

## **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 | Dale Benedict  
| 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 | Terri Smith  
| Kelly Boylan-Suazo | Mary Lynn Tucker | Lee Tucker | Jacqueline Exton |  
| Ian Exton | Lubos Sudek | Helena Sudek | Nick Allred | Danya Bodden  
| Matthias Bitterwolf | Mark Knopf | Amber Duncan | Colleen Tapp | Anne Page  
| Martha Wallin | Linda Weiss | Diane Zimmerman | Jim Blakey | Dana Strong |  
| Lauren Atkins | Jurgen Bitterwolf | Robyn Bitterwolf | Rachael Ackley | Doug Ackley | Jay Personeni |  
Chaunette Thomas | Robert Smack | Agnus Rampino | Lisa Thomas | Abigail Hall | Mark Michael | Stephen  
Bitterwolf | Doug Hoffman | Amy Lanfrankie | Robert F. White | Luisa B. White | Sergio Lopez | April  
Donohoo | Joesph Mancino | Karen Congero | Lori Sims | Mark Sims | Susan Bishop | David Roselle |  
Chester King | Jeannette Logan | Thomas Day | Tom McCoy | Anoushka Anna McCoy | Tom McCoy | Eric  
Ronsheimer | Kelly Ronsheimer. Carl Langkammerer | Eileen Robertson | Jim Robertson | Lauren Ingle |  
Kyle Ingle | Charlotte Ingle | Thomas Walter | Jeanne Stansy | Ed Marin | Jeannine Marin | Jennifer Marin | Pat  
Marin | Glen McBreaty | Terri Swain | Sara Morse | Andrew Morse | Harold Tapp | Zona Tapp | Christopher  
Barnett | Sara Morse | Andrew Morse |