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\$1.5 Million Petrus Plaza BVI Opens Next Week

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Petrus Plaza BVI. By. ANGELA BURNS FOR VI CONSORTIUM

FISH BAY, TORTOLA – Former U.S. Virgin Islands Senator and Gubernatorial Candidate Allie Petrus is expanding his business operations with a \$1.5 million investment in the British Virgin Islands.

Petrus Plaza BVI, a gas station, touchless drive-thru car wash and food court, is scheduled to have a phased opening at its Fish Bay location on Tortola by the end of next week.

Mr. Petrus, who owns Petrus Plaza, a chain of PG gas stations, Subway and Sbarro in St. Thomas, has strong roots in the BVI, having lived a portion of his early years in Brewers Bay. His grandmother Leona Callwood and mother Gretta Thomas Petrus were born here and he is dedicating this project to them both.

Mr. Petrus told VI Consortium, in an exclusive interview, that as a person who came from humble beginnings, he has followed the prescription to get an education, work hard, be a believer and watch things fall into place.

“I grew up in public housing in St. Thomas, went off to school in the US, did time in the military (Fort Benning, Georgia and also in Hawaii) and came back to St. Thomas wanting to make a difference,” he stated.

That drive led him to public service. He was elected to the Senate in 1994 where he served for three terms from 1995, before “selectively retiring”. But he said business is his passion more than anything else.

“I like developing things and helping people in general and being an employer helps me to do that, so me and my wife and daughter employ about a hundred people in St. Thomas at our small family business,” Mr. Petrus said.

He said they had this plan to do business in the BVI for quite some time and after he was unsuccessful running for governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands, they decided it was the right time to start.

According to Mr. Petrus, the goal is to grow this business and embark on other projects here in the BVI, so that he can be a major employer and contributor to the economy of this territory.

The signature architecture and accent colors, a happy terra-cotta and burnt orange, seen at Petrus Plaza in St. Thomas, now adorn the main road heading east on the main island of Tortola.

Groundbreaking for Petrus Plaza BVI took place in March 2019 with contractor Quality Construction.

Asked the cost of the project, Mr. Petrus, holding his head, said: “This is a major investment. My philosophy is go all the way or not at all. It’s like \$1.5 million.”

Subject to the relevant government permits being approved, he expects to host a soft launching for Petrus Plaza BVI by the end of this upcoming week. The gas station and drive through will be ready for business, while the food court will be coming by April this year.

Petrus Plaza BVI will be managed by Jennel Reid.