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## Lawmakers Expected to Approve Charlotte Amalie Easement and St. Croix Salon Variance

Lawmakers voiced support for a perpetual access easement tied to improvements at a historic Charlotte Amalie property and a St. Croix zoning use variance that would allow Daphne Jean-Marie to downsize her salon and beauty supply business from home soon.

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An aerial shot of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas USVI. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM.

Two land-use measures heard Friday in the Committee of the Whole are expected to move forward for votes at the next legislative session, after lawmakers voiced support for a perpetual access easement in downtown Charlotte Amalie and a zoning use variance for a beauty salon on

St. Croix.

The first measure, Bill 36-0252, would ratify a perpetual access easement for ingress and egress over a portion of Public Road R.O.W. Store Tvaer Gade, Queen's Quarter, St. Thomas.

The property owner plans to make several improvements, including updates to the stairway, awning, trash receptacle area, propane gas storage and small generator service. However, those improvements require formalization of an easement because the property has encroached for decades on adjacent government-owned property.

The building sits in the historic downtown area of Charlotte Amalie, and the Historic Preservation Committee requires the documents before allowing the improvements to proceed.

The Department of Property and Procurement supports ratification of the easement. Assistant Commissioner Vincent Richards told lawmakers that the agreement would not compromise the government's ownership interest.

"Nothing contained will result in a forfeiture of the government's title to the government's property," Mr. Richards affirmed.

Lawmakers raised no objection to the request.

"I have no problem with that, and what you are doing in respect to your development is outstanding," Senator Marvin Blyden stated.

Senators also expressed support for Bill 36-0290, which would grant a zoning use variance for Plot No. 104 Estate Concordia, Westend Quarter, St. Croix. The variance would allow the property to be used for construction and operation of a beauty salon, despite the parcel's R-2 Residential Low Density–One and Two Family zoning.

Two structures currently sit on the property, and the owner intends to construct a small addition to one of them.

According to Planning Technician Gail Pagan, the Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan "promotes strategies to strengthen the USVI's local economy, including support for cottage industries and home-based businesses." DPNR recommends approving the variance.

The property owner, Daphne Jean-Marie, told lawmakers that she and her husband own a salon and beauty supply store but have decided to downsize because of the "rising cost of doing business and a slower economy." She said her neighbors support the decision and have voiced no opposition.

"I understand the need for surviving, keeping your business striving, and at the same time trying to save some money," Senator Franklin Johnson said.

No votes are taken in the Committee of the Whole. Both measures will be placed on the agenda at the next legislative session, where lawmakers are expected to take final votes.