



# Coral Bay Community Council

## 2016 Annual Newsletter

### Serving Our Beautiful Coral Bay Community

The Coral Bay Community Council (CBCC) has grown into a substantial **nonprofit community organization, serving environmental, planning, youth, and other social and public infrastructure objectives** since its founding in 2003.

#### **CBCC is “For People who love Coral Bay.”**

With 400 members and many more in the community offering their volunteer help, CBCC is able to undertake a broad range of projects for Coral Bay. CBCC’s base of financial support from your dues and donations and fundraisers has been growing. CBCC encourages regular Memberships & Donations, Planned Giving, Business Memberships and our new Visitor-oriented *Life Preserver* contributions campaign. CBCC’s Bizarre Bazaar on December 10th – our annual fundraising event promoting



local crafts, fun and food - has become a tradition. Join us!

CBCC employees are: Sean Richardson, Michelle Bransom and Scott Eanes. They manage our many projects. With leadership from the volunteer president and board, CBCC is expanding the range of environmental and community projects that can be accomplished.

Thanks to everyone in Coral Bay—including East End, Mandahl, & Bordeaux — for your volunteer activism and financial support. **Your dollar support provides the critical matching funds and base support that make it possible for CBCC to receive federal grants.** Let’s work together to be even more valuable to the community and nature.

#### **Board of Directors**

Sharon Coldren  
Robert DeBonis  
Wendy Davis  
Jason Hayman  
K. Sara O’Neill  
Joan A. Thomas  
David Silverman  
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### Coral Bay Watershed Management Projects

For more than a decade, CBCC has demonstrated its ability to be an effective watershed management agency for the large Coral Bay watershed. CBCC is both a planning and implementation-oriented advocate for environmental protection, that is balanced with economic growth within the community vision. CBCC does this through community forums and projects, partnerships with Virgin Islands government agencies, federal agencies, homeowners associations, and local businesses and individual volunteers.

Since 2008, CBCC has received more than a dozen grants from federal agencies (EPA, NOAA, USDA), foundations, professional associations, and local agencies, all for various components of effective watershed management planning and restoration implementation. CBCC is regularly recognized by federal agencies for its work and that of its many community volunteers and supporters. CBCC works with the Virgin Islands government routinely, including the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Public Works, Agriculture, Sports, Parks and Recreation and more.



**STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:** CBCC has several grants to work with neighborhoods to initiate stormwater management improvements, such as paving eroding road surfaces, and directing road water runoff into natural gaths as often as possible. Gerda Marsh Rd. and Calabash Boom Rd. improvement projects are almost complete. Freemans’ Ground, Johnny Horn Trail, and some other neighborhoods have received engineering advice and will be among the next

neighborhoods to get their ideas through the engineering, permitting and construction stages with CBCC help. Homeowners are raising dollars to match with grant dollars to accomplish the needed construction work. These projects will use financial support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, NOAA, DPNR EPA 319(h) funds, along with the in-kind funds and work from the neighborhood resident groups. Cooperation with Public Works and DPNR is essential to complete these projects.

CBCC was represented this year at the NOAA in the Caribbean Conference in Puerto Rico. We are often asked to share our work in stormwater management and the expertise we have gained.

#### **SOLID WASTE**

**MANAGEMENT:** With a \$73,000 USDA grant, CBCC will be conducting outreach on improving waste management

practices in Coral Bay and the VI, by engaging in campaigns to encourage the 4 R’s: Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle. We will start “at home” with composting, reduced disposable plastics, and more – working closely with the Island Green Living Association, the VI Waste Management Authority and other organizations and volunteers.

With USDA grants, these planning documents were completed for Coral Bay:

**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**POTABLE WATER SUPPLY PLAN**  
**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLAN**

#### **Please Make a Tax Deductible Donation & Become a Member!**

**CBCC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and relies on your assistance, both volunteer and financial.**

**Please give generously so we can be even more ambitious in service to Coral Bay. Thank you!**

## More Watershed Management ....

CBCC continues to share and encourage their use, and also seeks to implement recommendations in cooperation with residents and government especially on these critical issues of potable (drinking) water provision and effective treatment of sewage.

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:

**Empowering Youth to protect the Environment:** With this \$30,000 EPA grant, CBCC has been able to hold two workshop events for island youth to learn about environmental concerns impacting our ocean waters: especially illegal dumping and littering in our ghuts and the overall concern

in the VI about disposal of our solid waste and our role as citizens.

### LANDSCAPING MANUAL TO REDUCE EROSION:

NOAA provided a \$58K grant to



conduct outreach and write a manual on landscaping and other best management practice techniques that homeowners can use to reduce erosion and stormwater runoff into our bay. A commitment of \$30,000 of in-kind activities and cash support from our members/donors was required to receive this grant.

### MARINE DEBRIS REMOVAL:

CBCC used a NOAA grant of \$90,000 and matching funds and volunteer work contributing another \$50,000 —to remove more than 12 derelict vessels from Coral Harbor — an accumulation built up since Hurricane Hugo. Thanks to all the Coral Bay Yacht Club volunteers for all the shoreline cleanup too.

## Coral Bay Proposed Marina Resort Developments:

**COULD THEY HAPPEN?** In 2014, virtually everyone who loves remote Coral Bay was shocked by the Summers End Group (SEG) development proposal for a 149 slip megayacht marina and associated land development. We were even more shocked by its quick passage through the Virgin Islands Coastal Zone Management permitting process — ignoring substantial portions of local law. In 2015, when it entered the federal Army Corps permit process, over 15,000 people responded against it. CBCC, with Save Coral Bay, submitted well over 500 pages of comments and scientific analysis about the environmental detriment to the bay. All

Federal environmental agencies – EPA, NOAA, and FWS – opposed the design. The applicant has been required to address all these issues in writing to the Army Corps, for their review. At the USVI level, the appeals process and the lawsuit funded by the Save Coral Bay fund is proceeding in VI Superior Court.

Also in 2015-2016, the long-rumored Moravian Church Conference/T-Rex resort and marina development got public airings in community meetings, where there was much skepticism about the practicality of the details, such as water availability, wastewater management and wetlands protection. The marina design entered the

Army Corps process and CBCC again made the written proposal available on our website. Along with Save Coral Bay and other environmental organizations — more than 8,000 opposing public comments were received by the Army Corps — and hundreds of pages of analysis and studies from CBCC. What will happen now? With continued “watch-dogging” of the proposals, we are confident that smaller, more environmentally sensitive forms of economic development will prevail. *CBCC needs your continued financial support to have all the studies in place and to conduct needed education and outreach --to protect our bay waters.*

## On the Ground: Learning Spaces, Parks, and Infrastructure

**GUY H. BENJAMIN SCHOOL BECOMING COMMUNITY CENTER:** Partnerships in Hope, Inc., a small nonprofit, has led the way on beginning the reopening of the school as a community center. CBCC is working to assist this effort, especially to get public meeting space in Coral Bay, and find ways to use all the campus buildings to serve community needs and aspirations. St. John School of the Arts afterschool classes and an afterschool reading program are the first steps.

CBCC is developing a concept to use the historic veranda surrounded school building at GBCC as a **CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL EDUCATION CENTER** with exhibits serving school children on field trips, local visitors and tourists, and as a “[Welcome Center](#)” to connect local entrepreneurs sharing

historical/cultural tours & goods as their products -- with tourists and the public. Many organizations, elders, and government agencies are partners in planning this possible Center.

### AGRICULTURE CENTER BUILDING:

Repairs were done on this government-owned building using CBCC funds for the supplies and volunteer labor in cooperation with the American Legion. Phase 2: new gutters and a facelift on the bathrooms will be done next. It is available to the public for meetings, yoga and other exercise and youth and adult activities.

**BASKETBALL COURT:** There was a major disappointment this year when the VI Department of Sports, Parks, & Recreation & the

Moravian Church Conference backed out of supporting the Rotary Club of St. John’s plans to refurbish the Coral Bay Basketball Court.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** CBCC has ongoing work with government agencies and other involved parties to:

- Relocate the Main Dumpsters out of the mangroves to a new Recycling Center site
- Repair the roof at [Johns Folly Learning Institute](#)
- Encourage pedestrian walkways and nature trails for locals and tourists
- Preserve and showcase historic sites
- Add recreation areas

## Communications, Office Resources and CBCC Financials

**COMMUNICATIONS:** CBCC members receive several emails each month about news and upcoming events. Email is the major way we share news, and “call” for volunteers, participation and donations. We also maintain a list of other people in the community whom we can contact and include in public issues and activities. [Like us on Facebook—Coral Bay Community Council](#)

[Twitter: @CBCC\\_CORAL\\_BAY](#)

**CBCC continues to encourage real planning processes for Coral Bay and all the Virgin Islands that focus on capacity and infrastructure planning that will serve both people and the natural environment.**

**OFFICE:** Stop by CBCC’s office space across from Skinny Legs and see the resources that our members support. Many brochures are available with good advice.

**FINANCIALS:** CBCC’s annual detailed financial reports are available on our website. CBCC spent \$260,000 in 2015, and will spend about the same amount by December 2016 on projects to benefit Coral Bay. Matching funds and volunteer work double the real value.