

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Work Continues To Remove 100-Year-Old Mahogany Trees At Capitol Building In St. Thomas

Community Center / **Published On August 07, 2018 10:04 AM /**

Staff **August 07, 2018**



ST. THOMAS -- Senate President Myron Jackson is advising the public that work of trimming and removing several mahogany trees from the grounds of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on St. Thomas, which are in jeopardy of causing major structural damage to the historic Capitol Building, continues.

According to a release issued Monday, the decision to trim and remove the trees was made after consultation with a certified arborist, and the conclusion that hurricane-force winds experienced last year could cause the trees to fall into the roof, further compromising what once served as a historic battery, and houses the offices of the first branch of government.

“Trees removed were severely compromised during the two Category 5 storms. Approval was granted by the Historic Preservation Commission given their conditions,” Mr. Jackson said. “A native tree species will be replanted to restore canopy and the historic landscape of the Capitol grounds.”

The trees in question are about 100 years old, have stood witness to the 1917 Transfer Ceremony, framed Charlotte Amalie High School graduations which once used the site as a campus, and accommodated other government operations, Mr. Jackson made known.

“It is heartbreaking to see these ancient mahogany trees go to save our building. We honor the long role they have played in anchoring this historic site, providing us with their shade and beauty,” the Senate president said.

He said the intent is to use some of it to create scrolls that highlight the institution’s past and present history.

“We also look forward to sharing the lumber with our skilled Virgin Islands woodworkers who can convert one of the highest quality woods in the world into fine works of art and craftsmanship,” Mr. Jackson said. “As we finalize details and protocols for distribution, the wood remains the property of the Legislature and its removal from the site is currently prohibited.”