

Senate Agenda

Today

The Economic Development, Agriculture and Planning Committee will meet at 10 a.m. in Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas to consider a bill limiting structures on St. John to no more than three stories; a bill relating to enterprise zones; a lease agreement between the V.I. government and Tropical Shipping Construction; and a major Coastal Zone Management permit between the CZM Commission and the University of the Virgin Islands.

Thursday

The Rules and Judiciary Committee will meet at 10 a.m. in Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas to consider a bill establishing a judicial branch Administrative office and an Advisory Management Committee. (Continuation of previous committee meeting.)

Friday

No meetings.

Senate committee considers bill expanding enterprise zones, creating commercial zone

By **ALDETH LEWIN**
Daily News Staff

ST. THOMAS — Senators will consider legislation today that will further strengthen the enterprise zones and create a commercial zone, offering incentives for investment in some of the territory's most blighted areas.

The Senate Committee on Economic Development, Agriculture and Planning is scheduled to meet at 9 a.m. today at Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas.

The bill, sponsored by committee chairwoman Janette Millin Young, previously was heard in September but held in committee.

Young said the bill originally contained a provision for the government to take blighted properties in the enterprise zones through eminent domain to fix them up and make the areas nicer.

The territory's enterprise zones

are Savan, Charlotte Amalie, Christiansted and Frederiksted. The program provides tax incentives to breathe new life into neighborhoods that have declined from once being socially and economically vibrant communities.

An amendment in the nature of a substitute will be offered today that strips the eminent domain component from the bill, Millin Young said.

In the new version, the bill seeks to codify Gov. John deJongh Jr.'s executive order expanding the enterprise zones in the territory.

The measure also would create a commercial zone, which also would offer incentives and tax breaks for people who want to invest and develop the town areas.

Young said the goal of both initiatives is to revitalize the towns and surrounding areas that used to be vibrant communities where people lived and worked.

Particularly in downtown

Sen. Janette Millin Young said the goal of both initiatives is to revitalize the towns and surrounding areas that used to be vibrant communities where people lived and worked.

Charlotte Amalie, the only shops are geared toward tourists.

"There's really no need for our people to come into those areas," she said. "So, we need to diversify."

The commercial zone measure was submitted to the Senate by deJongh in December along with several other pieces of legislation.

According to the governor's proposed bill, the Enterprise Zone Commission would designate Commercial Zone areas through resolutions passed by the body.

The creation of the Commercial Zone is to give property owners and small businesses an incentive to make the areas financially attrac-

tive for investment and, by extension, places to visit and work, thereby broadening the tax base, according to a statement issued by Government House in December.

The Senate committee also is scheduled today to consider a bill, sponsored by Sen. Craig Barshinger, to limit future developments on St. John to three stories.

Two Coastal Zone Management permits are also on the agenda, one for the University of the Virgin Islands and one for Tropical Shipping.

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