



SUMMER'S END

G R O U P

Good morning Senators Francis and other senators, staff and my fellow Virgin Islanders listening in,

My name is Robert O'Connor, Jr., but most everyone calls me Bob. I am a native Virgin Islander and my family has called St. John home for generations.

I am one of the co-founders of the St. John Marina project. A marina in Coral Bay is a project originally conceived and initiated by generational St. Johnians and native Virgin Islanders. I am one of the owners of the Summer's End Group, LLC, developer of the St. John Marina project.

For more than 16 years I have been telling everyone about the deteriorating environmental conditions of Coral Harbor and our tragic loss of native St. John families due to economic strangulation. It is public knowledge now, environmental conditions in Coral Harbor and the economy of Coral Bay is on life support.

Right now, there is nothing on the horizon for St. John except the St. John Marina project. Today is a call to support environmentally considerate, sustainable economic development.

The St. John Marina is the only MAJOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT here that is ready to go for St. John! Already permitted, it has the support of the Governor and his Administration. I'd personally like to thank Gov. Bryan for support and actions as they are a testament to his commitment to helping generational St. John families.

This project brings immediate jobs, career and entrepreneurial opportunities for local property owners. In an industry currently dominated by the BVI, the St. John Marina also helps the USVI reclaim a leadership role in the multibillion-dollar recreational boating industry that has no access to St. John right now.

Like many St. Johnians of my generation, we have held a vision for St. John and Coral Bay to again be what it once was, a thriving marine community that offered opportunity to local families limited only by their imagination.

As part of Summer's End, I stand for this project and we are standing for local St. Johnians and their right to protect and develop their property establishing a legacy of generational prosperity. We are standing for local St. Johnians who do not want to be limited and told they can only have a "mom & pop" business, or they have to work minimum wage jobs.



SUMMERS' END

G R O U P

I am standing for those who have had to leave St. John in order to provide a quality life for their family or worse undertake low-level work in villas for people who are not from here but built homes in the hills and would do everything in their power to stop our people from economic freedom and prosperity.

Who are these people? The Coral Bay Council David, Sharon, and other or speculators like Paul, who would conspire together and solicit government officials to stop career opportunities and economic prosperity for local families on St. John.

Do you realize that we will have spent over half a million dollars on attorney's fees by the time this marina is permitted to fight those people....to fight those people trying to stop us?

Things have to change; they must change, or we locals may as well walk down the street and get on that ferry and leave now.

For years Summers End, the Marsh Sisters Trust (Eglah & Minerva), Calvert Marsh, Inc. (Calvert, Madeline, David), Kenneth Marsh, and our families have been standing together fighting a battle with our own government to complete this permitting process.

We have followed all of the rules. We have all of the approvals including the Board of Land Use Appeals. We have the approvals and support of the Governor. All that we are asking from the Legislature is authorization to lease the water from the government.

I continue to stand with and for local St. John families who don't want to be run off of the island due to a lack of, sustainable development.

I am standing for change! Change of the current conditions of "land rich and cash poor".

Why can't we be owners of a thriving multimillion-dollar business? Why can't we keep our land and develop it according to our own dreams and visions?

How do we stop our kids and our families from leaving? How do we keep our schools open on St. John? How do we save our dying culture?

The St. John Marina development begins to answer those questions. We must act now to have something for St. John.



SUMMER'S END

G R O U P

Everything is in order and in front of you to approve this project. You have had what you asked for since December 18, 2019....six months. As you requested, Gov. Bryan vetted and modified our permit as authorized by the CZM Act and sent you the consolidated land and water permit.

All of our land contracts are in place, in good standing and enforceable by law. We have FIVE attorneys who monitor the contracts and permit approvals and respond to the false accusations and claims by these groups and individuals which will continue until this permitting process is complete.

The permits are all there, just like you all requested and just what you asked for.

To continue and delay this permit from moving forward is only supporting those groups who would prefer to kill this project. To allow this project to be delayed for just one more day, is doing a disservice to our people, and supporting those who want all of us gone.

Why are we before the Legislature today? Simply, for authorization of a submerged lands lease.

We are asking for this legislature to authorize the water lease and in doing so ratifying the Consolidated CZM permit. For the record, this fully approved CZM permit was first sent to the Legislature for authorization in NOVEMBER 2014.

Right now, there is nothing on the horizon for St. John. There is no marina. There are no slips. There is no pump out. There is no organization or enforcement in Coral Bay.

The reality is, EVERYONE wins with the St. John Marina, including those that oppose the project. No one loses! Everyone wins, everyone benefits.

Without the St. John Marina only those trying to stop us win and all of us locals lose.

We are requesting the Legislature move forward and authorize the submerged lands lease that has already been approved by CZM, Board of Land Use Appeals and Gov. Albert Bryan, so that this project can begin helping St. John and local St. Johnian families realize all of the benefits of the St. John Marina and entrepreneurial opportunities.



SUMMER'S END

G R O U P

And as I close, I would like to take a minute right now to speak to all of my fellow Virgin Islanders.

For those of you who are watching this.... I say.... never give up! Develop your land!

Fight for your right to thrive and never give up on your dreams for a better Virgin Islands where local families can realize their dreams, potential, and thrive economically!

We are a loving people, a welcoming people. We welcome all but we should not be taken advantage of by the people we welcome. We ask that we be respected.

I will fight with you for as long as I can, but I want you to hear my voice.... never give up!
I have loved each one of you!

I stand for you all now and will be standing for you still long after I am gone!

My heart is with you all! May God bless you and continue to bless our beloved Virgin Islands.

Sincerely,

Bob O'Connor Jr.