordable home is the foundation from which individuals, families and communities grow and flourish.” With the territory currently in the grips of a [housing affordability crisis](#), the collaborative effort between Enterprise and FHLBNY is an attempt to directly address the issue.

According to Enterprise, “While the U.S. Virgin Islands government largely handles affordable housing, encouraging more private engagement in local housing and community development efforts can help address the significant need remaining for affordable homes.”

Three organizations – one based on each island – received \$100,000 grants last year to help them in their quest to increase affordable housing options for Virgin Islanders – St. Croix Foundation for Community Development Inc., WMWilliams & Partners, Inc., and Adrian Realty LLC. Representatives from all three organizations, as well as interested persons from the development community, were present at the training.