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Agencies Outline 2026 Construction Timeline for Lameshur Road as CZM Weighs Federal Consistency Request

CZM heard details on gravel surfacing, drainage fixes, parking changes, & silt-fence protections for the Lameshur road project as commissioners questioned the lack of paving & agencies cited funding limits ahead of expected construction beginning in 2026.

Community Center / **Published On December 10, 2025 07:46 AM /**

Janeke Simon **December 10, 2025**

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A major road rehabilitation effort for St. John moved a step forward on Tuesday as the Coastal Zone Management Commission held a public hearing on proposed repairs to the access road leading to the Lameshur Bays. The project, presented as a joint effort by the National Park Service and Federal Lands Highway, outlines substantial improvements intended to stabilize the roadway and protect the area's sensitive natural resources.

According to Kim Campo-Allen, Environmental Protection Specialist with Eastern Federal Lands, the plan calls for repairing just over three quarters of a mile of road “from subgrade and base up,” with a gravel surface currently proposed. In addition to the roadway, the work includes “new low water crossings, ditch reconditioning, [and] construction of a new parking area.” Campo-Allen explained that improved drainage is necessary to reduce erosion, and that the parking area should reduce roadside parking, “which has resulted in damage to vegetation.”

Commissioners raised questions about how the project would affect the surrounding environment. Commissioner Ralf Boulon pressed for assurances that construction remain “within the existing road prism as much as possible,” citing the area’s sensitive ecology. Campo-Allen confirmed that this limitation was required due to nearby wetlands and “very sensitive cultural resources adjacent to the road.” She added that erosion control barriers, including silt fences, would be placed “along the entire border of the road to prevent storm water from entering those wetlands next to the road.”

The project’s design is shaped by its funding source, the Great American Outdoors Act. Commissioner Andrew Penn asked whether the road could be paved rather than left with a gravel surface, calling the current plan “kind of a messy fix.” He pointed to the access road to Mahaut Bay, where paving has helped reduce erosion in a similar landscape. Campo-Allen confirmed that the budget does not allow for pavement.

Scott Simmons, Deputy Superintendent of the Virgin Islands National Park, acknowledged Penn’s point. “You are correct,” Simmons said, but indicated that delaying the project to secure new funding would allow the road to deteriorate further. “If we were to wait for the funding to be available for us to do the pavement, we don’t know how long that would be, and the road would continue getting worse and worse. So at this time we’re trying to proceed with the best project we can with the funding that’s available.” When Commissioner Kurt Marsh Jr. asked whether additional funds might be secured, Simmons replied, “I don’t foresee the funding coming available in the near future,” describing the rehabilitation as “a standalone project.”

Still, Simmons agreed that more investment would be needed. He said the agencies should seek support “for a more sustainable long term solution here,” and noted that paving could potentially occur in stages, “between the low water crossings.”

A representative from Federal Lands Highway addressed a question from the public regarding timing, stating that construction is expected to begin in September 2026 and finish by February of the following year, though work could begin sooner if permitting is completed early. The road will be closed to traffic during construction. From the public gallery, Amy Roberts noted that this would likely cut off access to the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS), but officials did not respond to the observation.

With the presentation completed, the CZM Commission will accept public comments for seven days before convening again in about 30 days to decide whether to approve the project’s application for a federal consistency determination.