



GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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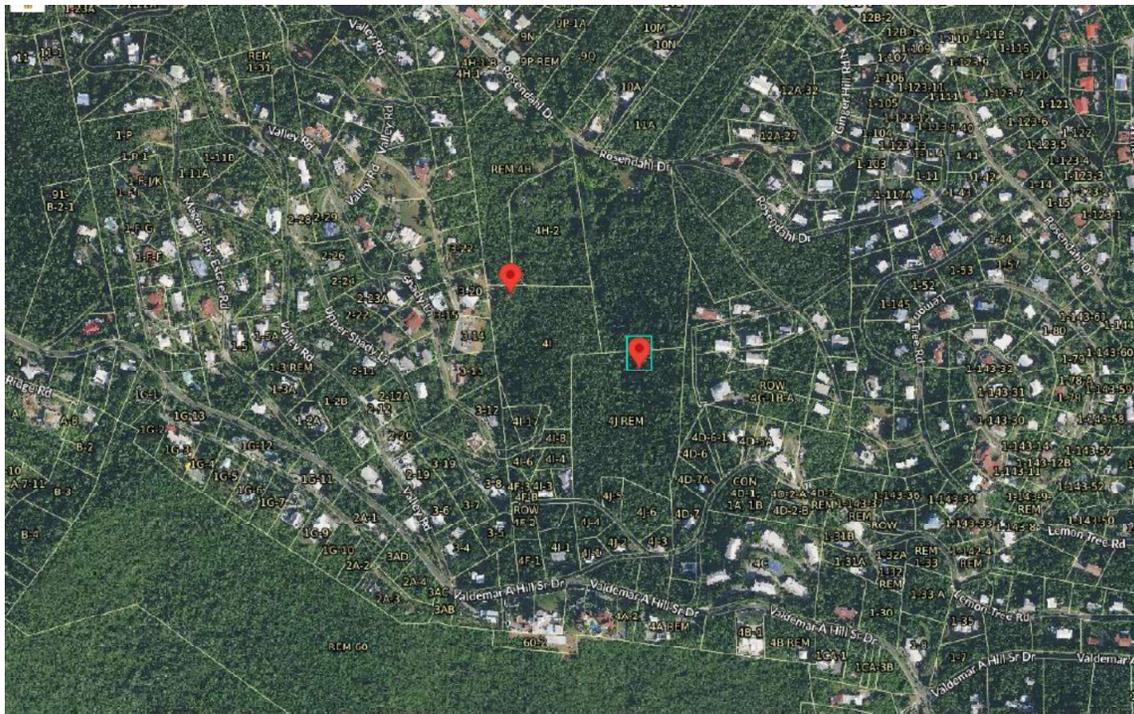
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Office of the Commissioner

**Report by the Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning on the Petition to Amend Official Zoning Map No. STZ-6, Application No. CCZP0003-25**

Petition of applicant, AC Development, LLC, requesting a planned area development for Parcel Nos. 4i Remainder and 4J Remainder Estate St. Joseph & Rosendahl, No. 4 Great Northside Quarter, St. Thomas which are zoned R-2 (Residential-Low Density-One and Two Family). The purpose of the request is to develop a residential development with 80 for-sale units comprised of 28 twenty-foot townhouse units, 36 twenty-four-foot townhouse units, and 16 single-family detached units.



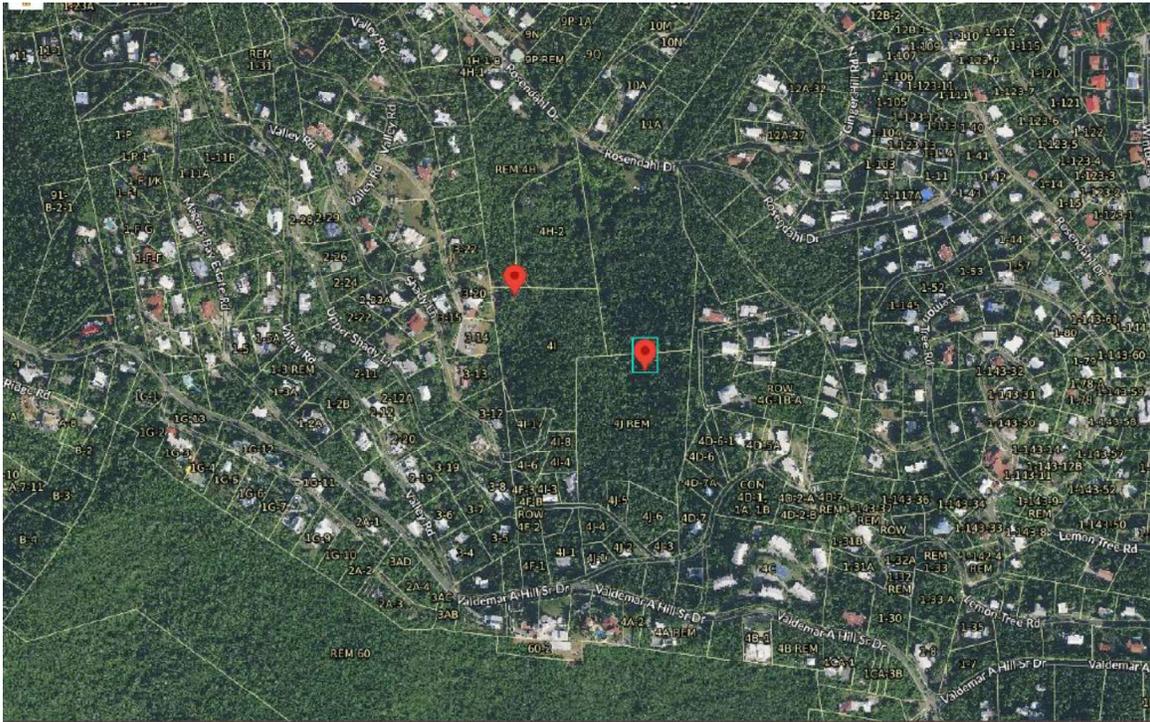
*Photo of current site condition- undeveloped land marked in red*

**Property Owner(s):** 4i Remainder- Doris L. Smalls, Trustee of the Doris L. Smalls Trust as per Warranty Deed dated November 23, 2014, Document No. 2015002342. 4J Remainder- Edith Clarke and Dianne Thomas as per Adjudication dated April 14, 2023, Probate No. ST-2018-PB-00122.

**Applicant Representative(s):** Ajani Corneiro and Jerril Fredericks of AC Development, LLC; and Tom Miner, engineer with Frederick Ward Associates.

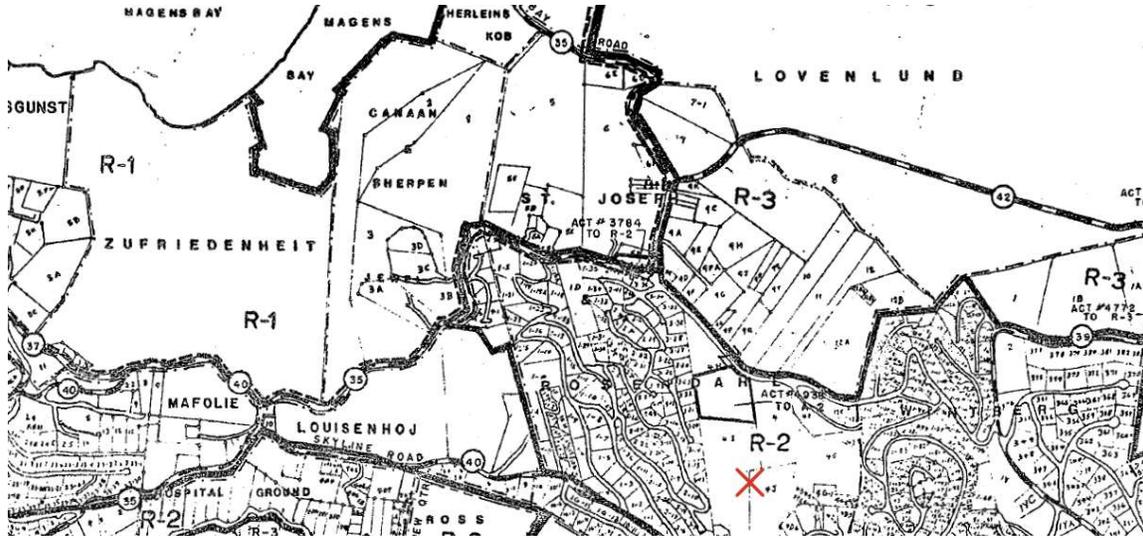
**Acreage:** 4i Remainder is 5.619 acres as described on survey drawing D9-7847-T006 and 4J Remainder is 5.543 acres as described on survey drawing D9-7634-T005.

**Surrounding Uses and Zones:** To the north is residential activity. To the east/southeast and west are residential activity. To the south there is vacant land and the Raimer Family cemetery.



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

The surrounding area is zoned A-2 (Agricultural Zone) and R-2 with one rezoning granted for Parcel 4H-2 from R-2 to A-2 in 1984 by Act No. 4938.



Official Zoning Map No. STZ-6 (properties' location indicated by red X)

**Infrastructure:** Individual cisterns will provide water for each dwelling unit and there will be a centralized wastewater system. Centralized stormwater management with underground stormwater storage features, essentially holding tanks, are proposed. The additional rainwater harvesting could be used to supplement the individual cisterns, used for fire suppression, or to augment the development's water supply during a drought.

**Other needed DPNR Division reviews:** Development of the properties will require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan from the Division of Environmental Protection.

**Project Summary:** The application proposes a residential development only, with 80 units for sale. Twenty-eight units would be twenty-foot townhouse units of 1200 sq ft, three bedrooms, two-and-a-half baths. Thirty-six units would be twenty-four-foot townhouse units of 1,450 sq ft, three bedrooms, two-and-a-half baths. The third would be 16 single-family detached units of 1600 sq ft, three bedrooms, three baths, and a flex room. All buildings would be two stories. The development proposes 195 parking spaces- two per unit and 35 on-street. The proposed access points are from Rosendahl Drive and Gooseberry Lane.

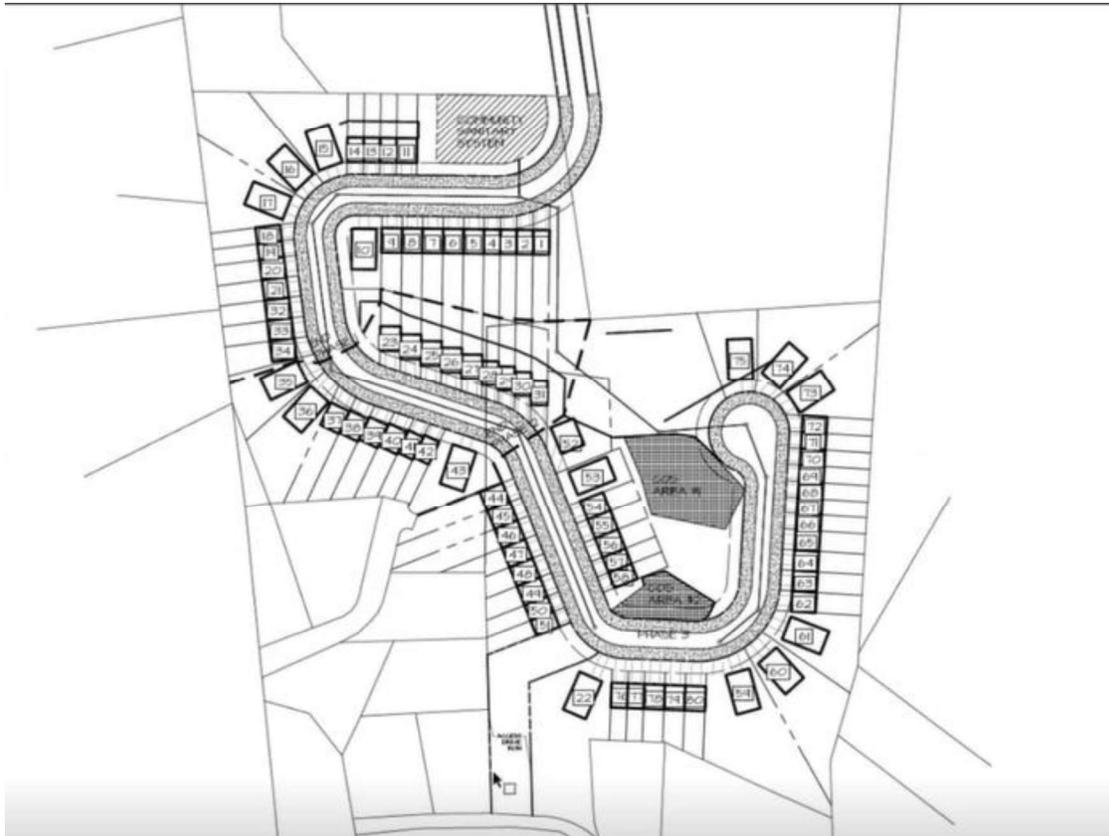
Phase 1 will consist of access from Gooseberry Lane and the construction of nine, twenty-foot townhouse units; 11, twenty-four-foot townhouse units; and four single-family detached units.

Phase 2 will consist of six, twenty-foot townhouse units; nine, twenty-four-foot townhouse units; and three single-family detached units.

Phase 3 will consist of 13 twenty-foot townhouse units, 16 twenty-four-foot townhouse units, and nine single-family detached units.

With the enrollment of multiple agencies and utilization of Insulated Concrete forms (ICF), it is envisioned that phase 1 could take an 18 month build out and sell process. The three phases, fully built out, could take three to three and a half years.





*Plan renderings*

**Public Response at DPNR-CCZP Public Hearing held March 24, 2025:** There were over 150 attendees at the public hearing. Questions, comments, concerns, and opposition posed by attendees were summarized and the applicant's responses attached as an appendix to this report (File item 22B. Public hearing responses- AC Dev). They were generally of the nature of:

1. Access road and traffic.
2. Stormwater runoff and environmental impact.
3. Wastewater and cistern concerns.
4. Density, zoning, and aesthetic impact.
5. Project viability, transparency, and affordability.
6. Raimer family and cultural heritage concerns.

**Analysis of Request/Reason for Recommendation:** The 2024 adopted Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan notes: "The last 50+ years have seen a gradual intensifying of problems related to...the rising cost of housing...." "Regulatory reform measures are identified throughout the (Comprehensive Land and Water Use) plan addressing issues related to housing...." In the Living and Thriving Together chapter of the Plan, "...throughout the planning process, the people of the USVI shared their hopes and frustrations about a wide range of

issues that impact their daily lives.... The USVI is experiencing a housing crisis in which the typical price of a home...is not affordable when compared with the typical incomes of residents. This mismatch between what people earn and what housing costs is a common story across the U.S., but it is particularly severe in the USVI. The need for more affordable housing options and housing types that better meet the needs of Virgin Islanders of all ages and incomes, such as lower income residents, middle-income residents, young adults, families, and seniors, has reached levels that are severely stressing communities, depleting the workforce, and generally stressing the islands' economy. Housing affordability is a significant challenge in the USVI. The main drivers of the lack of affordable housing are the comparably low incomes of USVI residents, high costs of construction, limited availability of developable land, demand pressures from non-residents, and high costs of homeowner's insurance and other financing challenges.... Regarding housing choice, the available supply of housing is currently not large enough, nor diverse enough, to meet the needs of current residents....”

Limited Land Area is the first listed in the Issues & Opportunities for St. Thomas chapter of the Plan. “...with the highest density of population, high demand for services, and the prevalence of severely steep terrain, St. Thomas experiences this problem perhaps more acutely than the other major islands.”

The Planned Area Development provision of the Zoning Code has existed since 1972 and allows sound and imaginative developments which meet the spirit of the law if not its strict letter (Virgin Islands Code, Title 29, Chapter 3, Subchapter 1, Section 232). The intent is to provide an opportunity for alternative variety and creative or unique design arrangements and relationships of buildings and uses of land. It is required that planned development applications include the construction plans and a schedule of construction be filed and made part of any law establishing a planned development to assure the people of the Virgin Islands that no change after approval can occur unless the applicant has submitted a revised plan or schedule which may be approved by law and adopted (Section 232 (b). Submitted in file, items 13A. Engineering, 13B. Models, 13C. Renderings, and 23B. Development Schedule).

It is also required that construction needs to progress within two years of the legislature's approval, or the approval shall be void and resubmission to the Planning Office needed for reconsideration. Planned area development applications are treated like permit applications and require studies be conducted as part of a complete application package (File items 15. Cultural Assessment and 16. Flora and Fauna study). This is in stark contrast to a zoning map amendment

which does not require construction plans, studies be conducted, a construction schedule, or an expiration clause included for legislative approval.

There are various development options allowed by code under the current R-2 zoning, which are compared below: Subdivision, group dwelling, and the PAD.

Development Provisions	Planned Area Development Requirements	Development Proposal based on plans	R-2 Subdivision Development Requirements	R-2 Group Dwelling Development Requirements
Uses Permitted	R-2 uses with maximum of 5% lot occupancy by uses permitted in the R-3, R-5, B-3, & B-4 districts (5% of 11.162 acres is a maximum of 0.5581 acres)	R-2 uses only	R-2 uses which are a mix of residential and non-residential (19 uses as a matter of right)	R-2 uses which are a mix of residential and non-residential (19 uses as a matter of right)
Required Lot Area	Minimum of 5 acres	11.162 acres or 486,216.72 sf	Minimum 10,000 sf lots or approximately 48 lots	Minimum 10,000 sf lots
Required parking areas	Shall be provided as per Section 230 of the Zoning Code	195 parking spots	Shall be provided as per Section 230 of the Zoning Code	Shall be provided as per Section 230 of the Zoning Code
Permitted Density	Shall meet overall residential density requirements for the R-3 district (80 persons per acre or a maximum of 893 persons)	80, three-bedroom dwellings equivalent to 320 persons	Two dwelling units per lot or approximately 96 dwelling units	Eight dwelling units per acre or two dwelling units for every 10,000 sf (approximately 96 dwelling units)
Permitted lot occupancy for buildings/ structures	Shall not exceed 30% (30% of 11.162 acres is a maximum of 3.3486 acres/145,865.016 sf)	17.06% (82,940.24 sf)	30%	30%

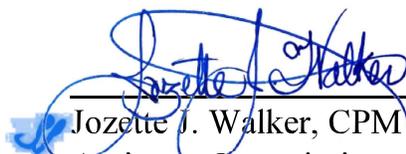
Maximum height limit	No residential structure shall exceed 6 stories	Two stories	Two stories	Two stories
Common open space (no building/ structure or parking)	Not less than 40% (40% of 11.162 acres is a minimum of 4.4648 acres)	65% of total acreage	No open space requirement	No open space requirement

A subdivision or group dwelling could result in greater density than what the applicant is proposing. The PAD is bound by the plans submitted and any change to increase density or allow for non-R-2 uses would require Legislative amendment. The clustering of the development, rather than a subdivision, and the required common open space will lessen the environmental impact and protect larger habitat areas. Subdivision would result in fragmented habitat areas and greater chance for stormwater due to more impervious surfaces (e.g. Roads and driveways for each lot). It is the department’s position that due to the properties’ topography they are best suited for a clustered development, rather than a subdivision, which would lessen environmental impact and allow for more preservation of green space. It is also noted that the PAD has the clause that construction needs to progress within two years of the legislature's approval, or the approval shall be void and resubmission to the Planning Office needed for reconsideration.

**Recommendation**

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources recommends the following:

Pursuant to Title 29 Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 3, Section 232 (b), Official Zoning Map No. STZ-6 for the island of St. Thomas be amended by establishing a planned area development on the R-2 zoned Parcel Nos. 4i Remainder and 4J Remainder Estate St. Joseph & Rosendahl, No. 4 Great Northside Quarter, St. Thomas as per the submitted file items 13A. Engineering, 13B. Models, 13C. Renderings, and 23B. Development Schedule.

  
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 Jozette J. Walker, CPM  
 Assistant Commissioner

4.15.2025  
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 Date

Cc: Jean-Pierre L. Oriol, Commissioner