



Coral Bay Community Council

October 2013 Annual News

Celebrating CBCC's 10th Anniversary!

It's the Coral Bay Community Council's 10th anniversary! CBCC was formed at a large community meeting in November 2003. Today, in 2013, we have grown into a substantial nonprofit community organization, serving environmental, planning, youth, and other social and public infrastructure objectives. This year, for the first time, CBCC created a logo—and a concept: *"For People who love Coral Bay."*

With about 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. In just the last year, CBCC has grown its base of financial support from your dues and donations to \$32K from \$22K, and now encourages Planned Giving and Business Memberships. Typically, for every dollar we spend, there is at least another dollar of in-kind services volunteered. CBCC has one paid staff member: Patricia Reed, the Environmental Projects Man-

ager. Now our challenge is both to sustain and continue to grow this support, so we can meet future needs.

With the continued leadership of its volunteer President and board members, CBCC has expanded the range of environmental and community projects that can be accomplished.

Thanks to everyone in Coral Bay for your volunteer activism and financial support. Let's work together to make our second decade even more valuable to the community and nature.

Check out our CBCC Website -
www.CoralBayCommunityCouncil.org
Lots of useful information for you.

Thank You! Jean Vance
our volunteer webmaster

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Coral Bay Watershed Management Project

The **goals** of the Coral Bay Watershed Management Project are to empower the community to **1) effectively reverse the past environmental degradation** caused by poor construction practices, badly designed roads, violated wetlands, and other human and development choices, and to **2) envision and plan for future physical and economic development that does not exceed the carrying capacity of the land and environment**, and provides all infrastructure needs (water, waste water, solid waste, roads, public services). Several grants, as well as member dollars and volunteers and agency partners are assisting in this effort. **Two new planning grants received from the USDA for Solid Waste (household trash) Management and Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment will be important focuses for 2014.**

The **Coral Bay Watershed Management Project** is grassroots-led, with professional and monetary assistance from government agencies. CBCC is using a 1:1 matching grant from the Coral Reef Conservation Fund to update the 5-year-old Watershed Management Plan and include more robust water quality improvement measures, with a focus on prevention of sediment & other stormwater contaminants reaching critical marine habitats (mangroves, seagrass and coral reef habitats with endangered species turtles and corals). Water quality monitoring efforts continue throughout Coral Bay, including another year of sediment monitoring by Dr. Sarah Gray, gully flow monitoring by Dr. Carlos Ramos-Scharron, and



secchi disk and gully turbidity monitoring by CBCC. CBCC concluded its year-long beach debris study and will be releasing the results soon.

CBCC was represented this year in USVI environmental meetings, including a climate impacts conference put on by The Nature Conservancy and a Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning workshop held by the Caribbean Regional Ocean Partnership and DPNR. NOAA & EPA staff have visited Coral Bay. We are also participating in the reactivated Non-Point Source Pollution steering committee. We are often asked to share our work of the last 7 years and the expertise we have gained.

CBCC hosted a visit by 12 watershed managers from Tortola and the Guanica watershed in Puerto Rico, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy to share the mitigation work we have done. The ongoing process of engaging residents and DPW in properly maintaining stormwater drainage into gullies and the bay to reduce erosion, and repairing and retrofitting 30 years of improper construction practices will continue.

Planning for Coral Bay's marine uses has moved forward this year due to efforts by CBCC and interested community members. Initial meetings helped focus planning efforts on water quality, marinas, shoreline access by the public, and moorings. Later meetings pursued more detailed investigations into how each topic affects Coral Bay and what activities should be undertaken.

Please Make a Tax Deductible Donation

CBCC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and relies on your assistance, both in time and financially. Please give generously so we can be even more ambitious in our scope of work. Thank you!

Planning: American Institute of Architects Workshop; Community Vision

AIA SDAT: Professional expertise was received free of charge from the American



Institute of Architects (AIA) Sustainable Design Team Program to hold a planning workshop and write a report about the direction of Coral Bay's future. The AIA Community Visioning Workshop was held in Coral Bay – May 29-31. Over 140 residents participated in the public meetings. Donations of lodging, food, and services supported the whole event. No CBCC funds were spent. See more info at

<http://www.coralbaycommunitycouncil.org/AIA.htm>. The AIA report will be available in mid-fall 2013. This effort has created a renewed interest in community interaction and planning that bodes well for the next community involvement steps, such as developing a short vision statement, and setting priorities. CBCC held follow-up community meetings July 29th and August 20th, and these meetings will continue.

COMMUNITY VISION SURVEY: In May, CBCC conducted a Survey Monkey survey about Coral Bay's community vision values and received 217 responses. It showed strong consensus – 90% and above - about the core values that should underpin Coral Bay's vision for the future, including environmental protection. Despite a strong desire for little change, people do want to see improvements, such as resolving trash and dumpster issues for a visibly cleaner environment everywhere in Coral Bay, adding a gas station, improving roads, adding recreational facilities and more. The conclusions and report can be accessed at <http://sdrv.ms/13Tvo4K> and at the CBCC website.

Coral Bay Job Club & Guy Benjamin School

CORAL BAY JOB CLUB: A \$4,500 VI Department of Labor Grant made it possible for CBCC to offer a summer program to 12 teenagers called the "Coral Bay Job Club", for the second year. The students learned to understand employer expectations; how to interview well, do role-playing, write a resume, and how businesses work. A follow-up after-school club, run by volunteer Bonny Corbeil, ran for 6 weeks in early 2013 at the Calabash Boom Apartment Community Center.



PLANTS & GARDENING: Children participated in an afterschool program on plants, value of wetlands and gardening.

GUY H. BENJAMIN SCHOOL SUPPORT: CBCC continues to support the goals of improving our local public school. It now ranks as the 2nd best elementary school in St. Thomas/St. John, and has dramatically raised its test scores in recent

years: for instance, rising from 43% proficient or better in math in 2009 to 72% in 2012! Compared to the territory, performance is particularly strong in the 4-6th grades. The value of this small school and its nurturing setting needs to be spread. Enrollment from all St. John is declining, and the school's continuance is threatened. CBCC provides encouragement and resources to support the staff, parents and students in making this school excellent and keeping it as the core of the community.

On the Ground: Wetlands Restoration, Parks, and Infrastructure

WETLANDS: Using a \$20k matching grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and EPA, which required CBCC and the community to provide another \$20k of in-kind services, we restored a degraded wetlands area in central Coral Bay (across from the current dumpster site). Volunteers, under the direction of a professional plan, removed invasive species, installed fencing and planted native species in the Phase 1 area. In Phase 2, volunteer parents are fencing and creating a toddler's park under the big San-San shade tree, and grants are being sought for play structures and more outdoor furniture. This is one more step forward in protecting Coral

Bay ecosystems! Learn more on [our website](#).

CLEANUPS: Thanks to all the volunteers and the Coral Bay Yacht Club members who always come out for the shoreline and roadside cleanups!

CORAL BAY OVERLOOK: CBCC worked with a donor to purchase gravel to repair the deep potholes at the popular scenic overlook. Land owner, Elvis Marsh, volunteered the use of his heavy equipment to transport and spread the gravel. CBCC looks forward to facilitating other "good things" for Coral Bay.

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 Basketball Court,
- * Encourage pedestrian walkways and nature trails for locals and tourists,
- * Preserve and showcase historic sites,
- * Add recreational areas,
- * Upgrade roads & other public infrastructure.



Communications, Office Resources and CBCC Financials

COMMUNICATIONS: CBCC members receive several emails each month about news and upcoming events. It is the major way we share news, "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 Bulletin Board](#)

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 across from Skinny Legs and see the resources our members support.

FINANCIALS: CBCC's annual detailed financial reports are available at: <http://www.coralbaycommunitycouncil.org/Board-of-Directors.htm>