



06-09-23 | Committee of the whole

Legislature USVI

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- 0:00:00 We'll be right back. Thank you. I'll see you next time. [3 such phrases repeated 49 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]
- 0:24:30 Thank you. We'll be right back. [2 such phrases repeated 26 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]
- 0:37:30 Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you.
- 0:39:30 Thank you. We'll be right back. President, good morning to all, the committee of the whole of June 9th, 2023 is here [3 such phrases repeated 28 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]
- 0:53:29 call to order. I'm Senator Novel E. Francis Jr., Senate President of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, and I want to say good morning to all present, viewing, and listening. We are here today at the Fitz E. Lowe's Conference Room in St. Croix Legislative Building where we will consider three zoning applications. Welcome to the applicants and to the representatives of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources. It has been a busy week for my colleagues and I as we have participated in promotional ceremonies and graduations for the University of Arizona's and our public and private school. Congratulations to all of our graduates. I had the pleasure of attending our community salutes and to be among the first to congratulate our high school graduates who are joining the military. We certainly wish you well and thank you for your service in advance. I was also honored to welcome the scholars from around the world to St. Croix for the annual Caribbean Studies Conference that was held this week at the RT Park. It's been a very fitting that this conference is being held during our Caribbean American Heritage Month and as the territory prepares to commemorate our 175th anniversary of emancipation. My congratulations to Dr. Chinzira Kahina and her team for their successful hosting of this international conference. While I was unable to attend this week's grand opening, I commend Ms. Van Der Poel, Romney and her team from the Board of Nurse Licensure and their achievement of opening a St. Croix office. It has been a long goal of theirs for quite some time and I'm pleased to see it become a reality. Before I proceed, I'd like to a

moment of silent for former senator hugo dennis jr who served during the 14th and 15th legislature the territory benefited benefited from his leadership and experience as the minority leader and also as the president of the legislature is for his service as a union leader and assistant

0:55:38 commissioner for the department of sports park and recreation we all stand on the shoulders of giants like former senator Dennis who certainly paved the way to be for us to be here today and I would just like to stand and offer a moment of silence for former senator Hugo Dennis thank you The matter before us today has been through the Department of Planning and Natural Resources own process and they have reviewed and certainly held public hearings. I want to remind all that's present here and listening that there is no votes taken in this committee of the whole. Instead when the committee receives testimony from the individuals of my colleagues and I would get an opportunity to query them and when the matter is presented during our next legislative session which is scheduled for June the 14th and then we'll go to a vote. Also I'd like to take this opportunity to remind everyone to put their phones and either silent or turn them off as not to interrupt the proceedings. Madam Clerk please call the roll. Senator Marvin A. Blyden. Senator Blyden absent.

0:57:12 Absent. Senator Anghel L. Bolquez, Jr.? Present. Senator Bolquez? Present. Senator Diane T. Capehart? Senator Capehart? Absent. Senator Samuel Carrion? Senator Carrion? Present. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Here.

0:57:41 Senator DeGraff, present. Senator Ray Fonseca. Senator Fonseca, absent. Senator Novell E. Francis, Jr. I'm here. Senator Francis, present. Senator Alma Francis Heiliger. Present. Senator Francis Heiliger, present. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory. Senator Fred Gregory, absent. Senator Kenneth L. Gittins. Senator Gittins, absent. Senator Maurice C. James. Senator James. Absent. Senator Jayvan E. James, Sr. Senator Jayvan James, absent.

0:58:53 Senator Franklin D. Johnson. Senator Franklin Johnson, absent. Senator Carla Joseph. Senator Joseph, present. Mr. President, we have seven present, eight absent, and I do have some correspondence. Please proceed to reading of the correspondence. Madam Clerk.

0:59:46 From the Office of Senator Marvin A. Blyden, June 9th, 2023, to the Honorable Novell E. Francis Jr. Dear Mr. President, I regret to inform you that due to unforeseen circumstances, I will be unable to attend today's meeting of the Committee of the Whole. Please mark my absence as excused, and please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused, as well as my best wishes for a productive meeting. Sincerely, Marvin A. Blyton, Vice President of the 35th Legislature.

1:00:23 From the Office of Senator Kenneth L. Gittins, dated June 8, 2023, to the Honorable Novell E. Francis, Jr. Dear Chairman Francis, please excuse my absence from the Committee of the Whole hearing scheduled for today, June 9, 2023. Due to scheduling conflicts, including the celebration of the life of my dearly departed cousin, Corrine Messer-Milligan, I am unable to attend. I note the importance of the agenda items to be discussed in today's hearing and ask that any additional information shared during the hearing be forwarded to my office.

1:01:11 I thank you in advance for your understanding. Sincerely, Kenneth L. Gittins. From the Office of the Honorable Diane T. Capehart, June 9, 2023, to the Honorable Novelle E. Francis, Jr.: Dear Senate President, please be advised that I will not be in attendance on today, June 9, 2023, at the Committee of the Home Meeting on the Island of St. Croix. I am out of the territory attending the 2023 Mental Health America Conference Next Generation Prevention in Washington, D.C. Please ensure that I receive all the information provided in today's hearing, if not accessible on the legislative drive. Furthermore, I note the importance of this hearing and regret my absence.

1:02:10 I ask to be recorded as excused. I thank you in advance and wish you a very productive hearing. Best regards, Diane T. Capehart. From the Office of the Honorable Maurice C. James, June 8th, 2023, to the Honorable Nouvelle E. Francis Jr., Senate President.

1:02:36 Dear Senator Francis Jr., I do apologize that due to a previous commitment, I cannot be present at the Committee of the Whole to be held on Friday, June 9th, 2023. Kindly excuse my absence. I regret any inconvenience my absence may cause. Thank you for your understanding. Kind regards, Maurice James, Senator. From the office of Senator Franklin D. Johnson, Dated June 9, 2023, to the Honorable Senate President, Novell E. Francis Jr., Chairman of the Committee of the Whole.

1:03:18 Dear Mr. President, I will be late in attending today's Friday, June 9, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. My sincere apologies for any inconvenience my delayed arrival may cause, as I pay my respect to the Messer and Milligan family on the passing of Miss Corrine Mercedes Messer Milligan. Sincerely, Franklin D. Johnson, Senator. We'll end the reading of the correspondence. Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Also, please record Senator Donna Frick-Gregory as being present in the St. Thomas chambers and Mark, Senator Blyden, Senator Gittins, Senator Maurice James, Senator Capehart and Senator Johnson is excused at this time. We know that there is a big Frederick Scott funeral today and individuals will be trickling. Ms. Corrine Messer-Milligan is being laid to rest today so you know some of our other colleagues will be trickling and that's not sorry but let me get the tally at this time.

- 1:04:42 Madam Clerk, the Tali. The total of attendance is eight present, five absent, two excused. Five excused, huh? Eight present, five excused.
- 1:05:13 Five excused and two absent. Very well. We do have a quorum and prepare to proceed. Madam Clerk, please read today's agenda into the record. The Committee of the Whole, official agenda, time, 10 a.m., call to order by Senator Novell, the Honorable Novell E. Francis Jr., Senate President, and the roll call by myself.
- 1:05:51 The 35th legislature will convene in a committee of the whole hearing to receive testimony on the following zoning requests. Bill number 35-0079, an act amending official zoning map number SCZ-10 for the Island of St. Croix to change the zoning designation of plot number 71, Consolidate Estate Concordia, West End Quarter, St. Croix Virgin Islands, from R2, residential low density one and two family, to R3, residential medium density. The invited testifiers are the Honorable Jean-Pierre L. Ordeole, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Leah Laplace-Matthew, Territorial Planner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Junior John Straker, Representative, Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands.
- 1:06:46 Bill number 35-0080 and act amending official zoning map number SCZ-10 for the Island of St. Croix to rezone plot number 52B, Estate Hannah's Rest, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, from C Commercial to B3, Business Scattered. Invited testifiers are the Honorable Jean-Pierre L. Oriole, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Leah Laplace-Matthew, Territorial Planner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Ryan Ferdinand, Representative, Church of God Seventh-day. Bill number 35-0092, an act amending official zoning map number SCZ-11 for the island of St. Croix to rezone plot number 140H, Estate St. George, Prince Quarter, St. Croix Virgin Islands from R2, with residential low, density one and two family to business three, business scattered. The invited testifiers are the Honorable Jean-Pierre L. Oriel, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, the Honorable Leah Laplace-Matthew, Territorial Planner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Clarence Brown, Representative.
- 1:08:21 That is the ending of the agenda. Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Please also record Senator Ray Fonseca as being present, as well as Senator Giovanni James Sr. is being present. At this time we'll go to the testifiers and again I want to welcome you to the legislature and look forward to acquiring you today and your application. First of all we'd like to do a sound check and we'll go to DPNR so that we could recognize her. Good morning. Go ahead with your name. Good Good morning, my name is Leah Laplace-Matthew. On behalf of Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Aurole, who had a scheduling conflict, he's in a meeting with the governor and EPA administrator. My name is Leah Laplace-Matthew, territorial planner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning.
- 1:09:21 And with me are our Division's two planning technicians, our newest addition, Mr. Kishoy Samuel, and Ms. Jewel Polimis. Very well, thank you and welcome. Welcome on board and you guys, all right? Thank you. Ms. Straker. Hi, good morning. My name is Junia John Straker. I'm the CEO of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands. And with me is Mr. Camilo Rodriguez, who is our construction manager, a civil engineer. Before we go to the next testifier, we just want to recognize the presence of Senator Franklin D. Johnson. Good morning, Senator. Welcome. Good morning again, right? Can we just say each other at a funeral?
- 1:10:10 Next. Yes, good morning. My name is Carmelo Rodriguez. I work as Construction Manager for Lutheran Social Services. Good morning. Welcome. Next, we'll go right over here. We want Clarence Brown, representing Mr. Leary-Aubart. Welcome. Morning. Pastor Michael Jules, representing the Church of God, second day. Welcome, Pastor. Very well. We have completed all of the individuals that will be testifying.
- 1:10:42 We'll be doing this in one block today. We'll have DPNR present, and then we'll have the representative speak to those areas of particular. Then we'll move on to the next application and then the next one, and then at the conclusion we'll open up for my colleagues to be able to query on all three of them. Ms. Laplace-Matthews, do you recognize? Please recognize the mic of Ms. Laplace-Matthew. Good morning again, and thank you, Leah Laplace-Matthew with DPNR's Division of Comprehensive and coastal zone planning. I'd like to say good morning to 35th legislature and the people of the Virgin Islands, board viewing and listening. The first application, report on petition to amend official zoning map number SCZ-10, application number ZAC-23-2. I'll have planning technician Kishoy Samuel I will present that report. Thank you.
- 1:11:46 Mr. Samuel, you may proceed. Okay. Report on petition to amend official zoning map number SCZ-10, application number ZAC-3-2. of Lutheran Social Services of the VI Inc to amend the official zoning map number SCZ-10 from R2 residential low density one and two family the R3 residential medium density for plat number 71 consolidated estate Concordia West End Quarter, St. Croix. Project profile owner slash applicant. Lutheran Social Services of the VI Inc. as per quitclaim deed dated October 28, 1977 document Document number 4355-1977 and warranty D dated September 10,

2014. Document number 2014-003016. rights were granted to Ms. Junia John Straker, Chief Executive Officer on October 29, 2022.

- 1:13:20 The acreage. The subject property comprises of a total of 9.99 acres as described on drawing number D96387-C014 dated July 1, 2014. Current use.
- 1:13:49 The property consists of a children's home, Queen Louise home for children, a nursery slash children's day care, an early head start center, an administrative building with kitchen and maintenance space, and an office trailer. The children's home was constructed in the 1960s prior to the adoption of the zoning code. This grants it non-conforming status and regulated by sections 2, 3, 4 of the zoning code.
- 1:14:29 Proposed use. The purpose of the request is to bring the property's use as a children's home into zoning conformity and allow a construction of a new sister, Emma Cottage, for children with severe development disabilities. Surrounding uses slash zoning. Surrounding that the property to the north, south and west is undeveloped land, to the east is a residential neighbourhood. The immediate area is zoned R2 but further to the west is R3 zoned. Outland and further east A2 agriculture zoned and undeveloped land. Infrastructure. The water needs are supplied by cistern. Wastewater is handled by a septic system. Public response.
- 1:15:38 There has been no opposition to the proposed rezoning. No one spoke in support of, questions or commented on the petition at DPNR's public hearing held February 21, 2013. Ms. Junior Jan Straker testified during the Department's public hearing that the intent is to bring the property into zoning conformity and construct a new Sister Emma cottage to replace the existing structure. Sister Emma cottage sustained severe damage in 2017 due to Hurricanes Arma and Maria.
- 1:16:27 The building will be repurposed and another cottage will be constructed away from the area that sustain flood damage. The property is currently non-conforming with the use of children's home not being permitted in our two zones. The zoning codes adaption on October 1st 1972 placed children's home in only four zoning districts, R3, R4, residential medium density, R5, residential high density, and S special.
- 1:17:09 The property's non-conforming or grandfather status limits the site redevelopment. The redevelopment of the current Sister Emma Cottage can only be to the current footprint. Section 234 of the zoning code states, no building occupied by a non-conforming use shall be extended or enlarged in any manner except as may be required by law or regulations or change to a conforming use. As the territory tackles its housing crisis, alternative living arrangements have been gathering national attention from the planning field for almost a decade. Community residents which functions and perform similarly to dwellings with family-like settings.
- 1:18:13 One house type that has been looked at is group homes, which would be children's home and convalescent, rest, nursing and retirement homes and sanatoriums in our zoning code. Group homes are generally any communal housing arrangement for a group of unrelated individuals. Another housing type is transitional housing which is not addressed in our code but has been allowed in the R3, R4, R5, B1, B2 and B3 zones because it is residential activity closely resembling multiple family housing. The USVI zoning code defines a family as one.
- 1:19:09 One person or group or two, or two or more persons living together and interrelation by bands of kinship, marriage and mutual consent or legal adoption, occupying the whole or part of a dwelling as a separate housekeeping unit with a common set of cooking facilities. The persons thus constituting a family may also include foster children, gratuation, guests, and domestic servants.
- 1:19:44 Unlike more restrictive family definitions of other jurisdictions, family being only related by blood, adaption and or marriages and if unrelated a limited number of individuals. The USVI zoning code allows for group housing whether dwellings are allowed. The exception, however, is the USVI zoning code separates children's homes and convalescent rest, nursing and retirement homes and sanitrams, regulating these group housing types to a total of six zones while dwellings are allowed in 12 of our 18 zones. Zoning reform is being encouraged at the national level to address the housing shortfall.
- 1:20:49 The department has processed five applicants in the past six years requesting approval for transitional and group housing in zones they have been excluded from. Zoning reform is needed to address the number of zoning map amend requests being received so that the territory can effectively address the housing needs of all VI residents. The Department of Planning and Natural Resources recommends that Official Zoning Map number SCZ-10 to be amended from R2 Residential Low Density 1 and the 2 Family to R3 Residential medium density for plat number 71 Consolidated Estate Concordia West End Quarter St. Croix signed by Commissioner John Pierre L. Oriel March 27, 2023 and this concludes the report for applicant number ZAC-23-2. Thank you very much Mr. Stamwell, good job. Next we'll go to Ms. Stryker, you're recognized for your testimony at this time. Good morning. Good morning Honorable Senate President Francis, esteemed members of the legislature, Ms. Laplace Matthew, Territorial Planner for DPNR and other attendees of this

hearing, I extend my warm greetings to all present. My name is Junia John Straker and I have

- 1:22:37 the privilege of serving as the Chief Executive Officer of Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands Inc. Today I appear before you with a humble request to consider the rezoning of plot number 71 estate Concordia West Frederick said st. Croix our objective is to transition the current zoning classification from the R2 which is residential low density one and two family to R3 residential medium density this rezoning will provide us with the opportunity to construct a new group home named Sister Emma Cottage as a replacement of our existing facility on the Queen Louise Home for Children Campus. Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands is the largest private nonprofit agency dedicated to providing essential family and child services in the Virgin Islands. Each day we offer support and assistance to over 300 individuals including children, families, seniors and individuals with disabilities across our 11 program sites on St. Croix and St. Thomas. We consider it both an honor and a responsibility to offer love, shelter and care to the most vulnerable members of our community providing them with a safe and nurturing environment when they need it most the sister emma cottage located within the queen louise home for children campus was originally constructed in the mid 1960s the cottage was converted and renamed sister emma
- 1:24:26 cottage in response to the increasing demand for residential foster placement of children and with severe physical and developmental challenges. Many of the children under our care at Sister Emma Cottage rely on wheelchairs and require extensive medical support. Our dedicated caregivers work tirelessly every day, offering love, care and support to our residents, helping them reach their fullest potential. It is important to note that all placements at the cottage are made through the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services. During the devastating hurricanes, Irma and Maria, our island experienced torrential rains that resulted in the flooding of Sister Emma Cottage. In response, our staff promptly evacuated the children to one of our early Head Start classroom on the Queen Louise home campus. Given the complexity of their disabilities, evacuating these children posed significant challenges and potential risk.
- 1:25:42 Unfortunately, the floodwaters caused damage to their personal belongings, including clothing, toys, and medical supplies. Additionally, the cottage itself suffered losses such as furniture, appliances, and hospital beds. The flood water even inundated the cottage's ADA van. The flooding exacerbated the pre-existing hurricane damage to Sister Emma's cottage. Even with moderate rainfall, water seeps through the tiles and floors.
- 1:26:20 Heavy rain now requires our staff regularly mop the floors and extra caution must be exercised while maneuvering the children's wheelchairs. It became evident that relocating Sister Emma's cottage away from its current proximity to the flood prone area is essential for ensuring the long-term safety of the children particularly during future hurricanes or heavy rainfalls. LSSVI applied for and was approved for a grant from the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority Community Block Grant Disaster Recovery Funding to rebuild Sister Emma's Cottage at a new location on the Queen Louise Home Campus.
- 1:27:11 The Queen Louise Home property was rezoned in 1971, I think. As R2 residential low density, allowing for one and two family residences. The campus spanning 9.99 acres currently accommodates the following structures. Two cottages providing homes for children who have experienced abuse, abandonment, neglect or require respite care. An administrative building housing, staff offices, a commercial kitchen, and maintenance space. An early Head Start program serving 48 families, including 24 infants and toddlers at the center, 12 infants and toddlers in our home-based program, and 12 pregnant women.
- 1:28:04 a trailer serving as offices for the Early Head Start program, and lastly, the Sister Emma Cottage offering 24-hour residential foster care to children and young adults which surveyed developmental and physical challenges. Our intention is to replace this building with a new structure pending approval of the rezoning. In conclusion, I kindly request your favorable consideration of the rezoning application for Plot No. 71 Estate Concordia West Frederickstead St. Croix from an hour 2 to an hour 3. This rezoning will empower Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands Inc. to construct a new Sister Emma Cottage serving as a replacement for the current cottage which is prone to flooding on the Queen Louise Home for Children campus.
- 1:28:58 Our support will make a significant contribution to the safety, well-being and future of the children and young adults with survey challenges under our care. Thank you for your attention and I am more than happy to address any questions or concerns you may have. Thank you very much, Ms. Straker, anyone else from your team will be testifying on this matter? No. Do we have pictures to show at media at this time? Good morning again, Liela Plas-Matthew with DPNR.
- 1:29:34 On the screen you'll see aerial photos of the Queen Louise site, which is to the left, the most left of the picture. Next picture. One second, so we could have the adjustment made, so my colleagues could be able to view it. Okay, so in this photo, you have an aerial, and you can see the heading Queen Louise, home for children. Next picture. Another aerial shot. Next picture. This is the surrounding area. Some of it is undeveloped land, and there's some residential to the north.

well in the picture it would be to the north of the Queen Louise home the residential subdivision next picture some more photos of the surrounding area next picture surrounding views next picture surrounding property undeveloped Next picture. This is the parcel, well, the portion of the parcel that the new building would be constructed. Next picture. And the fence line for the property, showing neighbouring property undeveloped. Next picture. That concludes the photos. Very well. Thank you very much. to the next application second report on petition to amend officials on a map number SCZ-10 application number ZAC-23-3 I'll have this report read by

- 1:31:31 planning technician Jewel Polymas you may proceed report on petition to amend and Official Zoning Map Number SCZ-10. Application Number ZAC-23-3. Petition of Michael Jules and Church of God Seventh Day, requesting that a used variance be granted to the C Commercial Zoned Plot Number 52B, Estate Hannes Rest, West End Quarter, St. Croix. Owner applicant, the Church of God Seventh Day Inc. as per warranty deed dated September 28, 2006, document number 206-005-754. Acreage, the property consists of 0.7717 acres as described on drawing number 685. Current use, church services are conducted out of a trailer. Proposed use, the purpose of the request is to bring the property's use as a church into zoning conformity and allow construction of a building for use as a church and other public uses, example daycare, soup kitchen, etc. The trailer would be converted for use as a caretaker's residence.
- 1:32:57 Surrounding uses and zones. Surrounding the property to the north is a gas station and laundromat. To the east, south, and west is undeveloped land. The immediate area is zoned C commercial, B3 business scattered, and R2 residential low density, one and two family. Infrastructure. Water needs are supplied by the public water line. Wastewater is handled by the public sewer line. Public response. There has been no opposition to the proposal. No one spoke in support of, questioned, or commented on the petition at DPNR's public hearing held February 22, 2023. Analysis Pastor Michael Jules testified during the department's public hearing that the intent is to allow construction of a building for use as a church and for other public uses, example, daycare, soup kitchen, etc. The existing trailer would be converted for use as a caretaker's residence. The property has been used as a crusade ground and the existing trailer was granted building permits in 2009 for church service use. In 2022, the submission of an earth change permit application for construction of a church building resulted in the discovery that the C commercial zoning does not permit churches and is a zoning designated designation intended for light industrial and manufacturing uses to be located away from the central business districts that caters to pedestrians and tourists after analyzing one the applicant's multi-faceted requests residential daycare and school church etc Two, the commercial C zoning not having been developed since adoption on October 1st, 1972.
- 1:34:55 Three, the past persistent use of the site for church services. And four, no oppositions or concerns expressed by community members. The department recommends re-zoning of the property to B3 business scattered. The B-3 zone would be more appropriate because it would allow for the variety of uses the applicant wishes to pursue in the present as well as future public uses. It also would not be out of character with the surrounding areas zoning and character.
- 1:35:29 The B-3 zone would be a down zoning from the C commercial zoning and allow for mixed use of the site. Recommendation. The Department of Planning and Natural Resources recommends that official zoning map number SCZ-10 be amended from C Commercial to B3 Business Scattered for plot number 52B, Estate Hannes Rest, West End Quarter, St. Croix. Signed by Commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriel, dated March 28, 2023. This concludes the reading of the report on CAC-23-3.
- 1:36:07 Thank you very much, Mr. Polamese. Next, we'll go to Pastor Jules. You're recognized for your testimony. Again, may I say good morning to everyone. Thank the Lord very much for the opportunity of being present here with you. We do humbly pray that whatever assistance we seek for the purpose of creating a building for worship, perhaps a prayer for all people it is also our intention to extend the soup kitchen maybe to assist the public also a daycare for parents or families who probably work in later hours as it has been read or heard that we were confronted with a zone problem that we couldn't do much about and i am very thankful and willing to accept the recommendation that was made to downgrade from c to b3 i please ask everyone of you honorable senators to let our requests be granted and grant us the petition so we construct thank you very much pastor jules at this time our media um we put up the pictorials Okay, this is the current site.
- 1:37:31 There's a foundation on the property, and that's the foundation to the rear, and in the front is the parking area. Next picture. That's the current building that's being used for church services, and there's some gardens on the other side of the building. Next picture. The current trailer. Next picture. another view of the current trailer next picture and this photo shows the property to the rear of the church well the proposed church building uh it's undeveloped r2 zone land next picture another view of that r2 undeveloped land to the rear next picture and that concludes Thank you very much, Ms. Laplace-Matthew, and we can go ahead and proceed to the next application at this time.

- 1:38:31 Okay, good morning again. Report on petition to amend official zone map number SCZ-11, application number ZAC-23-1. of Leary-Aubert to amend the official zone and map number SCZ-11 from R2 residential low density one and two family to B3 business scattered. For plot number 140-H, Estate St. George, Prince Quarter, St. Croix. Project profile. Owner applicant, Leary-Aubert as per warranty deed dated March 19, 2021, document number 2021001115, acreage, the subject property comprises a total of 0.334 acres as described on drawing number D9-6672-C020, current use, The property is currently being used for livestock farming.
- 1:39:48 Proposed use, the purpose of the request is to allow mixed-use development. Surrounding uses slash zones. Surrounding the property to the north are residences with R2 zoning, and further north is undeveloped B3 zoned land. East is undeveloped B3 zoned land. To the south is a B3 zoned shopping center, and to the west is undeveloped I2 zoned land. Infrastructure.
- 1:40:22 Water needs will be supplied by the public water line and cistern. Wastewater will be handled by a septic system. Public response. There has been no opposition to the proposed rezoning. No one spoke in support of, questioned, or commented on the petition at DPNR's public hearing held March 20, 2023. Analysis. Mr. Clarence Brown and Mr. Larry Aubert testified during the department's public hearing that the intent is to allow mixed use of the property. Mr. Aubert proposes a single two-story building that would have a business on the bottom floor and a residence on the upper floor. He intends to make value-added products and sell them from the site. Example items would be baked goods, pastries, jams, stews, and confectionaries. The subject property is part of a small R2 residential subdivision, approximately four acres, consisting of eight plots. They are surrounded by B3 and I2 zones. The northern and eastern undeveloped B3 zoned property is proposed for mixed use development. Future development of the western I2 zoned property will also impact the eight R2 zoned lots. It is likely the eight R2 zoned lots will lose their desirability for low density residential use and may see future requests for higher density residential and business uses. As the territory tackles its housing crisis, alternative living arrangements have been gathering national attention from the planning field for almost a decade. Zoning reform is being encouraged at the national level to address the housing shortfall, and reform is encouraged to increase the density of housing allowed in various zoning districts. The Virgin Islands has a recognized gap in the housing density allowed by the R2 zone, and the next zone up, R3.
- 1:42:44 Nationwide, this gap for the coined term, missing middle housing, is being tackled by zoning reform to allow units ranging from triplexes, fourplexes, sixplexes, townhouses, and live-work units. These missing middle housing units could allow for the gradual transition of a commercial corridor from strictly commercial or mixed use onto a lower density residential neighborhood, essentially acting as a buffer. The requested B3 zone is one that allows the mix of residential and business, and would allow for the live work unit proposed by Mr. Albert's intent for the property. The B3 Zone would allow retail operation on the bottom floor and a residential unit on the upper floor. This zoning can also allow for greater residential density that could act as a buffer and allow for a gradual transition between the B3 and I2 zoning nearby zoning nearby and the farther north low-density residential activity found in the R1 and R2 zoned portions of estates St. George's, Mountain and Hope. In conclusion, the department views the request as reasonable. The department recognizes the impact the surrounding B3 and I2 zoning will have on the property and sees the merits in allowing the mixed-youth live-work unit proposed by the applicant recommendation the department of planning and natural resources recommends that officials on a map number scz-11 be amended from r2 residential low density one and two family to b3 business scattered for plot number 140-h estate st george prince quarter st croix
- 1:44:44 Signed by Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriel, dated April 24, 2023. This concludes the reading of the report for application number ZAC-23-1. Thank you. Thank you very much, Ms. Laplace-Machus. I just love when there's collaboration. Next, we'll go to Mr. Clarence Brown. You're recognized for your testimony. Good morning, everyone. My name is Clarence Brown. Today, I'm representing Mr. Leary-Albert. in his request to have this property rezoned from the current R2 zone to B3. This is a small site compared to some of the rezoning that we've seen come here.
- 1:45:33 It's .334 acres and it sits along the public road. As stated earlier, the current area is filled with mix, A mix of uses that includes businesses, commercial, industrial, and residential zones. Directly across the street from Mr. Albert's site is actually a large industrial plot of land that is zoned I-2. Sharing the block with this property is a small strip mall that includes neighborhood pharmacy, several food and beverage establishments, and other businesses, and other business zoned land, which includes a large B3 strip just behind, just to the east of this plot. This lot has public frontage to the west and to the east actually has another road, so it's not sitting right on anyone's boundary line. The intention by Mr. Albert is to use the property as a small shop where he could sell local food and dairy products.
- 1:46:37 And the proposed use will not introduce any new disruptions to the area. As stated, there's already quite a bit of business activity there. So we're requesting the zoning change from R2 to B3, which would allow Mr. Albert to have a business on the lower floor and reside on the upper level. So we're confident that the proposed amendment fits within the established

character of the area and will have a positive effect on the community. and I'm here to answer any questions at the appropriate time.

1:47:11 Thank you. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Brown. Any photos, media? No photos? I think there was one if it's my last night here. That's just a zoning map. Next picture. I think that's the only one. Next photo? That's the only one they have. There's some additional photos as part of the application, but apparently those weren't shared with the media. Well there we have it, colleagues.

1:47:51 We have three zonings before us, and nothing too controversial today. I seem that no reason to break out the big stick. I'll allow for a five-minute round on these three zonings and again we have both the bill number 35.0079 which is the estate Concadia site, we have bill number 35.0080 which is the Hannah's Rest site and of course bill number 35.0092 which is the St. George Prince Quarter site. At this time I will open up to a five minute round and i'll come to you senator alma francis heiliger you're recognized for your five minutes good morning to my colleagues good morning to the testifiers good morning to the people of the territory and staff um my first um what i would like to discuss is bill number 35-0092. That particular one has to do with the rezoning from R2 to B3 for the business slash residence. For me, I want to ask about parking. This is going to be a property that is going to be a home and a business at the same time. How are you planning to lay out to accommodate for parking for the specific type of business you shared that it intends to be clarence brown representing mr leary albert um thanks for the question um i think that's that that was a critical part in us trying to understand how we could use this property and if it was appropriate to try to accommodate both um so we developed a conceptual site plan i i do have it here um and it was shared as part of the application as well and what it does show is that along the the main um public road there is the parking that is for the business um portion of the of the site and to the rear there's still an opportunity for us to get off-site parking for the

1:50:04 residences so we're able to accommodate both and and still keep them separate and organized okay and in regards to the residences in the business is this going to be one singular resident or singular business or for example will it have two homes how do you plan on laying it out no the intent is that this is a true live work unit so mr arbert will live upstairs and on the lower floor will be his business so it'll be a single business a single residence and also i think to the previous question as well this property has two roads um so it's a corner lot so to speak and so it really makes it easy to separate the residential from the commercial traffic by having the more private road being the access for the residential portions excellent um i want to now move on to bill number 35-0080 that is the one with the church um it spoke to having accommodations for daycare soup kitchen um could someone give me an idea of how many members this church will be having because i want to make sure as to the size location for fitting members of the church do you have any idea yeah we have about 80 members 80 sharing two different areas okay and for those that are going to um one of the things i i found out with um dealing with churches i i have i have a great appreciation for churches and especially those that are utilizing not only for worship but also

1:51:53 to help the community as well so with some of the other things that you guys want to incorporate and do, speaking about the daycare and other types of services. Are you concerned about volume of traffic to the church, or do you think that would be something would be okay and accommodated for? No, we shouldn't be concerned about traffic. I mean, there are about three, four different road you could travel to lead to over that area there and there are spaces inside that probably would left there so we're not that much concerned about the traffic because it would be cleared at any time okay thank you and 35.0079 um a lot of my concern and questions for this one had to do with flooding um as going through and listening to some of the concerns before and accommodations for a second building etc how did you guys come up to alleviate some of those issues so that with the rebuild and an additional building how would that be accommodated you know I've read through it but also for public information to share it the current system the current cottage sits It's sort of on a lower path of the property. And after we experienced the flooding- 30 seconds.

1:53:28 The FEMA, like the Danish FEMA, provided some funding for us to build like a swale. But even with that, we have some flooding. And so the building, the new building will sit on a higher plane. the property is 9.99 acres so um the entire building is not flood plain in a flood plain okay um when it comes to the accommodations for our children with disabilities um approximately how many children will be able to be accommodated time the current um cottage could accommodate nine currently we have five um the new cottage will double the size so we'll have we'll be able to accommodate around 16 about 16 um just final part um staff to ratio for the children about how much staff to maybe accommodating the maximum at 16 children do you anticipate you would need um would have to double the number of staffing that we have now currently we have we could accommodate let's say um it depends too on the needs of the children but currently like we have five and we have like 14 staff members so it depends those are um highly needy children and so yeah it's staff extensive okay thank you so much mr chair for the additional time and thank you for your testimony uh thank you very much senator francis halliga for your line of questions before we go to senator johnson i

wanted to ask you mr raker where are you within the city beach process have you already been um awarded what is the discussion being had with with um housing finance authority on the CDBG? We've been awarded. We currently have 30% architectural drawing that's been presented to them, so we have been awarded. Very well, thank you. Senator

1:55:24 Johnson, you're recognized for your five minutes. Good morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning to my colleagues. Good morning to the test of fires. Good morning to the viewing and listening audience. Why everybody looking so serious in here to them, Ms. Ann. It's a beautiful day. We have three, you know, we zone in here that DP and R is in full support. And when you got them on your side, you have us on your side. So let's get this on and let's make things happen for the people of this territory. But I want to start off by saying to Ms. Vidal, thank you. Thank you. Thank you for making my job easy. And, you know, I want to speak a little bit about, and I don't have much question for you guys, because I'm going to support these three next year. But I want to speak a little bit about the Queen Louise home, because I've been there on many, many, many occasions. And I must say it's a place everyone should visit at some time and see the children that needs our support. My first experience was when I worked at the Bureau correction i was reading a newspaper article and someone had stole the bikes for the children at the queen louise home i got all my officers and every payday i collected money and we raised money and we bought must say about 15 bikes and some stores gave donation and that's my first encounter but it was a very touching encounter also working with uh my former boss governor map he was a very big donor to those children down there. And I must say, working with you two, I must say that every time that I've reached out to you, Lutheran Social Service have always been ready and willing to help people in times of needs that are in bad, bad situation. So I must say thank you. I'm glad to see that you're going to get this opportunity to expand. The grant

1:57:26 that you receive, does it fulfill all your needs to complete the project in its entirety? They have committed to providing whatever support we need. The first 390,000 is on us, so we have that. And then the balance will be provided based on what we were told. And are you getting some money to refurbish the main building that you say has some issues and leaks? We are replacing the building, period. We We'll repurpose the building later on, we know, probably for storage, but we're replacing the building totally, building a new building on another site.

1:58:04 Glad to hear that, and again, I say thank you to all that you do. Pastor Jules, you came in here this morning, I could barely hear you. Every Sunday, I hear you, and your voice is big and loud, very loud and clear. And so I don't want you to have no fear when you're inside here. speak just as loud as when you speak on the Sunday morning you're doing your spiritual revival and stuff like that um with after kovic there was a lot of churches where the you know the population of people attending decrease what what do you think is going to help you to to raise back your congregation and bring it to you know a good solid congregation what do you think you'll be able to have to do? Outreach is not what it used to be in time past because you can't go to people home or stand publicly on the streets. So we're more dependent on maybe radio, television, all that, and reach out to the community whenever we can. Maybe there are a lot of young people who are around who's not certain of where life would take them. Also, particularly in the area of Frederick State, where we are, the trailer has become too small to accommodate the amount of people who are in it, so that's why we're seeking to erect a building where could accommodate a lot more and even people who are passing by who probably may want meals when we open it we have done that in time pass to some places to fire department and some other places but we would like to have something permanent going on around you have the financial backing to complete this project as you once you start well as we see in christianity god will provide Well, you know, once you start, you should be able to finish. The idea is to have a plan and prepare to go forward with your plan. So I wish you all the best in your endeavor.

1:59:53 And the soup kitchen is a very good idea. There is always need for folks who are not privileged to have a hot meal. So that's a very good idea. Thanks very much. As I say, once DPNR is in your corner, we do support. And to the Brown family, business is always a good thing. and being there in your premises is even more important. So I support you in that. Small business is what keeps this island, these islands, ticking. So I wish you the best in your endeavor with your business, and we don't fight down nothing that D.P. and I don't say needs to be fought down. So be relaxed and be comfortable. I'm quite sure everything will go well. All right? Have a wonderful day.

2:00:33 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much, Senator Johnson. Next, the chair will recognize Senator DeGraff. You're recognized for your five minutes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning to us as far as all of you listen and present. I say second to my minority member, you know, keep up the good works. First of all, I stand in support of all three of these applications, 100%. For the Brown family 0035, 0092, will it be any increase in traffic overall?

2:01:10 because the areas seem to be heavily traversed. So once you build that, would it be safe for your business and residents traffic-wise? Okay, good morning, Clarence Brown here. I want to be clear, I'm representing the businessman, Leary Albert. Okay, okay. So again, I think that's an excellent question. So that area, I wouldn't say it's heavily traversed, but I

will say there is a little bit more activity than the typical residential neighborhood, right? Because it's just in from Center Line Road. And as you get past us, there's some non-residential activity, like there's a school back there, et cetera.

2:01:55 So again, this is a small shop, right? We don't anticipate that we'll have more than four or five cars at this property at any given time, you know? So I do want to emphasize, this is a small business, and so we see limited impact on traffic. Okay, thank you. For the church in 350080, again, I stand in support of the soup kitchen and daycare. Are they within walking for traffic, for individuals, for the soup kitchen, and also again for the daycare?

2:02:31 Yes, they would be. We are within about 100 feet away from the main road where taxis and public transportation could be utilized. And if possible in the near future, we may also have a transport that would make that easier to get people to decide. Excellent. Excellent, thank you for that. And finally in 350079, with the old building being built in the 60s, was there any need for any asbestos abatement or lead abatement, anything, as a part of your cost assessment? No, and again, we're building a brand new building, but no, to their question.

2:03:15 Okay, good. And finally, to all three, what is the cost of your assessment? Right now, 350079, what's the cost of your investment? And then for the three. Okay, so the building is gonna be in excess of \$4 million. Okay, great, and now for the church, Seventh-day Adventists. We often have been mistaken for Seventh-day Adventists, but we are Church of God Seventh-day. I do apologize. It's all right. Yes, the cost of the investment? The cost of our investment, we are looking now about maybe \$240,000 or less. Okay. And finally, \$450,92?

2:04:12 \$450,000. Say again, please. \$450,000. \$450,000. Okay. And again, like I said, with those investments into our community and the things that you're doing thank you on behalf of the people of the territory so i thank you for the time mr chair uh thank you very much senator de graaf i don't know why mr larry didn't come and represent himself he could he could certainly represent himself and his son he got his son in training too so um he have his backup as well but no no worries mr brown always do a good job for his his clients at this time the chair will recognize senator carrion you recognize for your five minutes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning to you. Good morning to my colleagues. Good morning to the testifiers and good morning to the beautiful people of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Well, we're here today to consider and listen to the testifiers regard to these rezoning. I always say that this body shouldn't be the one handling these issues but here we are hopefully we're working on something to get this change and LDPNR also has been successful with the town hall and the meetings they've been having getting information from the community to participate in the whole planning for the territory so commend you guys for that I do have a few questions like how my colleagues mentioned today this really is not a complicated matter as we're not touching any issue that is controversial and the PNR has seemed to have done due diligence in visiting these sites and the recommendations are

2:06:08 favorable, so that's always very helpful. But with regards to Bill 350079, Ms. John Strickland pronounced it right. Good morning to you ma'am. I do have a question and I think let me go to Ms. Laplace first and ask her why not a variance so you know also for general education um the use variance was not considered because the request for r3 it was appropriate it's within the area you have r3 zoning also in the area so it would not be out of character usually the use variance will look at it if we see the requested zone is not appropriate okay we'll it would be considered alternative that we would look at so if it's out of character of the surrounding properties if the zone requested yeah if the zone requested would not be appropriate we'll then take a look at the use variance okay and this probably does not fit into conformity can you once again share with us why so it's currently zoned R2 it was It was built in the 60s when the code was adopted in 1972, for whatever reason, they separated children's homes into four zones, one of them not being the R2. So it automatically made the Queen Louise home grandfathered, non-conformant. But there's restrictions on grandfathered properties, because the thought is, if you restrict grandfathered properties, you could force them to conform, but we can see that they're not going anywhere.

2:07:57 Got you. CEO, Ms. John Straker, tell me a little bit about this new cottage. Do you already have the designs of it, what it would look like and so forth? What can we expect to see? Okay, we have a rendition of the cottage and we now have the architect working on. So we we have drawings we have drawings on what it should look like what it's going to look like we have visions in our heads we have everything you want to see so we know exactly what the building is going to look like um so it's going to be very homely um is it one level two level one level it's one level it's gonna have um just describe a little bit through it yeah it's gonna have um So several bathrooms, ADA bathrooms, we're going to have an isolation room that I think I should change to stimulation room and not isolation room. We're going to have classroom, a classroom because of the clientele, we're going to have a coordinator's office, we have kitchen dining, a commercial kitchen, dining area, multipurpose room. We're going to have a therapy room, nurse's station, a courtyard that's going to be really good for the clientele, and 30 seconds. Okay. I think I covered it all. Sounds exciting.

- 2:09:32 I know you all must be knowing that you'll have a new facility for the children. So I commend you for the work that you and Lutheran Social Services have been doing. Pastor Jewell, how are you, sir? Pretty good. Good. I just want to say, of course, I'll be voting in favor of all three of these measures, as there is no opposition, and DPNR has made a recommendation that I am in agreement with. But I just want to ask you, Pastor Jewel, are you aware that the rezoning you are requesting is a downgrade or a downzoning, as DPNR mentioned, which means that the value of your property will decrease? I'm familiar with that, but it's quite suitable for what we want to do.
- 2:10:14 Have you investigated or aware of the amount of loss? How much would it decrease the value of your property by rezoning it? No, I didn't go through that way, but there's two things. Instead of risking a waiver and don't get nothing, I settled for what I think is best. Okay. I just wanted to make sure that you were aware of that. Yeah, I'm aware that it would do that, yeah. Thanks very much. It was very well. And then in the DPNR, it says a soup kitchen, daycare, and extra, some other stuff. What are your other intentions in the property? And I end with this, if you have other intentions. Well, for the present, I do not have any, but the new generation coming would always come up with something brighter than I can even think of. So I feel we fit it in one time instead of trying to ask for it later. it would be best to let it set in one time.
- 2:11:09 Great, great. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I will vote accordingly at the appropriate time when we have session on these measures. Thank you. Thank you very much, Senator Carrion. Before we go to the next senator, which will be Senator James, I wanted to ask you, Ms. Straker, what is your association or affiliation with the early head starts? There are several early head starts that are being built territory-wide, especially the one that's going up there by Concordia that seems to be growing leaps and bounds. Can you just touch a little bit on that?
- 2:11:37 Sure. Head Start is operated by Department of Human Services. Early Head Start, which is birth to three, and we have a pregnant women program, so we try to catch as early as possible those low-income families. The Early Head Start, we had the two Early Head Start in the Virgin Islands, I mean on St. Croix. We have none on St. Thomas yet. and those are run by Lutheran Social Services. The new one that you're referring to was a grant that was acquired by Office of Head Start to build a new early Head Start to replace one of our current Head Start, the one on Not Sure Road.
- 2:12:20 That building, we purchased like 4.43 acres of property and we are building a huge facility that will act as a hub for the low-income families, a project that we're so very proud of. It's going to act as a hub in case of another disaster where the families, low-income families, and as well as the staff will be able to come in, take a shower. They'll be able to do laundry.
- 2:12:52 We'll have a huge commercial kitchen, so we'll be able to feed them. They'll be able to charge. It's outfitted with generator, where they'll be able to charge their phones to reach out to their families. They also have training rooms, multipurpose rooms. They'll be able to come look for jobs. We have areas they'll be able to do, as well as areas for teachers to just relax in between the classroom. Just a beautiful facility that we're really, really proud of. Very well, thank you. I'm proud of it too, and you can see it just, every time I pass by there, just seems to be expanding more and more um so i just wanted you to put that on record at this time the chair will recognize senator javon james for his five minutes greetings to the people of the u.s virgin islands good morning testifiers before i get into my line of questioning or comments i would like to take this time to acknowledge these two young ladies who are behind of me zara williams who's a junior at uvi it's the business administration is a major with a minor in tourism and hospitality management and last but not least malia who's a senior at the same core educational complex who are both interns at the office of senator javan james so thank you for being here and we are working them they're earning that money But in all seriousness, colleagues, I only found one thing with all of these three bills or rezoning before us. They all going to need blacks.
- 2:14:33 Yeah, they're going to need some blacks. Where are you all going to get these blacks from, buddy? Well, sir. Just right trucking. But anyway, Mr. Leary-Arbert, I want to salute you for what you're doing. If I was right in line with what I chair in this committee or in this body, the Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture, I see you're getting into farming or something like that. Of course, you can't speak because you're in the audience. I don't know why.
- 2:15:07 But Mr. Brown, can you elaborate some more as far as the farming aspect of this business endeavor? yeah so currently the property is being used um there's some farming but what that he's doing as well as some other people are doing in the area and so the plan here is that he'll now be able to monetize some of that effort and um do some value-add products um that he could um sell to the community um in in the form of food and other type of dairy products so and i'm happy to hear that and I'm trying to tighten because I know at the EDA, Economic Development Authority, they have this new campaign or thing that they're working on called Made in the USVI. So Mr. Albert, look into that. They're trying to brand and promote products that are made in the U.S. Virgin Islands and I'm assuming that what is planted or produced at the farm is going to be use for the pastries and the baked goods and what have you the jams and stews the plan is to incorporate as many things both that's that's grown and made on the site but also in the territory in general so local

products awesome so i definitely stand in support of of that and as far as pastor jules i agree with the good senator from project said don't be afraid to speak while you're in here it's no different but as far as the daycare and the soup kitchen i'm assuming with a soup kitchen that's for individuals who are homeless individuals who are going through explain to me well it would be difficult to point out those that are homeless may i say for the public as well or everybody who are in need who pass by we'll make it available to them. So a good senator from Frederic Selle and myself can come there? Yeah it's not we're gonna make it open

2:17:03 because we don't know I mean we may not be homeless we may be hungry if this food is available we will make it available. And as far as the daycare how many children you plan to accommodate and if you mention that before I apologize. No well it would be based on the staff that we would be able to afford to have in for the amount of children I think they are limited per staff head or whatever but as much as possible if we probably can go within 15 to 10 to 15 or more maybe we would do it okay and I'm assuming you're already in conversations with the Department of Human Services and all that stuff right or it's in the personal not me not with human service as far as I know okay I thought you had to go through the Department of Human Services when doing those they would tell us the best way to go about it and what they expect from us okay just want to make sure and as far as the caretakers residents um can you just expound some more and explain to me about that 30 seconds in where we are worshipping now is a little trailer that we arranged to suit that and based on our experience about these buildings you need a caretaker for the ground close the building open it in time maintain it and to keep a watch in the area while we are there so we are going to turn where we are using now into a caretaker place where they can live there okay understood thank you for placing that on the record as far as the other one that's for the sister emma cottage time you don't even have to second guess my support i am in full support of that. It's a no-brainer. Like I said, you guys are going to need blocks.

2:18:51 Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the time. God bless the Virgin Islands. Thank you very much, Senator James. Next, we'll go to Senator Balquez. Senator Alarj Balquez, you recognize for your five minutes. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good morning, colleagues. Good morning, listening and viewing audience. Good morning to the central staff. I am in full support of all of these measures. From 350079, which aims to provide a safe and stable environment for children who cannot be with their parents for some reason and can grow and develop without the fear of abuse or neglect. Bill 350080 to bring the property into conformity and allow the construction of a daycare and a soup kitchen to help provide substantial social related services to our broader community. and 35-0092 for livestock farming and agricultural goods. And as we continue to pursuit the sustainability from a food security standpoint here in the Virgin Islands, this is definitely a win on the local level. I want to start off with Ms. Straka and good morning to you.

2:20:09 Good morning. I wanted to find out how many children do you currently service at the facility now i know the question was asked about how many more but how many are there now currently we um have nine we have four four children as of now um the facility currently can accommodate nine so the times when we've had nine the times we've had ten um the new facility will double the um the numbers so we'll be able to accommodate um 16. Okay excellent and concerning your FASTA process um do you have a process or is there a flow chart concerning that process uh just to familiarize I'd like to request that through the chair if you do uh but you don't necessarily have to answer that right this minute I'm very curious about that as there are some measures that I'm looking into that would support foster care in the Virgin Islands is is this facility the only type of facility for foster care on the island of Saint Croix um Queen Queen Louise home sister Emma cottage is the only type facility in the Virgin Islands period that's specific to individual with physical and different children with physical and developmental disabilities okay thank you very important and concerning your water sources are there any wells on the property you don't have to expand water sources we do have a well we've had a well for many years but we will be constructing a cistern to accommodate the the building the new building okay excellent i want to move over to mr ferdinand good

2:22:04 Good morning Mr. Ferdinand. I wanted to ask you would this lodging be available for any assistance in transitional needs or some sort of disaster shelter in the event of such? Mr. Ferdinand? That's Pastor Jules. Oh, I apologize, Mr. Jules. My apology, may you redirect your question again, please?

2:22:43 I was wondering, in the event of some sort of disaster or if there was some need for transitional housing of some sort, would you be willing to provide that? The answer is yes. Very good. I apologize. I thought it was Ferdinand. My apologies. Thanks. Also, I know that you're going to be zoning to a business scattered. Will you also be pursuing any other type of services in the long run for the community? Any other service would be the regular church service, maybe crusade or things of that sort, but nothing outnumbered than what we're doing now.

2:23:25 Okay, very well. Mr. Brown, good morning. Good morning. 30 seconds. Good morning. You mentioned local foods and dairy products. Will you also be partnering with other farmers on St. Croix to provide a mini market type of opportunity for them to be able to sell their goods as well? Yeah, I think there'll be an opportunity and an effort to incorporate as

many local farmers as we can into what's ultimately sold here. And so I think Mr. Albert will, you know, engage with the right persons at the right time.

2 : 24 : 06 Ty? I think that's very important. Mr. Chair, may I quickly wrap up, please? You may, Senator. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that that's very important because the farmers need to form a cooperative and be able to have that self sustainability within themselves so that they can collaborate and be able to make the best out of the industry of agriculture. And this body has been doing its job in trying to provide that industry's footing as we move forward. So I commend you and all of the other business stakeholders for making these rezoning changes. And I look forward to voting in the affirmative when the time comes. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the time. Thank you very much, Senator Bulquez. Next, the Chair will recognize Senator Donna Frey.

2 : 25 : 00 Gregory, you recognize for your five minutes. Good morning, and thank you, Mr. Chair, and good morning to the testifiers, and good morning to my colleagues and the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Usually I have a lot to ask, but these zonings as before us are pretty straightforward. AND, OF COURSE, THESE ZONINGS ARE TO SUPPORT THE LEAST AMONG US ONE, AND THERE'S ONE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONING THAT'S HERE THIS MORNING. SO I GUESS MY PRIMARY CONCERN IS WHETHER OR NOT, AND I'LL ASK EACH EACH TESTIFIER INDIVIDUALLY, THE CAPITAL FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE BUILDOUT THAT YOU'RE PROPOSING THAT'S DRIVING THE NEED FOR THIS REZONING. SO LET ME START WITH MS. DRAN STRIKER. OF COURSE, MS. DRAN STRIKER, I SEE YOU AND DEFINITELY APPRECIATE ALL THAT YOU DO FOR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS AND THOSE THAT ARE IN NEED.

2 : 26 : 11 BUT LET'S TALK ABOUT THE CAPITAL FUNDS. Do you have capital resources to support what you're proposing to do here with this zoning change? Yes, Senator. The project is being supported through the CBDGDR funding. It's been approved. We have some capital amount that we are also utilizing. We have like 390,000 that we committed to using for the project. The other fund is committed through the CBDGDR funding that's available through the VI Housing Finance Authority. And overall what is the total cost for this particular project?

2 : 27 : 01 It's going to be around \$4 million. Whoa. So what is your CBDG ask? What does, I'm sorry? How much is the application that you have before the CBDG, have they already committed to giving you the funding and if yes what is that amount or what was your application? When we first started the process we were at below \$3 million but the cost of construction has increased and so they've committed to providing the funding that we need and so the The first 390,000 is being spent by Lutheran Social Services. Perfect. Thank you for that. And just quickly, how many children currently you serve in the sister Emma's cottage? We currently serve up to nine.

2 : 27 : 56 Sometimes we'll have 10 if they're young enough, but currently we have five children. As of today, we have five. Okay. But we'll double the population. One of the challenges we have is when children age out, like when they turn 18, 19, and they're so severely disabled, we have a facility that we can transition them to. We have one on St. Thomas, Yellow Cedar, one on St. Croix, Ginger Thomas resident. But usually, a child is transitioned or individual is transitioned when they pass away. SO YOU OFTEN DO NOT HAVE THE AVAILABILITY TO TRANSFER A CHILD WHO'S TRANSITION FROM BEING A CHILD, YOU KNOW, AT 20, AT 18 YEARS OLD.

2 : 28 : 46 WOULD THIS BILLOUT ALLOW YOU TO DO THAT? YES. OKAY. PERFECT. AWESOME. SO ARE YOU CONSIDERING ANY VOCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR THOSE RESIDENTS? YES. WE HAVE CLASSROOM. IT'S BEEN CHALLENGING TO... MY TIME IS SHORT. MY TIME IS SHORT. have a classroom yes okay all right perfect so let's go to pastor jewel um and i also want to commend you pastor jewel for making to ensuring that we're your your congregation continues to serve the community so let's talk about your capital resources as we consider this uh this bill out do you have the capital resources and if you do what is that amount well we have known together in grouping as brethren to reach whatever we're trying to achieve.

2 : 29 : 33 For the present, sometimes we estimate a number at \$240,000, it may be higher, it may be less, depends on what help that comes available. Let me ask you quickly then, do you have a rendering of this, of what you're proposing? Do I have a? A rendering, architectural rendering? The drawing is still kept back. I CAN'T PRESENT IT, I DON'T HAVE IT IN HAND. YOU DON'T HAVE A COST ASSOCIATED WITH THIS, AND OF COURSE I THINK I SAW THAT FOR THE BILL NUMBER 35, MR. BROWN, THE BROWN FAMILY, YOU'RE LOOKING AT 450,000, AND DO YOU HAVE THE CAPITAL FOR THE 450? TIME. 450. SO THIS IS THE ALBERT FAMILY, NOT THE BROWN FAMILY, I'M JUST REPRESENTING MR. ALBERT THIS MORNING.

2 : 30 : 22 THAT'S RIGHT, YOU'RE CORRECT. So yes, Mr. Albert is ready to go. I do want to emphasize he's an extremely talented builder here on St. Croix. And so he's ready to complete this and is totally capable of getting this project going. All right. Well, thank you. And Mr. Brown, I should know better than to call you Brown property, right, because I know

you. You are a brilliant Virgin Islander who does really good work. So whenever we see you here on the Senate floor, it's very encouraging. It's very easy for us to say yes, at least for me, to say yes when I see you. So at the appropriate time, I will support all of these measures, unless there is some major change or something that we are not aware of today. But this is good stuff for the Virgin Islands and particularly for the Island District of St. Croix.

2:31:14 So I'm in full support. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much, Senator McGregory. And next we'll go to Senator Potter. and Potter, you recognize, for your five minutes. Good morning, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Morning to colleagues and to all of the testifiers who are here before us today. I agree with you, Mr. Chair, that it is always refreshing when you have non-controversial matters here before us. I know we're paid to make those tough decisions, but it is always refreshing when the items come before us are just basically no-brainers. And I fully support all of the initiatives, all of the rezonings here. Lutron Social Services has been a fixture here in our community doing a really good work, really noble work, the rezoning to reconstruct the cottage for our children, our community who are severely suffering from severe developmental disabilities is definitely a noble cause for sure. Similarly, the Pastor Jules and what you are doing with the Church of God of Seventh-day, the soup kitchen and the daycare are certainly initiatives that all Virgin Islanders, particularly in the area, will benefit from. Mr. Aubart, your business initiative, clearly small business development is really the engine that fuels our economy. So any effort to build and develop a business that is going to be of benefit to the treasury of the Virgin Islands is certainly a very very positive thing. I wanted to ask the DPNR Ms. Matthew just to walk us through if you can just briefly summarize what the process of rezoning a property entails. You know if a citizen of the Virgin Islands were looking at you know this hearing today and they were curious as to what this process entails you know how would you explain that to them okay so there's an application package with a checklist the

2:33:42 applicant has to fill that out submit all the supporting documents we review it we then hold a pre-application meeting on the request we will then schedule a public hearing the public hearing is open to the public not just neighbors within the 150 foot radius if there's any comments we then have to write a recommendation report incorporating the comments from the public and in the recommendation we have to do research every site it's site specific so every site is different each island is different and then after that recommendation report we then submit it to the commissioner for REVIEW AND SIGNATURE, THEN IT GOES TO THE LEGISLATURE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THAT. I KNOW THAT NONE OF THE APPLICATIONS THAT ARE HERE BEFORE US, THERE'S NO EVIDENCE OF ANY PUBLIC OPPOSITION. ARE YOU COMFORTABLE WITH, YOU KNOW, THE WORK THAT YOU DO TO that people who are potentially impacted are aware of, you know, their potential rezoning of property that is adjacent to their property? Yes, we're comfortable. The rezoning process, the applicants, you know, they come with an intention. There's always the possibility that their intention changes but we cannot see into the future so we just have to go with current intention what the neighbors have as concerns comments we have to look at that okay thank you for that to the applicants I wanted to know if there was

2:35:34 any plans to incorporate solar or renewables in your development Beginning with maybe Ms. Straker and just allowing everyone else to comment on that. We do have some solar panels at Queen Louise Home. We have quite a bit actually. But for that particular project, we did not incorporate. But they are benefiting from the solar that's already on the property.

2:36:09 Thank you Ms. Straker, Pastor Jules. We have not taken it into much consideration. We're just trying to go as far as we can, one step at a time. If it is necessary in the future, we would be very glad to go that way. Okay, thank you, sir. And finally, Mr. Brown. Yeah, that's a consideration that would be made at the next step. I think first and foremost, we wanted to make sure we had the permission to do this billing.

2:36:38 Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you very much to all the testifiers. At the appropriate time, I plan to vote in the affirmative for all of these rezonings. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for the time. Thank you very much, Senator Potter, for your line of questions. Before we go to the next senator, which will be Senator Fonseca, I wanted to ask you, Ms. Rekha, how long have you been with the Lutheran Social Services? I've been there for maybe like 31 years. yeah 31 i think somewhere wrong there it seems seems like we were just young kids or what we started i remember back when i joined the law enforcement field or there and yeah it's been a long time 31 years huh how much longer you intend to to do hopefully three years yeah that's the plan thank you i agree i agree with my former colleague that spoke about the fact that you have really made some contributions um especially those the vulnerable population you know we don't see a lot of that and see the staff behind as well that really have have done some good work here in this committee and we appreciate each and every one of you at this time senator fonsaca you recognize for your five minutes yes uh thank you very much uh mr president and blessings uh mr chair um and blessings and greetings to our community in the virgin islands and um you know special welcome i'm over here on the big island and you know i'm in support of uh bill number 35009 um i want to say also a special welcome to all of the testifiers um i noticed today that these um bills have no

opposition uh the first one lutheran social services um you know it's commendable um in uh you're going from r2 to b3 in estate concordia for the for the youths that's that's very good um pastor joel i'm also um in

2:38:42 favor of that you know you want to spread the gospel um that's always commendable um so we have We have to do that, even though your property is going to devalue, like one of my distinguished colleagues mentioned. I wanted to go to Bill 35-0092. That's plot number 148 in Estates in George. And that's going from R2 to B3. And I wanted to mention some specifics here. And the area will be used as a shop to sell food and dairy products. And in the testimony, we have that the area is filled with mixed-use zones.

2:39:28 And there's testimony that there are many uses in the immediate neighborhood, you know. There's a business zone. There's an industrial zone. There's a commercial zone. There's a residential zone. and immediately across the street there's a large industrial zone so you know my colleague had mentioned where we're going to get the blacks from well i guess you know um in this place they got industrial they got commercial they got residential they got business but you know the key is is there's no opposition you know because i got some letters um about four or five letters about a black thing and all of them was the same letter but they had three different names so you know it seems like there's a group of folks just printing out letters but you know we ain't going there today um I want to um specifically um say that I'm in support of all of of the measures the three bills here bill 3500-79 I had um a particular question for you miss Matthew I noticed that it was in the flood area that area was in the flood there's a portion of the property that has flooding yes okay and i noticed that the water supply line will be a system correct okay so they're going to use rain water or you're filling the system with wapper water where does the water come to the system um we transport okay so you're going to transport right we do have a well in the property and so it'll be rainwater. If we run out of water, it'll be transported in.

2:41:08 Okay, and it also is its own septic system, so the sewage goes into the septic? Yes, it'll be, yes. So now the new septic you're building or it's an existing septic? We'll build a separate septic for that particular building. Okay, and is the testimony of DPNR that new septic can accommodate the expansion, Ms. Machu? Yes, Senator. Okay, good. And now, so the water, is the water filtered for these youths? Oh, yes. We have quite a, we are heavily monitored by Department of Human, Department of Public, DPNR. So, the cistern is monitored, water is tested all the time. So, yes. Okay, that's great to hear that. You know, Lutron Social Services, you know, I was looking at the testimony and you have some information there about your bylaws of the board.

2:42:08 And, you know, that is so impressive, that information on the bylaws of the board. Because, you know, we got some board issues been going around lately. You know, we don't want to call no name. But I was looking at the health resources and services administration regulations for boards. And, you know, it's very, very impressive. And I was comparing it with the Lutron services. And you can see why Lutron Services is doing so well. They have a board that actually has a lot of good regulations and bylaws, and this is so important.

2 : 42 : 49 So, Lutron Services, you are to be congratulations. And, you know, we as senators, it's part of our responsibility. We give an oath to provide these overseers. so at the appropriate time uh mr chair i will be voting in favor of this and um i hope you can get a blocks them because i noticed there's some construction going on and thank you very much mr chair for this time very well thank you very much um senator fonseca before we go to the next senator is we've been at this for two hours so i'm going to take a quick three minute break The Committee of the Whole stands on recess for three minutes.

2:43:56 We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:47:26 Thank you. Thank you. Let's get started. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Thank you. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. and we are out of recess again today we are in the committee of the whole where the legislature is hearing matters of zoning requests and we have three before us today bill number 35-0079

2:55:21 act amending official zoning map number scz 10 for the island of st croix to change the zoning designation of plus number 71 estate concordia west east quarter st croix virgin islands from r2 residential low density one and two family two r3 residential medium density we also have bill Bill No. 35-0080 and Act Amending Official Zoning Map, SCZ No. 10 for the Island of St. Croix Rezone, Plot No. 52B, Estate Hannah's Rest, West End Quarter, St. Croix Virgin Islands from C Commercial to B3, Business Scattered, and of course, Bill No. 35-0092 and Act Amending Official Zoning Map SCZ-1140, Island of St. Croix 3 Zone, Plot No. 148, Estates in George Prince Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands from R2, Low Density 1, and 2 Family 2B3, Business Scattered. And we have before us a number of individuals, of course, from DPNR as well as the representatives.

2:56:33 So next we'll be hearing from Senator Carla Joseph, you're recognized for your five minutes. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, a pleasant good afternoon to my colleagues, good afternoon to our testifiers as well as DPNR staff, and of course to our listening and viewing audience. My colleagues have asked, some previous colleagues have asked some very

probing questions of all of the testifiers here. My test questions, rather, are going to be very succinct in nature because we have been getting a lot of answers, good answers, from the testifiers relating to these zoning amendments. And as been stated, these zoning amendments are not very controversial in nature. They are really to help our community and provide much needed services to really expand some of the services that we have and also to bring on board new opportunities for businesses and residents to have living space so I wanted to begin my question with Pastor Michael Jules. I had the opportunity to visit the site yesterday as I do with most if not all rezoning in our territory. I had a really great conversation with some of your congregational members and I really want to thank them they are here in the audience as well for taking time out on short notice to meet with me we met with for maybe an hour or so having a very great conversation and I noted that you do have within the package that we receive from DPNR a

2:58:41 A SITE PLAN, AND IN THIS SITE PLAN, IT SHOWS WHERE YOU PLAN TO ERECT YOUR BUILDING, WHICH WOULD BE, I SUSPECT, ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE. IS THAT THE SOUTHERN SIDE? NOW, I WANTED TO ASK, BECAUSE YOU ARE IN AN AREA WHERE THERE'S A RESIDENTIAL, I DID ask your congregation members this question because once you have a b2 or b3 zoning that opens up for other things to happen but we know it's a church um and there have been changes in churches nationally and even internationally where house of worships are now being converted because the doors are closed in some places especially in europe and they have now have those churches as other things than religious gatherings. What would be your position if a restriction was placed on this rezoning to limit it just for religious purposes?

2:59:58 It would be hard for me to give you an answer because there might be future leaders who may think otherwise. Okay, restrictions just to limit you so that you, if others come forward, that you don't operate any bars on the premises. Oh, far be it from God. Bar, right? I know it may be far-fetched, but like, very far-fetched, but I'm telling you it is happening. They are, they are. One at a time, please. They are using some of the religious sanctuaries have been converted.

3:00:37 Mr. Brown is shaking his head in the affirmative. I'm telling you, these are things that are happening. And I'm just looking at the future because rezoning changes the destiny of the property. And it changes the destiny of the neighborhood. So that's just one of my concerns. I also wanted to really commend the Lutheran Services for your work that you've been doing over the years. I don't have any objections. I saw your floor plans, and I'm very much impressed. I also heard my colleagues ask about the flood zone, how you're going to address it, and I know it's very simple. You're just going to elevate the building, and that's it. It is a no-brainer for me, and I really want to commend you for your work that you do. I do want to be able to visit, so once this meeting has been concluded, I would be very much appreciative to be able to come and visit the site. Finally, my time is almost up, finally, Mr. Brown, Mr. Chairman.

3:01:52 Time. You may proceed, Senator. Thank you kindly. Finally, with the site located on Mountain Road in St. Croix, I haven't visited our site, but I will take some time today to take a look at it. I don't have any objections to that site either, noting that there's going to be a lot of other developments that may be coming down the tree. My final question, so I don't have any issues or questions, my final question is to DPNR. You mentioned in your comments, in your report, that zoning amendments are needed, especially at, you mentioned it, that it needed in the rezoning for Mr. Brown's property in St. George Prince Quarter. You indicated that, you know, we have to start looking at zoning reform, specifically. Where is DPNR with that?

3:02:57 Is this all part of your effort with a comprehensive land and water use plan? Yes, Senator. So as part of the comprehensive plan, we are going to look at, you know, what changes would be needed and it would set the framework so that we can come back and then, you know, do the zoning reform that's needed. Because our code is from 1972 and it's holding us hostage. Yes, because you also mentioned there needed to be a middle ground between R2 and R3. And so we have been having these discussions, but we definitely would like to see some end product from the discussion so that we could be more so in compliance. And I know this is also a national issue. Mr. Chairman, I really want to thank you kindly for your leniency with me and the leeway with me today. Thank you so much, and I will be voting in the affirmative for all of these measures when they are brought forward. Thank you kindly.

3:03:57 Thank you very much, Senator Joseph, and please don't forget to be reciprocal when I come before your committee to make sure you are just as kind and lenient. Madam Timekeeper, if you could put five minutes on the clock for me, I perhaps wouldn't use all of it, but I'm really happy and delighted to be, you know, chairing this meeting today because I think that the three zonings that have come before us are very important. Zone-in requests, but more importantly, the fact that they're non-controversial and there you can see the work that have gone into both the applicants as well as DPNR in preparation to get us to this point today. So I want to commend all that have worked in getting us to this point, as well as the staff of the legislature who's also instrumental in making sure that we're facilitating this all the way through um to its final stage the queen louise home um and the fact that they're moving for again rebuilding their campus is near and dear to my heart and i'm happy to see this i first started to go to um the queen louise home i think back in the early 90s when i

serve as a governor's security for governor alexander farrelly where we held the christmas party every single year at that queen louise um well moved from queen louise home and then at times we brought them over to the same farm um sight those that were able to come over um you know the they were also being housed there and you know just to see the whole transformation of the queen louise home i wanted to ask you um uh miss straker in regards to we we see that decline in health care workers nationally how are you um attracting or retaining those health care workers

3:05:46 and providers that you have um within uh the lutheran social services we we have been challenged with um attracting nurses sometimes so you know like nurses are heavily paid these days but the ones that we attract the hearts are in the work once they see the residents so we've had really really good um experiences with nurses and we have a a pediatrician on contract who's been on contract for years that i love dearly and you can if you want anyone to sit in a medical meeting and represent to represent you you'd be the one i could definitely see how the love that he has for those children and how he goes to bat for them so um you know although it's um challenging sometimes to get medical um personnel the ones that we do get we've been really blessed with how do you handle or work on their behavioral health or mental health because obviously you know these individuals go through a lot of trauma as well you know um being caregivers um and for for these very vulnerable uh patients what do you do in terms of of, um, assisting your healthcare workers with their own personal behavioral health.

3:07:08 You talking about our employees? Yes. Um, usually unless like if we have an incident where a child may have passed away that has affected them, um, deeply, then what we'll do is we'll try to obtain some, um, support with a health provider who would hold some sessions with them, whether individually or as a group. But as far as the staff as a whole, we do trainings that we hope that benefits them.

3:07:46 Different programs have different trainings, so for example, our Early Head Start program, we deal with low income individuals with low income and lots of challenges. So we do trauma training, so we engage individuals that are qualified to do that, and if we recognize or the individual recognize that they need additional support, they'll recommend that they use their EAP system to get additional support. Very well. Thank you very much. And Mr. Pastor Jules, again, I am in full support of your request as well, and I just wanted to ask you in terms of we're seeing where you know the building of churches and edifice are really declining you know these days where a lot of people are more you know not attending churches or they're doing it a lot but virtually and you know it's commendable that you're still moving to expand your services you know what is what is being done in your opinion to assist in attracting younger individuals so that you could have that next level of succession within the church environment. One minute.

3:08:58 People on the whole are attracted to new buildings, suitable, comfortable to walk in than just a little trailer. So I feel by taking a higher step to a building itself, it may attract even those who pass by the highway, walk by to come in to see what's going in. So today we are launching now for a proper building where people could feel a little more comfortable. Very well. Thank you very much. And, of course, Mr. Brown, I thank you for your representation of Mr. Larry Ogbert. And, you know, he's a friend of mine. I know of his hard work, his commitment, and I'm certainly proud of his achievement and moving, you know, beyond just residential but now, you know, trying to put on that business entrepreneurship hat. And I certainly want to wish him best wishes and his endeavor to make this happen. It's not easy running a business locally here. But nonetheless, you know, I think it's commendable when you're moving in that direction.

3:09:57 So all in all, my time has been called in the nick of time. I just want to say that I'm in full support of all of the measures before us today. I wanted to ask any of my colleagues if they have any alibis, anything that they'll point a personal purpose, and it's a chance that you recognize. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just want to utilize this time to extend condolence to some of the family who have lost loved one over this past week. My co-worker, Glenwood David, who worked at the Bureau of Correction, was laid to rest yesterday. I had such a busy schedule, couldn't you make that one. David McIntosh, everybody knows as Rubber, again, a next gentleman, a classmate. And then today was on the funeral for Ms. Corrine Mesa Milligan, a well-known lady in this community for being a part of festival, having a booth in the village and stuff like that so i definitely want to extend my deepest condolence to the family and the last of their loved one and you know may god stay with them and bless them for the rest of this time thank you very much mr chair uh thank you very much senator johnson and that is a fact i mean we've been attending a lot of funerals uh most recently and um which which adds to the trauma and pain that we're seeing in this community so we have to do all you know within our power to assist with that so or churches and those type of areas, I mean, of course, you know, assistance providing some support during those times. At this time, I think this complete this round of questions. I wanted to go to each of the applicants just so that we could do a wrap up round. I'll give you 30 seconds to do a close off. Again, there's no votes taken in this committee process.

- 3:11:37 However, on June 14th, when we have our next session, a decision will be made on the request that's come before us. So for bill number 35-0079, Concadia, Ms. Rekha, I'll allow you to close off, 30 seconds. So I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to come before you. Thanks for the consideration. I look forward to a favorable vote from the Senate, and if there are any questions that weren't addressed here, please feel free to reach out. I'm happy to provide any information that would help in coming to a conclusion. So thank you again, Senate President.
- 3:12:21 Thank you, Senators. Appreciate you being so welcoming. Thank you. You're very welcome as well. At this time, we'll go to Pastor Jules for your closing comments. It's been a great privilege to have been before you all. I thank all honorable, what would I say, Madam, seniors, ladies, gentlemen. brothers sisters are taking time in considering our application today and I hope by the Christ of God it may find being favorable in your sight so we depend that you will do what is best for us I think we trust that from the very beginning and we're gonna let you go we don't always have our desires that's what we learn for sure in life whatever it is possible and the best that we can get we trust we want to thank you all of us every one of you as well to attend there even the church members who came to render the support without saying anything that I pray God that if there's any possibility we could do more for the public if we could look at it what things could be done for the public that is not being done we would be willing to expand in doing that or even to parents who works late and their children doesn't know how the place to put them or other things like that we intend to look into that to see if we could expand in that area as well thank you very much Pastor Jules and good luck and best wishes on your project next we'll go to mr. Clarence Brown for his closing comments yes again on behalf of mr. Albert I'd like to thank both the legislature all all the members of the legislature today, DPNR, Ms. Leah Laplace and her office, again, for being very supportive, professional and collaborative and getting us here today with a favorable recommendation. And like many persons here today, I look forward to an updated zoning law
- 3:14:31 here in the territory that would, you know, both give the proper restrictions, but also the proper flexibility so that some of these don't need to be here. Thank you. Thank you very much. At this time, we'll go to DPNR for closing comments. Thank you, and good afternoon, 35th legislature, people of the Virgin Islands. Just want to say thank you for allowing us to bring our recommendations before the floor. And it's a lot of hard work, but we do it for the people of the Virgin Islands. We do recognize that our code is outdated and we try our best to work with our applicants. Thank you.
- 3:15:11 Thank you very much, and again, this concludes this process, and the next consideration will be made during our session, the Committee of the Whole of June 9th, and I want to thank all of the staff members that's here, the central staff, which inclusive of certainly our clerks, certainly all of our staff, media, we have our reporters and security, everyone that was involved in making this day possible. I truly want to thank you for a successful day and the Committee of the Whole of June 9th is hereby adjourned. God bless.
- 3:16:01 Thank you.

People named in this transcript

SUSPECTED, and a finding aid only. Names were matched by machine against the spellings used across all 426 of our transcripts, and the title is the one used in the room. Being named here is NOT evidence that a person attended or spoke - only that the name was said. Speech recognition mishears names, so a spelling may be wrong even where no alternative is offered.

- 7x **Senator Franklin D. Johnson**
heard in this transcript as: Franklin Johnson, Johnson
- 6x **Senator Marise C. James**
the surname alone also matches: Javan James; Giovanni James Sr
heard in this transcript as: James, Maurice C. James, Maurice James
- 6x **Senator Novelle Francis**
the surname alone also matches: Novel E. Francis Jr.; Navelle Francis Jr.
heard in this transcript as: Francis, Francis Jr, Novel E. Francis Jr, Novell E. Francis Jr.
- 5x **Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr.**
heard in this transcript as: Angel L. Bolques Jr., Anghel L. Bolquez Jr., Balquez, Bolquez, Bulquez
- 5x **Senator Carla Joseph**
the surname alone also matches: Clifford Joseph; Karla J. Joseph
heard in this transcript as: Joseph
- 5x **Senator Kenneth L. Gittens**
heard in this transcript as: Gittins, Kenneth L. Gittins

5x	Senator Marvin Blyden heard in this transcript as: Blyden, Marvin A. Blyden
5x	Senator Ray Fonseca heard in this transcript as: Fonseca
4x	Senator Diane T. Capeheart heard in this transcript as: Capehart, Diane T. Capehart
4x	Senator Dwayne DeGraff heard in this transcript as: DeGraff, Dwayne M. DeGraff
4x	Senator Samuel Carrion heard in this transcript as: Carrion
3x	Senator Alma Francis-Heiliger heard in this transcript as: Alma Francis Heiliger, Francis Heiliger
3x	Senator Donna Frett-Gregory heard in this transcript as: Donna A. Frett-Gregory, Donna Frick-Gregory
3x	Senator Javan James heard in this transcript as: Jayvan E. James Sr., Jayvan James
3x	Commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriel heard in this transcript as: Jean-Pierre L. Oriel
3x	Senator Milton E. Potter heard in this transcript as: Potter
2x	Senator Fred Gregory the surname alone also matches: Donna A. Frett-Gregory; Donna Frett-Gregory
2x	Senator Giovanni James Sr the surname alone also matches: Javan James; Marise C. James; Neville James
2x	Commissioner Jean-Pierre Aureole heard in this transcript as: Jean-Pierre L. Aureole
1x	Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory heard in this transcript as: Donna A. Fred Gregory

Bills and acts referred to

Matched by number against our own acts corpus. The number is what the recognition heard, so it may be wrong; where it resolved, the title is the one the Legislature gave the act.

Bill 35-0079	Act 8723 · June 14, 2023 · An Act amending Official Zoning Map No. SCZ- 10 for the island of St. Croix to change the zoning designation of Plot No. 71 Consolidate Estate Concordia, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands from R-2 (Residential-Low Density-One and Two Family) to R-3 (Residential-Medium Density) ---0
Bill 35-0080	Act 8724 · June 14, 2023 · An Act amending Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-10 for the island of St. Croix to rezone Plot No. 52-B Estate Hannah-s Rest, West End Quarter, St. Croix Virgin Islands, from C (Commercial) to B-3 (Business Scattered) ---0
Bill 35-0092	Act 8726 · June 14, 2023 · An Act amending Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-I 1 for the island of St. Croix to rezone Plot No. 140-H Estate St. George. Prince Quarter, St. Croix. Virgin Islands, from R-2 (Residential Low Density-One and Two Family) to B-3 (Business-Scattered) ---0
Bill 35-0009	Act 8704 · April 14, 2023 · An Act amending title 1 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 11, section 171(a) relating to the observance of national holidays and enacting The Juneteenth National Independence Day Act to declare June 19 a legal holiday in the Virgin Islands ---0
Act 8723	Act 8723 · June 14, 2023 · An Act amending Official Zoning Map No. SCZ- 10 for the island of St. Croix to change the zoning designation of Plot No. 71 Consolidate Estate Concordia, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands from R-2 (Residential-Low Density-One and Two Family) to R-3 (Residential-Medium Density) ---0
Act 8724	Act 8724 · June 14, 2023 · An Act amending Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-10 for the island of St. Croix to rezone Plot No. 52-B Estate Hannah-s Rest, West End Quarter, St. Croix Virgin Islands, from C (Commercial) to B-3 (Business Scattered) ---0
Act 8726	Act 8726 · June 14, 2023 · An Act amending Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-I 1 for the island of St. Croix to rezone Plot No. 140-H Estate St. George. Prince Quarter, St. Croix. Virgin Islands, from R-2 (Residential Low Density-One and Two Family) to B-3 (Business-Scattered) ---0

Act 8704

Act 8704 · April 14, 2023 · An Act amending title 1 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 11, section 171(a) relating to the observance of national holidays and enacting The Juneteenth National Independence Day Act to declare June 19 a legal holiday in the Virgin Islands ---0