

## **Objection to the proposed Amended 99 year Lease on Water Island**

We, the undersigned, are writing to express our strong concern and objection to the proposed Amended Lease and proposed development of substantial portions of public land on Water Island for a large hotel and resort project. This is a partial list of concerns to be more fully expanded on in the future by speakers at the hearing June 26, 2025.

We would embrace a smaller, appropriately scaled boutique hotel constructed to replace the former hotel without sacrificing protected parcels. A project of that nature could contribute to the local economy while respecting the character and environmental significance of Water Island. The current proposal goes far beyond that and is not in the public interest. The proposed lease and hotel plan primarily benefit the development group by controlling and potentially selling public and protected land.

This project will dramatically increase the year-round residential population through the construction of employee housing (300+ people), while also adding hotel guests (88 rooms) and associated commercial activity. The cumulative impact on roads, utilities, public safety, the environment, and the island's quality of life cannot be ignored. This proposed project is much larger than the WIDC project with much more land being leased for 99 years.

The proposed lease includes Fort Segarra, Phillips Landing, and the deep-water dock. The government is obligated by deed to provide Water Islanders with functional docks. These parcels should not be included in the lease. These are public amenities the government is obligated to provide to Water Island. A similar concern applies to Fort Segarra, why lease a non developable historic site?

Equally concerning is the apparent lack of due diligence regarding the developer, Blue Water Global. The company has been associated with several unsuccessful projects and bankruptcies, and its business model appears to include raising capital through the EB-5 immigrant investor program. Given the scale of this proposal and the amount of public land involved, the people of Water Island deserve a careful and transparent evaluation of the developer's financial capacity and track record.

Perhaps most concerning is the proposal to construct employee housing on Area K before the hotel itself is built. Housing for the development group will likely be filled with imported workers rather than Virgin Islanders. There is no guarantee that the hotel will ultimately be constructed after the employee housing is completed. The island could be left with a privately owned, densely populated residential complex built on public land while the promised hotel never materializes. This "cart before the horse" approach transfers substantial risk to the people of the Virgin Islands while providing substantial benefits to the developer.

Water Island is an irreplaceable public resource. Once these protected lands are developed, they cannot be restored to their natural state. Any decision to alter federal deed restrictions and transfer public lands to private commercial development should be made only after full transparency, meaningful public participation, and a clear demonstration that the proposal serves the public interest rather than the interests of a private developer.

We firmly believe that if the appropriate process is followed and interested voices are heard, this project will be found too overwhelming, too impractical, a misuse of public lands, and that the developers are not reliable stewards of such an important public resource.

## Respectfully, 162 Water Islanders

Elizabeth McConnell	Allison Manchester	Rob Manchester	Karen Marion
Robin Marion	Billy Bullock	Dave McArdle	Margarita Prieto
Steve Mange	Pam Mange	Andy Perry	Cheri Lopez
Joanne Bohr	Bob Bohr	Katherine Eyre	Eric Michael
Kevin Butler	Jami Koenig	Jan Robinson	Belinda Davis
Theresa Pearsal	Pamela Pandella	Jan Nestrud	Suzanne Nestrud
Chuck Nestrud	Christine Black	John Black	Cheryl Floyd
Richard Floyd	Debbie White	Peg Gillinschwartz	Chuck Gidley
Linda Gidley	Brian Saupe	Christi Roselle	Susan Berkowitz Johnson
Rob Johnson	John Clark	Jerry Barth	Carolyn Barth
Kathleen Carvalho	Jule S Northup	Fredrick Northup	Mariellen Heffner
Randy Heffner	Julia Rhode	Margie Greenlee	Anna Miraftabi
Karolin Gidley	Chip Stevens	Steve Rampino	Samantha Leidner
Darlene Tau	Chris Hinnenkamp	Tom Learmont	Judy Learmont
Margot Leboeuf	Sindi Combs	Maggie Morrison	Mike Catron
Karen Catron	Tim Lundin	Rosa Lundin	Karen Diez Canseco
Jesus Diez Canseco	Warren Thring	Becky Learmont Nester	John Nester
Stephen Bubb	Sue Bubb	Laura Beth Duncan	Glen Petit
Melissa Petit	Joe Mancino	Kathleen Butler	Mercedes Blosser
Jennifer Chapman	Randolph Chapman	David Rossio	Cari Rossio
Nicole Heffernan	Patrick Heffernan	Scott Rak	Angela Rak
Barbara Davis	Greg Davis	Andrew McNeal	Diane McNeal
Kelly Boylan-Suazo	Mary Lynn Tucker	Lee Tucker	Jacqueline Exton
Ian Exton	Lubos Sudek	Helena Sudek	Nick Allred
Matthias Bitterwolf	Mark Knopf	Amber Duncan	Colleen Tapp
Martha Wallin	Linda Weiss	Diane Zimmerman	Jim Blakey
Lauren Atkins	Jurgen Bitterwolf	Robyn Bitterwolf	Rachael Ackley
Chaunette Thomas	Robert Smack	Agnus Rampino	Lisa Thomas
Bitterwolf	Doug Hoffman	Amy Lanfrankie	Robert F. White
Donohoo	Joesph Mancino	Karen Congero	Lori Sims
Chester King	Jeannette Logan	Thomas Day	Tom McCoy
Ronsheimer	Kelly Ronsheimer. Carl Langkammerer	Eileen Robertson	Jim Robertson
Kyle Ingle	Charlotte Ingle	Thomas Walter	Jeanne Stansy
Marin	Glen McBreaty	Terri Swain	Sara Morse
Barnett	Sara Morse	Andrew Morse	