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FEMA Approves \$362K For Repairs to Historic Fleming House in Frederiksted, Which Houses EDA

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Fleming House By. OFFICE OF DISASTER RECOVERY

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Public Assistance Program has approved \$362,639 in funding for exterior and interior repairs to the Fleming House in Frederiksted, which houses the offices of the U.S. Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority (EDA), announced the Office of Disaster Recovery Monday.

The two-story historic site constructed in 1887 has been home to the EDA since 2003. The building sustained extensive damage after Hurricane Maria in September 2017.

“Economic development is most successful when collaborative partnerships and relationships occur within a community. The same also applies when historic sites need to be restored after

wear and tear, or the impact of a natural disaster,” said Kamal Latham, EDA chief executive officer. “It is indeed a privilege for our team to work within the walls of history as it facilitates economic development opportunities for the Territory’s future. We thank the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery for their tremendous work on this project.”

“The Fleming House is not only a worksite for the USVIEDA office on St. Croix. It is a significant part of the Frederiksted community and its history,” said Wayne L. Biggs, Jr., EDA assistant chief executive officer/chief operating officer. “As historic buildings are restored and house modern-day offices such as ours, a strong connection is developed between the past and present.”

FEMA Administrator Peter Gaynor, Federal Coordinating Officer, William Vogel, local and FEMA representatives, toured the building in February, O.D.R. said. The administrator saw firsthand the effects of disasters on historic properties and cultural resources.

“Historical sites, like the Fleming House, have special value to their communities and contribute to the local identity, Mr. Vogel said. “We are proud to be a part of the effort to restore the Fleming House and ensure its legacy continues for future generations.”

O.D.R. said the location will be renovated and restored to its pre-disaster condition utilizing comparable materials to maintain its historic façade in accordance with The Division for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Wooden window trims, handrails, Jalousies, lattice screens, shutters, copper hanging lamps, and brick columns will be installed to refurbish the building, returning its notable vintage finish.

“Several historic buildings in the territory will be refurbished utilizing recovery funds from Hurricanes Irma and Maria,” said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, O.D.R. director. “Ensuring that this and other slated projects are restored maintaining their historical elements is not just a requirement but an obligation.”

The site will also be rebuilt to withstand future weather events. A request for proposal to solicit qualified contractors is scheduled to be released by the end of June.