



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-18, Application No.  
ZAC-24-4**

Petition of applicants, Evolve USVI, LLC and Next to the Fred, LLC to amend Plot Nos. 36, 37, 38, and 42 Strand Street, Town of Frederiksted, St. Croix from W-1 (Waterfront-Pleasure) to R-3 (Residential-Medium Density) zoning for the rehabilitation of existing rental property and expansion of the Fred Hotel.



*Photos of current site condition*

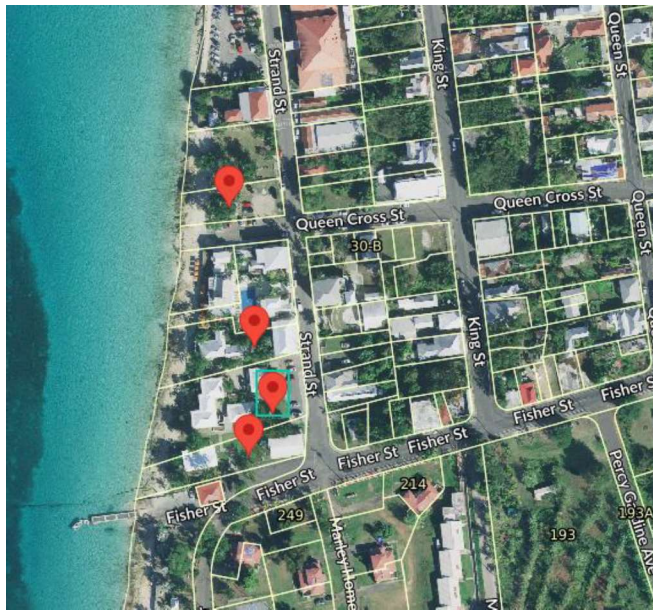
**Property Owner(s):** Evolve USVI, LLC and Next to the Fred, LLC as per Warranty Deeds dated January 4, 2018, Document No. 2018003368 and February 6, 2024, Document No. 2024000492.

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

**Acreage:** Plot Nos. 36, 37, and 38 have a combined acreage of 0.9229 acres as described on survey drawing 3246. Plot No. 42 is 0.1944 acres as described on survey drawing 5539.

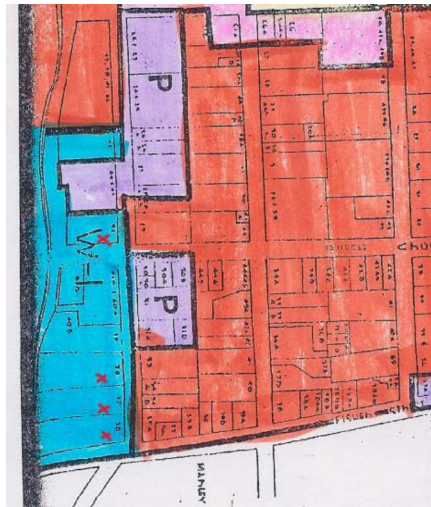
**Surrounding Uses and Zones:** To the north of the properties is Alderville Park (43 and 44 Strand Street), a mixed-use area, parking lot, and the Frederiksted Health Care medical center. To the east are residences and the Athalie McFarlane

Petersen Public Library. To the south is the Frederiksted Fish Market and the Marley Homes. To the west is the Caribbean Sea.



*MapGeo aerial view of properties (marked in red)*

The surrounding area is zoned W-1, P (Public), R-3, R-4 (Residential-Medium Density), and B-3 (Business-Scattered) with four rezonings granted. The rezonings were Plot Nos. 39, 40A, 40B, 41A, and 41B (the existing Fred Hotel, rezoned in 1989 and 2016 from W-1 to R-3 by Act Nos. 5430 and 7944), Plot No. 28B (rezoned in 1977 from R-4 to W-1 by Act No. 3966), and Plot No. 30B (rezoned in 1997 from P to B-3 by Act No. 6151).



*Official Zoning Map No. SCZ-18 (properties' locations indicated by red Xs)*

**Infrastructure:** Water needs are supplied by the public water line. Wastewater is handled by the public sewer line.

**Other needed DPNR Division reviews:** The applicants are in continuous communication with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and will need to comply with their requirements. The property will need to undergo the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Tier 1 permitting process for any future permitting needs.

**Project Summary:** At DPNR-CCZP's public hearing, Mr. Browne testified that the property owners are seeking the R-3 zone for the purpose of sharing the same zoning as the original hotel plots as well as adding 34 additional guest rooms to the Fred Hotel. Currently, the hotel has 20 guest rooms. The existing structures on the properties are mixed use with office spaces, restaurant/bars, gift shop, and the hotel. There are 12 existing parking spaces on Plots 36 to 38 that will be maintained, with an additional 24 parking spaces to be provided on a nearby lot about 200 ft. away. The property owners are seeking additional nearby lots for provision of required parking.

The plan is to maintain the existing buildings on Plots 36 to 38, repurposing and redistributing the space inside to develop guest rooms as well as add two new buildings. This would result in 24 guest rooms. On Plot 42, a new building with 10 guest rooms would be developed. Construction is proposed to commence in late 2024 and take about 18 months to complete.

**Public Response at DPNR-CCZP Public Hearing held May 20, 2024:** There were concerns and questions expressed by three adjacent property owners summarized below. No post-hearing comments were received.

1. The R-3 zone would allow for no setbacks.
2. Development in the towns is restricted due to being in a historic district.
3. Security for the proposed parking lot that would be over 200 ft. away.
4. Beach access and whether there would be a change to it.
5. The conceptual plan and ability to change after rezonings are granted.
6. Possible zoning violations that could set precedence for future undesirable developments, affecting property values.
7. Community opposition to proposal that could result in diminished property values. (*Property value may be impacted by zoning but it is on a case-by-case basis and is based on the activities occurring on surrounding properties.*)
8. Parking. (*The property owners are seeking additional nearby lots for provision of required parking.*)

9. Visual impact from tall buildings blocking water views or unsightly structures possibly diminishing the appeal of the area and decreasing property values. (*The historic district is limited to three story buildings; the development's new buildings are proposed to be two stories.*)
10. Quality of Life impacts- development could lead to overcrowding, loss of green space or increased crime rates. It could lower residents' quality of life and subsequently decrease property values. (*The development of the Fred has revitalized a formerly underutilized site and could provide the encouragement needed for others to revitalize surrounding properties.*)
11. Diminished property value due to blocked views and air stream, increased traffic, noise, or change in neighborhood character; environmental impact leading to pollution, habitat destruction, or natural resource depletion. (*The properties are already developed lots.*)
12. Infrastructure Strain- development could strain existing infrastructure, like roads and utilities, beyond capacity leading to decreased property values due to inconvenience and decreased services.
13. Historical impact- development could threaten historical sites or cultural heritage in the area. It could detract from the region's charm and history, lowering property values.
14. Flood risk- Developing in flood-prone areas could increase the risks of property damage and higher insurance premiums, also leading to diminished property values. (*Additional permitting oversight will be required due to the properties' location within the Historic District and the Coastal Zone/Tier 1.*)

**Analysis of Request/Reason for Recommendation:** The properties were developed separately, prior to the 1972 adoption of our zoning laws. Over time, the use of the property as a hotel and its nonconformity with the W-1 zoning requirements for hotel use, prompted rezonings. For a hotel to be developed on W-1 zoned plots, they must have a minimum of three acres. The first plots; 40A, 41A and 41B; were rezoned to R-3 in 1989. When The Fred acquired the property in 2015 and sought to develop additional plots 39 and 40B, rezoning to R-3 for conformity with the other lots was sought and granted in 2016.

In analyzing the applicant's request, the department considered the existing and newly acquired plots combined acreage of 1.8599 acres which still does not comply with the minimum three acres needed by the W-1 zoning district. It would be appropriate to place 36, 37, 38, and 42 Strand Street in the appropriate zoning designation for conformity with the other hotel plots and in compliance

for hotel use. The department analyzed the requested R-3, as well as the B-1 (Business-Central Business District) zoning.

The B-1 zoning was analyzed because it was intended to be devoted primarily for commercial enterprises serving the visitors and tourists of the central business districts of Charlotte Amalie, Christiansted, and Frederiksted. It was intended to maintain the historical and commercial character of the business centers of these cities. These areas also represented the historical districts of the communities and uses included hotels, professional offices, and residences.

R-3 vs. B-1 zoning for hotel use in the town of Frederiksted

Section 228. Uses Section 229. Development Provisions	Requested R-3 zone	Alternative, B-1 zone
Hotel use	Permitted as a matter of right.	Permitted as a matter of right.
Parking	In accordance with Section 230.	In accordance with Section 230, however, HPC may grant waiver.
Density (maximum)	80 persons per acre.	160 persons per acre.
Lot occupancy (maximum)	30 percent.	No requirement for business structures but a maximum Floor Area Ratio of two is granted.
Lot area (minimum)	6,000 square feet.	No requirement for business structures.
Usable open space (minimum)	35 percent.	No requirement.
Lot width (minimum)	No requirement.	No requirement.
Front, Side, and rear yards (in feet)	No setbacks required.	No setbacks required.
Height limit (maximum)	6 stories.	3 stories in the historic districts.

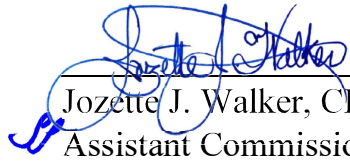
The B-1 zone has no minimum requirements for lot size, lot occupancy, or open space when it is for business use. It also allows a greater density than the R-3 zone. It would be more appropriate to grant B-1 zoning in keeping with the intention of the B-1 zone for commercial enterprises serving the visitors and tourists of the central business districts of Charlotte Amalie, Christiansted, and

Frederiksted and to maintain the historical and commercial character of the business centers of these cities.

It is also acknowledged that the provision of parking in the towns constantly poses a challenge for development projects and the B-1 zone has the added benefit of being granted parking waivers through the HPC.

**Recommendation**

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources recommends that Plot Nos. 36, 37, 38, and 42 Strand Street, Town of Frederiksted, St. Croix be rezoned from W-1 (Waterfront-Pleasure) to B-1 (Business-Central Business District).

  
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Jozette J. Walker, CPM  
Assistant Commissioner

6.17.24  
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Date

Cc: Jean-Pierre L. Oriol, Commissioner