

Mr. Jean Pierre Oriol, Acting Commissioner  
Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources  
Coastal Zone Management Program

Re: Summers End Marina Proposal



Good Day Mr. Oriol,

Two hundred years ago, if you were standing on the steps of the Emmaus Moravian Church, you could look out over the waters of Coral Bay and see sailboats at anchor in the harbor, the customs house on Usher Cay, and scattered homes and settlements along the shorelines. Today, you can stand on those same steps, and marvel at how little has changed - where once there were donkey trails there now are roads, but Usher Cay remains, the cannons are still in place at Fortsberg, and homes dot the hillsides. The pace of life is slow, people stop to greet one another in the street, and a person in need always finds an entire village to help. That is Coral Bay.

Our community has been built over generations, one stone at a time. Many of us who've come more recently have respected the traditional building methods, using stones and mortar, employing skilled craftsmen who were taught their trade here in the Virgin Islands. We've learned to respect nature - the force of a tropical storm, and the steady breeze of the trade winds. Not only have we had a hand in shaping Coral Bay, but Coral Bay has had a hand in shaping each and every one of us.

Many of us have built small businesses here in Coral Bay - woodworkers, artists, craftsmen, caterers, musicians and more. They are small, sustainable businesses which have grown with the community and fit the pace of life and meet the needs of our community. Many visitors marvel at how tight-knit we are - they often say that Coral Bay is like one big family.

And like a growing child we've made plenty of mistakes - our roads were not built to sustain tropical weather and heavy vehicles, our garbage receptacles overflow, and we've allowed our refuse to litter the roadsides. But we are a community of loving, caring people and we've taken it upon ourselves to learn from our mistakes and work hard to keep Coral Bay as simple, as beautiful, and as tranquil as it was before we arrived.

We are cleaning the waters of the harbor by improving our roadways and allowing the natural ghuts to filter rainwater before it reaches the sea. We are removing sunken boats from the shallow waters of the harbor. We'll work tirelessly until we find a solution for our perennial garbage problem. We, the people of Coral Bay, are dedicated to preserving, maintaining and appreciating the beauty which nature has bestowed upon this small piece of paradise.

All that we ask of this Committee is not to sell the heart and soul of our Coral Bay to any developer. The waters and the land beneath the sea are held in trust for all the people of the Virgin Islands. You are the trustees, and we beseech you to hear the people, and if you are really silent you might just hear the marvelous creatures who call those waters their home. You know what they are saying.

I, for one, will not be content until dolphins and turtles, eagle rays and fish of all types return to their ancestral waters, and I can sit at the shoreline and gaze in wonderment at the beauty which is Coral Bay.

Spoken from my heart,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David L. Silverman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

David L Silverman  
20 August 2014