

August 18,
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,

My name is Susan De Bonis and I am a resident and short term rental cottage owner in Coral Bay.

There are many qualified people that can speak to the detrimental environmental and infrastructure effects of the marina proposed by Summers End. I would like to address the issue on a more personal level.

I first came to St. John in the late nineties. My husband and I were staying on St. Thomas and took a day sail over to Hawksnest/Oppenheimer Bays...as we approached and saw the magnificent, untouched beauty we were overwhelmed... We fell in love... This was the tropical paradise that had eluded us through all our other travels in the Caribbean, all of which were overbuilt and commercialised. The next day we took ferry over to Cruz Bay and took an open air taxi tour of the island. When we got to the Chateaux Bordeaux overlook, we got our first breathtaking view of Coral Bay harbour. It was from that moment that we started focusing on the dream of moving to St. John one day. A process which ended up taking many years of preparation and planning...children finishing college, selling our home and our business.

When we were ready to move, we knew that we wanted to be on the quiet side of the island in Coral Bay. We had been struck by the physical beauty as well as the friendliness of the people...and the genuine sense of community...so lacking on the mainland.

We were lucky enough to find a property that had 2 cottages on it...one to live in, one to rent...which made it possible to afford the mortgage and to supplement our income so we could afford to live on this island where everything is so expensive. St John's economy is based largely on the rental home tourist industry. And in particular, people choose to come to Coral Bay because of its low key, simple, old time St. John feeling. One couple, who had been vacationing on St. John for years but had always rented in Cruz Bay, decided to come Coral Bay to rent our cottage. They told us that for the first time they felt they had finally experienced the REAL St. John! The donkeys and goats slowing cars allowing for great photos to bring home, the quaint local shops and restaurants, and last but not least the view of the harbour to Fortsberg, the East End and down the island chain, are but some of the things that bring guests to Coral Bay.

People who come to Coral Bay want simplicity, peace and quiet. I am against the building Summers End marina project because it will ruin everything people love about our little community.

It will scare away potential rental guests when they find out there will be major construction pounding pilings into the bay for years which will cause terrible noise pollution which travels all the way up the hillside. Most people actually inquire before booking whether there is construction going on nearby for this very reason. I believe this will destroy the fragile rental market which is just now recovering from the 2008 recession.

On top of that, many guests return year after year because Coral Bay is what they are looking for....getting away from it all....simplicity...beauty...peace...quiet...If this marina and complex are built with their high end designer shops catering to multi-million dollar yachts it will scare them away initially because of years of construction noise and scare them away forever because Coral Bay will never again be the place they wanted to escape to.

It will destroy the local businesses which cater the local resident's needs. They will go out of business because they will be displaced by high end shops or face astronomical rent increases which they can't afford.

I respectfully ask you to NOT approve the Summers End proposal which might benefit a few but at the cost of an entire local community.

Sincerely,

Susan De Bonis
10-32AB7 Estate Carolina
Coral Bay, St. John