



GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Office of the Commissioner

**Report by the Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning on
the Petition to Amend Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-11, Application No.
ZAC-24-3**

Petition of applicants, Ezra and Atarah Garib to amend Plot No. 1068 Estate Williams Delight, Prince Quarter, St. Croix from R-2 (Residential-Low Density-One and Two Family) to R-3 (Residential-Medium Density) zoning to develop six dwelling units.



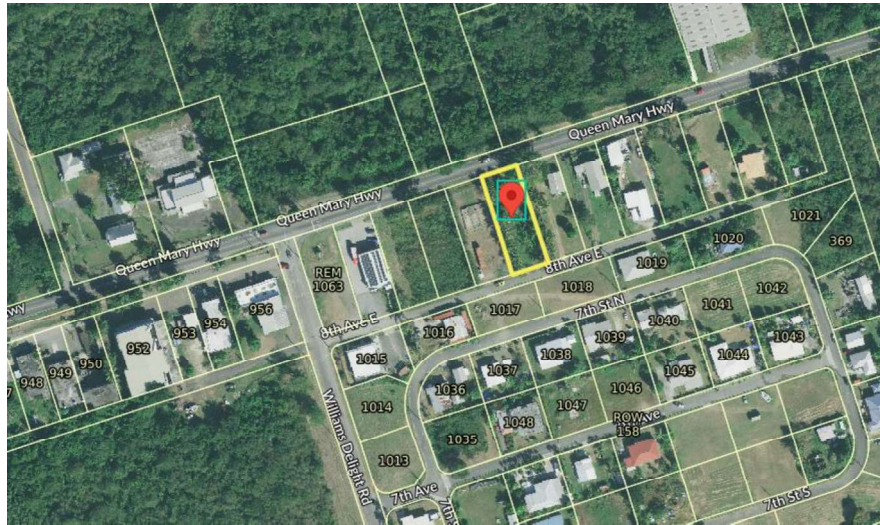
Photo of current site condition- undeveloped land

Property Owner(s): Ezra and Atarah Garib as per Warranty Deed dated January 10, 2023, Document No. 2023000443.

Applicant Representative(s): Clarence Browne, Managing Principal, Design District Architects, PLLC.

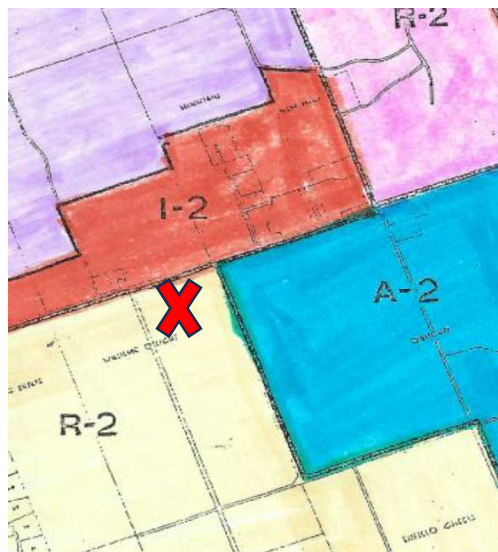
Acreeage: 0.308 acres as described on survey drawing No. 4096.

Surrounding Uses and Zones: To the north of the property is the Queen Mary Highway and undeveloped land. To the east and south is a mix of residences and undeveloped land. To the west is undeveloped land, Caribbean Grocery store, and S & P Bakery & Eatz.



MapGeo aerial view of property (marked in red)

The surrounding area is zoned R-2, B-3 (Business-Scattered), B-4 (Business-Residential Areas), and I-2 (Light Industry) with three rezonings granted. The rezonings were the western portion comprising the Williams Delight commercial strip along Queen Mary Highway (rezoned in 1975 from R-2 to B-4 by Act No. 3753), Plot No. 1015 (S & P Bakery & Eatz, rezoned in 1997 from R-2 to B-3 by Act No. 6151), and Plot No. 1064 (Caribbean Grocery, rezoned in 1995 from R-2 to B-3 by Act No. 6070).



Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-11 (property location indicated by red X)

Infrastructure: Water needs will be supplied by public water lines and a backup cistern. Wastewater will be handled by public sewer lines.

Other needed DPNR Division reviews: None.

Project Summary: At DPNR-CCZP’s public hearing, Mr. Browne testified that the applicants are seeking to develop six apartments in response to the housing need in the area. The development will consist of two, two-story buildings each having two, one-bedroom and one, two-bedroom apartments available for long-term rental. Access would be from 8th Avenue of Williams Delight and may take one to two phases to complete over a 12–16-month timeline. The applicants’ goal is to not go beyond the R-2 zone’s development provisions.



Conceptual drawing of proposed development

Public Response at DPNR-CCZP Public Hearing held May 20, 2024: There was no opposition or concerns expressed with the proposal. There were no post-hearing comments received. The Williams Delight Homeowners’ Association was contacted and advised of the application, however, they informed Mr. Browne they had no objection nor support for the proposal.

Analysis of Request/Reason for Recommendation: The property’s current R-2 zoning allows for the parcel, as a matter of right, to be developed with a maximum of two dwelling units (counted by the number of kitchens) once they comply with Section 229 of the Zoning Code (See below table).

Section 229. R-2 zone Development Provisions	1068 Williams Delight by right development
Minimum Lot Area- 10,000 sq ft	0.308 acres or 13,416.48 sq ft
Minimum Lot Width- 75 feet	75 ft wide
Maximum Lot Occupancy- 30 percent	30 percent of 13,416.48 sq ft is 4,024.94 sq ft maximum lot occupancy allowed by a building or buildings
Minimum front, side, and rear yards in feet- 15, 10, and 10, respectively	Proposed plans would comply with minimums of 15, 10, and 10, respectively
Maximum height limit- two stories	Proposed plans would comply with maximum of two stories

At 0.308 acres the property has no other development options available to increase density, other than rezoning. The sole intent for the requested R-3 zoning was to address the housing crisis by offering greater housing density. The requested R-3 zoning was intended for a larger density and more uses than the typical R-1/R-2 single and two-family zones. Areas with access to public sewer lines, water lines, and transportation are most appropriately suited for the 80 persons per acre allowed under R-3 zoning.

As the territory and nation tackles its housing crisis, zoning reform is being encouraged at the national level to address the housing shortfall and reform is encouraged and has been taken by using several methods: allowing housing in zones that previously did not allow housing, increasing density in various zoning districts/reducing lot sizes, changing measurements from maximum number of permitted dwelling units per acre to maximum number of permitted bedrooms per acre, or allowing house-scaled missing middle housing (designed to fit

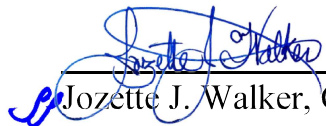
comfortably at the size and scale of detached single- and two-family homes). Zoning Reform will address the number of zoning map amendment requests we are receiving for allowing greater housing density across the territory.

Currently, the Virgin Islands has a recognized gap in the housing density allowed between the R-2 zone and the next zone up, R-3. Nationwide, this gap for the coined term “Missing Middle” housing is those often-overlooked 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. These missing middle housing units also allow for the provision of affordable housing with the size and affordability for people of all ages including older adults/smaller families.

In analyzing the applicant’s request, the department considered the area’s number of zoning map amendments, the property’s access to public water and sewer lines and location to public transportation along Queen Mary Highway, the area’s mixed-use character and ability to act as a buffer transition from mixed use to lower density residential, and the proposal’s intent to be house-scaled (the two small buildings would have a lot coverage not exceeding the 4000 sq ft allowed by right). The department finds this rezoning request reasonable.

Recommendation

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources recommends that Plot No. 1068 Estate Williams Delight, Prince Quarter, St. Croix be rezoned from R-2 (Residential-Low Density-One and Two Family) to R-3 (Residential-Medium Density).



Jozette J. Walker, CPM
Assistant Commissioner

6.4.2024

Date

Cc: Jean-Pierre L. Oriol, Commissioner