



Dear Milton E. Potter,  
Chairman, Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning  
35th Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands

Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend tomorrow's session and I apologize for the inconvenience. However, after consulting with residents and developers who are most likely to be affected by Bill #35-0202, it has become evident that this legislation does not adequately address their concerns regarding historic preservation. I have gathered their suggestions in order to expedite the legislative process.

1. It is recommended that HPC (Historic Preservation Commission) publish comprehensive guidelines pertaining to paint colors, window and shutter styles, gutter requirements, and other relevant specifications. Once a project adheres to these established requirements, it should no longer be necessary to seek additional approval from HPC. Currently, the lengthy process of obtaining a letter for painting an approved color is a significant issue. Digital and hardcopies of this catalog should be available to the public.
2. DPNR (Department of Planning and Natural Resources) should assume responsibility for ensuring that all guidelines are met when a permit is obtained, eliminating the need for an additional letter of approval from HPC.
3. It is proposed that the boundaries of the historic districts be revised to reflect areas of genuine historical value. Many parts of southern Christiansted lack significant historical significance and imposing costly historic repairs on residents who cannot afford them is burdensome. Therefore, legislation should be enacted to redraw the maps, prioritizing cultural preservation and tourism in areas where they are crucial, while allowing for new housing development in other sections of the town.
4. Given the current scarcity of housing, special attention should be given to multi-family projects by both HPC and DPNR. This includes expediting the review process, potentially calling special HPC meetings specifically for multi-family development, and prioritizing these projects to address the housing shortage effectively.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the mission to enhance the development of the Virgin Islands and I look forward to further opportunities to contribute in the future.

Respectfully,

Matthew Ridgway