

[EXTERNAL MAIL]Fwd:

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To: Leia LaPlace <leia.laplace@dpr.vi.gov>

To whom it may concern

The federal government defines housing as affordable when it consumes no more than 30% of household income. So for some, a \$1500 rental unit household income needs to be \$60,000 per year net. Which could be as much as \$70k to \$85k per year gross depending on tax deductions.

I am commenting on the current rezoning request. I, like others, had reservations about this project. Being a general contractor I do feel there are better ways to construct housing. However, that comes at a price that would take affordability off the table for many. With the current cost of material, land, labor, and site work affordable is being replaced with impossible. Over 50 years ago

my father and I built our first home from recycled lumber. I learned how to lower building costs. Dad would say it doesn't matter how you start it's all about the finishing. Dad's teaching coupled with over 93 houses repaired on St. John after the hurricanes. I can say with certainty that I'm qualified to speak on how to build housing affordably in a location that poses multiple obstacles to achieving affordability. There are two ways to get housing built affordably for the working group located on St. John who does not have a six-figure income, a trust fund, a rich uncle, etc. Government subsidizing is great for tenants but costs taxpayers and future generations. The second is the Alternative building. The alternative building takes in many common factors that lower the overall cost. Some of these common factors are lots, walls, ceilings, roofs, floors, and space. By dividing the cost across-the-board it will lower the overall cost allowing for a lower rental rate.

This project seems to allow for this.

I have listened to comments and valid concerns, but I also hear people often asking do you know where I can find a place to stay. This is a common problem facing business owners in St. John. Workers not having comfortable living accommodations. It is hard for someone to give a good day's work if they have not had a good night's sleep.

As for technical construction questions asked at hearings, online, and on social media. I am confident that DPNR building inspectors will hold this builder as well as any other builders to the same standards set for similar structures. I do think that an R-4 zoning should have some restrictions pertaining to setbacks, occupant density, and story height limits. I feel that this rezoning and any future rezoning that will increase the quality of life for those residing in St. John should be considered for approval as long as it is in compliance and blends with the current area.

Decisions need to be made to preserve the past, accommodate the present, and prepare for the future.

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