

The Virgin Islands Consortium

In Additional Zoning Business, Senators Took Testimony on Proposed Assisted Living Facility, Other Matters

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ST. JOHN - The Senate Committee of the Whole met on St. John this week to take testimony on zoning requests and Minor Coastal Zone Permits, including a proposed assisted living facility, and bringing a nonconforming property into zoning conformity for a restaurant/bar and a hotel.

Testifiers included officials from the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), the applicants, and authorized agents. Lawmakers did not vote on any of the measures. The meeting was held at the Cleone H. Frequent Legislative Conference

Room.

“This concludes a series of Committee of the Whole meetings throughout the territory regarding zoning requests, lease agreements and Coastal Zone Management Permits. Today senators will have an opportunity to vet and be fully informed on the requests involving the island of St. John,” Senate President Novelle Sen. Francis said.

ZAJ-19-2- A request for a use variance to the R-1 (Residential-Low Density) zoned Plot No.6 Estate Adrian, No. 18 Cruz Bay Quarter, St. John to allow for an assisted living facility.

Permittee Ophelia Torres noted that the construction of an assisted living facility would allow the elderly and disabled people on St. John to spend their golden years close to family and friends. In response to Sen. Steven Payne's inquiry concerning turning the home into a hospice as needed, Torres stated that it was not a part of the plan, but provisions can be made.

ZAJ-19-3- A request to rezone Parcel Nos. 34-B and 34 Remainder Estate Freeman's Ground, No. 8A Coral Quarter, St. John from R-2 (Residential-Low Density-One and Two Family) to B-2 (Business-Secondary/Neighborhood).

The proposed use is to bring the legally and nonconforming property into zoning conformity. DPNR supports this zoning request due to the intent; B-3 zone suits the petition with regards to serving small neighborhood-serving retail businesses within residential districts, according to Leia LaPlace-Matthew — territorial planner of DPNR — who provided testimony on behalf of DPNR Commissioner Jean Pierre-Oriol.

ZAJ-20-1- A request to rezone Parcel No. 6D Estate Adrian, No. 18 Cruz Bay Quarter, St. John from R-1 (Residential-Low Density) to B-1 (Business-Central Business District), to allow for a restaurant, bar, and retail.

Permittee Brian Smith mentioned that re-zoning allows for the proposed business establishments to be in the front of the .63 acres of his family's property on Centerline Road. Furthermore, Smith indicated that the proposition will create jobs for the St. John Community. Although DPNR recommends the property to be a use variance, LaPlace-Matthew noted that a fence or wall must be erected to create a boundary between the business and neighboring residents.

Lastly, lawmakers vetted the following: ZAJ-20-2- A request for a planned area development for 42 parcels on Lovango Cay (Eastern Portion), No. 21 Cruz Bay Quarter, St. John which are zoned R-1 (Residential-Low Density).

The purpose is to allow for a hotel, club, private homes and for auxiliary use. Senators also considered Minor Coastal Zone Management Permit No. CZJ-03-20W, which allows for the reconstruction of a previously permitted dock, totaling 495 ft. The reconstruction of the dock will occur seaward of Parcels 300-40 and 300-50 Estate Chocolate Hole, St. John U.S. Virgin Islands. The permit will also allow the occupancy of 900 sq. feet of submerged land.