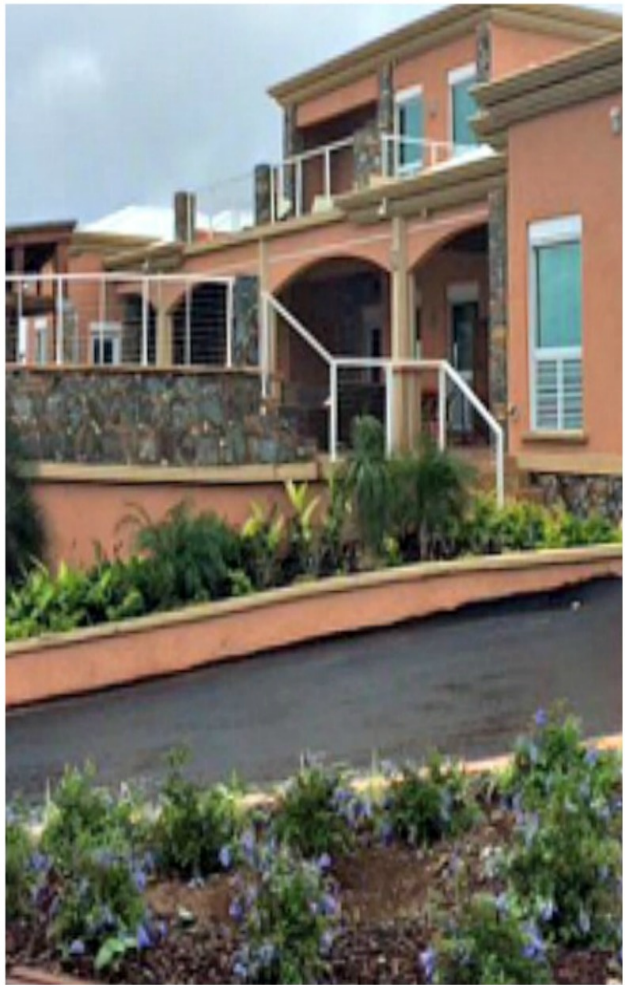


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Plans To Move Out Of \$12,500 Monthly Rental, Says Catherineberg Should Be Museum

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Governor Kenneth Mapp

ST. CROIX -- When Governor Kenneth Mapp is in St. Thomas, the leader of the territory stays at a \$12,500 monthly rental mansion that tax dollars are paying for. The amount was revealed by the [governor himself in February](#), while referencing erroneous information from his press office that the government's tab had been \$4,000 per month for the rental.

Today, while speaking at a press conference held at Government House, *VI Consortium* questioned the governor about the status of Catherineberg, the official governor's mansion, and whether his administration had been conducting assessments to determine if he would stay at the residence, as made known by WICO CEO Joseph Boschulte in a [recent interview](#) with *VI Consortium*.

"We are in fact conducting an assessment, the mold issues in Catherineberg, and Catherineberg is simply not a place to live on a full time basis," Mapp said.

The governor contended that where he lives has no bearing on his duty as governor, and made mention of his own home on St. Croix that he lives in when on the biggest of the three islands.

"I want to be very, very clear. I got elected and my priorities have nothing to do really with where I live and accommodations provided by the government," Mapp said. "I own my own home of which I've owned from 2001. I live there when I'm on St. Croix. There's residence made available to me by the government when I'm on St. Croix of which I have not slept in. I'm still in my own home and I'm happy to be there."

The territory's leader also reminded that he is required to reside on St. Thomas in according with law, however, Mapp said he will not live in a house that could be detrimental to his health.

"The Revised Organic Act requires me to take up residence on the Island of St. Thomas, but I'm not going to live in a place that's not healthy, that's not safe, that cannot provide accommodations that require for the duties of my office," he said.

Still, Mapp believes repairs at Catherineberg are overdue, as well as a determination as to what should be the final purpose of the aging mansion. The governor also made known that he plans on exiting the St. Thomas rental that's costing tax payers \$12,500 every month.

"Now, we will do an assessment of Catherineberg, there will be repairs of Catherineberg, I do have a plan to exit the Nazareth property. I can't give you a date on when that exodus will occur, but I think overall, and I've been on this public stage for quite a while, as a government and as a territory, we need to come to a resolution on this issue with residencies for governors and lieutenant governors. It's been provided since governor's were appointed by presidents," Mapp said.

He continued: "We've seen a clear demarcation from the standard of having residencies repaired to house governors and lieutenant governors. I think in this maze of what's happening, we're going to present a plan to the community and the legislature that we believe could resolve this once and for all.

"I'll just give you my personal view. If you ask me what should happen with Catherineberg, it's a place that has about 5 acres of land. I think that in the ambiance of its estate, a modern gubernatorial residence could be constructed that could house governors for the next 20 years and there families, and allow them to have security systems.

"I think Catherineberg is an excellent place to repose the history of the territory, certainly of governors and their families. I also believe that Catherineberg can be used when members of congress and the U.S. Senate and federal officials come to the territory with their families for weekends. It's a wonderful place that they could stay."

In further remarks on the Catherineberg controversy, the governor said the mansion "is just a wonderful museum; it's not a place for people to live and work and do the things you need to do without worrying about breaking mahogany and pulling pictures down."

Because Mapp is from St. Croix, he travels back and forth between the islands regularly, and asking his supporters from the St. Thomas/St. John district to forgive him beforehand, the governor said if it was left up to him, he'd commute daily and there would not be the issue of providing housing for him in St. Thomas.

"But my duties go beyond the time the airlines stop flying," he said.