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Leia LaPlace-Matthew
Territorial Planner
Department of Planning and Natural Resources
Division of Comprehensive and Coastal Zone Planning
45 Mars Hill, Frederiksted, VI 00840-4474

Via email: leia.laplace@dpnr.vi.gov

Re: Objection to Rezoning Application CCZP0069-25 (Parcel 6a Beeston Hill)

Dear Ms. LaPlace-Matthew,

In 1995, I moved to St. Croix as a young adult with nothing. From the moment I arrived, I felt at home, and over the years I have built both my life and my community here.

I appreciate Mr. Misbeh listening to the community's feedback on his initial rezoning request and adjusting his development plans to focus more on housing needs. As someone who has struggled first as a renter and later as a first-time homebuyer, I know how difficult it is to find affordable housing on St. Croix, especially without the support of generational wealth.

I also echo the comments made by Ms. Barnes at the September 15, 2025 public meeting: Virgin Islanders deserve the privilege of affordable housing. Most importantly, the privilege of being a homeowner. As Ms. Barnes reminded us, we each have a duty to provide not only for ourselves, but also for our community. That duty includes creating real pathways for young Virgin Islanders to return home, which requires preserving land for affordable residential development.

Rezoning Parcel 6a Beeston Hill from R-1 (residential) to B-2 (business) directly undermines this goal. While Mr. Misbeh proposes developing only 3 – 4 acres for a 24-unit housing project, the rezoning of the entire 15.94 acres to B-2 would raise land values, making the remaining acreage less affordable, and place it at risk for future commercial use. This would reduce the finite supply of residential land available for Virgin Islanders. Importantly, the proposed housing project can be built under the existing residential zoning and does not require a rezoning to B-2.

My opposition to the rezoning is not directed personally at Mr. Misbeh – G Max is one of my favorite stores, actually. Nor does it come from a sense of entitlement; everything I have, I've worked hard to achieve. My opposition comes as a long-time resident of St. Croix and a motivated member of the

community. I believe we must work together to use the tools already in place to support development while protecting the island we all love.

For these reasons, I support housing development on Parcel 6a Beeston Hill but strongly oppose the request to rezone it from R-1 to B-2.

I respectfully urge DPNR to recommend denial of the B-2 rezoning request and to preserve this land for residential use for Virgin Islanders living here today, for those seeking to return home, and for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,


Barry Guilbeau