

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Gallows Bay Dredging Gets Senate Approval

VIC News / **Published On May 22, 2015 09:45 AM /**

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ST. THOMAS -- The 31st Legislature moved swiftly during a session at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall on Thursday to [approve](#) two Coastal Zoning Management (CZM) permits for the development of two marine projects on St. Croix -- including the dredging of the Gallows Bay harbor.

After an urgent letter from Governor Kenneth Mapp pressing Senate President Neville James to schedule a hearing for the permits, which also included a permit to allow repairs to move forward on an existing concrete apron at the seaward Plot No. 10 in Water Gut, Christiansted, a hearing date was set for May 18.

Fourteen senators were present during the hearing, which included testimony from St. Croix Chamber of Commerce President Shak Hawkins and V.I. Port Authority Engineer Damian Cartwright, who said that small cruise and luxury boats will start coming to the Gallows Bay port once construction is complete.

But while all the senators expressed support for the measures, Sen. Kurt Violet was frustrated with assertions from David W. Mapp, assistant executive director of the Virgin Islands Port Authority, who seemingly tried to downplay the importance of reconstructing the Gallows Bay port. Violet, with passion, said he was tired of St. Croix being left behind while St. Thomas continues to move ahead. The senator said he was supportive of ongoing St. Thomas initiatives, however, in relation to port development, Gallows Bay would first need to be complete before he could support any project on the sister island.

In the end, the consensus in favor of the measures was strong, and on Thursday, senators cast their votes in the affirmative for Bill No. 31-0127, an act issued to the Virgin Islands Port Authority for dredging within the Schooner Bay Channel in the Christiansted Harbor; and Bill No. 31-0128, an act issued to the Virgin Islands Port Authority for development of Plot No. 10 Water Gut Reclaimed Land, also in Christiansted, 15-0.