

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Construction Has Yet To Start At Paul E. Joseph Stadium

Business / **Published On March 20, 2017 10:05 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **March 20, 2017**



ST. CROIX -- Although Governor Kenneth Mapp in January issued a notice to commence construction order for the long awaited Paul E. Joseph Stadium reconstruction, there's been no work at the construction site, leading many to question what's the holdup now.

On January 23, the governor issued the order directing the Department of Public Works to start work on the project, which has been delayed going on three years, following a decision by Mr. Mapp, upon taking office, [to halt the project](#) -- which had been negotiated by former Governor John P. de Jongh.

[In the January release](#), Government House said that Mr. Mapp originally delayed construction to request additional funding from the Legislature to purchase additional land for expansion, but with what the governor classified as the Senate's failure to act on his request, Mr. Mapp ordered D.P.W. Commissioner Gustav James to proceed with development.

"I do not believe that Senate action on my request for additional funds will occur soon. Accordingly, Coastal Systems and GEC should proceed with the project start immediately," the governor said.

Yet, when the project was [originally delayed](#), the governor cited different reasons for halting construction. Mr. Mapp had said that the original contract awarded to St. Croix-based GEC, LLC, was hastily put together, and that it was approved and signed by Mr. de Jongh even while the contractor did not have a single design to show.

"The Paul E. Joseph project in Frederiksted, which is a \$20 million project, I have directed for that project to be frozen," the governor said when announcing the halt. "I visited the project on Sunday. As many of you know, that project was put together in haste."

He added: "What is so troubling about that project is that the government has entered into a contract for a \$20 million project for which there is not a single concept or design." "The contract allows the vendor to design a stadium and surrounding areas, bill the government at the cost of 10 percent, put it together, and they give us a \$10 million project, the contract says the contractor and the government will split the savings, so the contractor will end up with a \$5 million bonus. We could have a stadium worth \$10 million, and you, the people of the Virgin Islands, would be out \$20 million."

Since then, however, GEC has satisfied the governor's concerns.

Mr. Mapp revealed his plan to [expand the original vision](#) during the 2016 Chamber of Commerce Meeting, held at The Palms at Pelican Cove. There, Mr. Mapp made known that the expansion would add another \$15 million to the \$20 million original contract to complete the work, with its completion date being pushed back to June, 2018. And in a separate press release in 2015 [announcing commencement of work](#) which [never happened](#), the governor pinned the delay with the goal to expand as the inauguration of Frederiksted's revitalization.

"This is the beginning of a vision for the revitalization of Frederiksted that was developed through the design charrette process in 2005 while I was PFA director of Finance and Administration," the governor said in October 2015. "I want to thank the administration's team of attorneys along with Commissioners Gustav James, Pedro Cruz and Randolph Bennett (Mr. Bennett is no longer with the administration) and the PFA's consultant, Coastal Systems-USVI, for working with the representatives of GEC, LLC to get this significant project back on track."

In Government House's January release, Mr. Mapp added that with construction documentation for the project at nearly 90% complete, there should be nothing to prevent the project from commencing. Yet, no work has started, and Government House hasn't given a reason why.

When construction finally begins, Government House says the stadium will be a modern sports complex designed to latest standards with the capacity to provide state-of-the-art facilities for local athletes and attract sports tourism to St. Croix.

*Feature Image: Kenneth Mapp detailing the expansion of the Paul E. Joseph Stadium using charts at the Palms at Pelican Cove during the C2016 hamber of Commerce Meeting. (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)*

© Viconsortium 2026