



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Office of the Commissioner

January 13, 2026

USVI Bakkeroe Community Coalition

RE: Bakkeroe Community Coalition: Rezoning Formal Response

Dear Bakkeroe Community Coalition:

This letter is the follow-up response requested regarding the Zoning Map Amendment Application currently under review, namely, CCZP0091-25 (Sweetgrass Valley Properties, LLC requesting a rezoning from R-1 (Residential-Low Density) to R-3 (Residential-Medium Density) for Right of Way Parcel No. 1-68-A and Parcel Nos. 1-68-1, 1-68-2, 1-68-3, 1-68-4, and 1-68 Remainder Estate Bakkeroe, No. 5 Frenchman Bay Quarter, St. Thomas. The purpose of the request is to develop workforce housing.)

The following clarifications are provided regarding the below expressed concerns:

Undisclosed Parcel and Failure of Proper Notice; Requests for Corrective Action. Immediate and Complete clarification of all parcels included in the rezoning request. Parcels are identified from legal documents (deed and survey). The parcel disclosed in the public hearing and identified on MapGeo as 1-61-4 was correctly identified and disclosed on the application, notification documents and in the public hearing by its proper legal description 1-68-4. The applicant, in error, utilized the MapGeo identification of the parcel, however, the application correctly utilizes the proper legal descriptions as noted in the deed and survey. Therefore, the concern of failure of proper notification is invalid and inapplicable due to the proper identification of the parcels in the application, notification documents, and at the public hearing.

Proper public re-notification identifying the full and accurate list of parcels. The properties were correctly identified, as per legal documents, and adjacent property owners properly notified as specified by Section 239 of the Zoning Code (Virgin Islands Code, Title 29, Chapter 3, Subchapter 1, Section 239 (a) (1-3), which states:

1. A notice about the hearing, including its purpose, time, and place, must be published in a local newspaper twice. The first notice should appear 10–15 days before the hearing, and the second at least 2 days before. (The Daily News Ad was published on December 15 and 26, 2025 (receipt attached)).
2. Owners of all lots in the area being changed, and those within 150 feet of it, must get a certified mail notice about the hearing at least 15 days before it happens. (The certified mail receipts indicate letters to the applicant and adjacent property owners were mailed December 9, 2025, with the public hearing occurring 20 days after on December 29th (certified Adjacent Property Owners mail listing and slips attached, Listing prepared and Certified by the Office of the Tax Assessor).

3. A notice with the hearing details must also be posted on the property. (Photos and email confirming posted as of 12/11/2025 attached).

Rescheduled public hearing that allows affected residents a fair and informed opportunity to respond to the complete scope of the proposal. The concern of rescheduled public hearing is invalid and inapplicable due to the proper identification of the parcels and proper notification of adjacent property owners and the public in compliance with Section 239 (a) (1-3). Also, adjacent property owners and the public were notified of the file being available for review prior to the public hearing, giving them a public comment period of 11-26 days. The first registrant was on 12/15/2025 and the public hearing was held December 29th with the public comment period ending January 9, 2026.

Lack of Clarity and Scope of Development. A zoning map amendment application is required to submit a conceptual plan which is a high-level, preliminary document that outlines the broad vision, goals, and overall layout for a proposed project. A zoning map amendment application is not a permit application and thus not required to submit development details, detailed site plans, or parcel-specific explanations; such information is required at the permitting phase. Thus, Zoning Map amendment requests are analyzed based off the conceptual plan, public comments, and the newly adopted Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan. This is following Section 237 (c) which states in summary, when reviewing a zoning change request, the Planning Office looks at Recent development and land use trends, Land availability and suitability, Impact on the Virgin Islands as a whole, Zoning goals and district purposes, and whether the change fits the overall development plan. It is important to note that because a zoning map amendment is not a permit application, if granted by the Legislature, applicants are not tied to the submitted conceptual plan.

Incompatibility with Established Residential Character. Traffic, Parking, and Infrastructure Impacts. Cumulative Rezoning and Disregard for Comprehensive Planning. As specified in Section 237 (c), when reviewing a zoning change request, the Planning Office looks at Recent development and land use trends, Land availability and suitability, Impact on the Virgin Islands as a whole, Zoning goals and district purposes, and whether the change fits the overall development plan. Thus, the conceptual plan, public comments, and the newly adopted Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan are all reviewed and the above concerns will be analyzed.

Next steps in the review process. All public comments have been uploaded to the electronic file, and the applicant has been notified of their need to provide a formal response summarizing concerns with how addressed/plan amended to address. The applicant's response will then be attached to the recommendation report as an appendix.

Confirmation on how community input will be considered moving forward. Community input is incorporated into and analyzed in the recommendation report, required, along with the entire electronic file, to be submitted to the Legislature.

We thank you for your civic engagement, transparent communication, and unified community voice. We look forward to continuing the meaningful dialogue and transparency essential to maintaining public trust and ensuring outcomes that align with sound planning principles and established procedures. The department is committed to ensuring fairness, transparency, and that public trust is upheld.

Sincerely,



Jean-Pierre L. Oriol
Commissioner