

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE SANDALS RESORTS INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC  
MEETING FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT RE THE  
OVERWATER SUITES AT SANDALS MONTEGO BAY ST. JAMES  
(APPLICATION REFERENCE NO: 2022-08017-EP00212) HELD AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES MONTEGO BAY ON WEDNESDAY,  
MAY 7, 2025, COMMENCING AT 5:50 P.M.

**PRESENT WERE:**

**The Panel**

Mrs. M. Stephenson Dalley - The Moderator  
Mr. P. Carroll

**Participants**

MR. R. Watson  
Dr. D. Crawford  
Mr. D. Brown  
Mr. A. Ngozi  
Ms. Christie  
Dr. A. Ross  
Mr. K. John  
Mr. R. Haggler  
Mr. N. Whittingham  
Dr. S. Dixon  
Ms. S. Evans  
Mr. Felix  
Ms. K. Berd  
Mr. R. Headley  
Mr. A. Bernard  
Mr. P. Diaz

**And residents of the community**

The Moderator: Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. Allow me to begin by inviting God's presence.

(Prayer offered by Mrs. Dalley)

So, good afternoon again. Allow me to acknowledge our Deputy Mayor, Mr. Dwight Crawford, who is with us this afternoon, and representatives from so many different agencies which are important for our purposes this afternoon.

I believe we have invited representatives from the National Works Agency, from the National Fisheries Authority, and, of course, the St. James Municipal Corporation.

Did I just see on the front row Councilor, Damian Brown? Howdy, good to have you, yes.

Of course. We have our Social Development Commission representative, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management. I see our friends from the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the Marine Division and otherwise, hard-working, yes, hard-working. The Jamaica Environment Trust. I am scanning to see if I find a representative from the Montego Bay Marine Park Trust, it is a very important organization to be here this afternoon. The Airports Authority of Jamaica, the Jamaica Beach Birthright Environmental Movement, of course, several representatives from Sandals Resorts International, and just

persons from civil society who are also stakeholders.

I am seeing representatives from the University of the West Indies as well, and other organizations which are affiliated, Synergy Designs Studio and Hue Lyew Chin Engineering Company Limited. I just want to make you all welcome and to say it is a pleasure for us to be here this evening.

Now, why are we here? We are here because Sandals Resorts International has to have a public meeting, and this meeting is part of the process in getting permission to construct 18 Over Water Bungalows, supported by 379 pylons. This proposal also includes beach work, nourishment and construction of groins east of the existing hotel. And when I say

existing hotel, I am talking about Sandals Montego Bay.

Now, NEPA's approval, as you, I am sure, know, is important, and their process is a rigorous one. It includes public notification, and specific responsibilities are placed on SRI to ensure that all is well. So, far they have done their flyers, their town crier, or wayside announcements, call it what you will. They have done their press ads, invitations to their neighbours, invitations to all stakeholders, invitations to just civil society, to be here, to have their voices heard as well. So, it is collaborative, but it is also part of NEPA's responsibility, as the agency that is responsible for the

conservation and protection and, of course, environmental management and compliance and enforcement, among other things.

So, this is a rigorous process. And as I said, the preliminaries have been done. The application has been made by Sandals Resorts to NEPA, and one of the requirements is an Environmental Impact Assessment, an EIA.

Part of the review process is to have the public consultation so various stakeholders may have an opportunity to hear what the project is about and to give their feedback, and so public comments will be submitted to NEPA for their consideration. Thereafter, NEPA will use the environmental assessment

as a tool in their decision-making process.

Now, we have an agenda, and I just want to say, you may hear matters coming up in the presentation, and you might have a burning question. Just make a note of it, because we would like to go through the presentations first, and right after that, we will hear your comments, your concerns. And we will take them in our question-and-answer segment, which will come later on.

All right, so I hope that sets the stage for our discourse this afternoon, and I am going to welcome you once again, and thank you for being here and hand over to the person

who will now take us through this first segment of the programme. And that is, Mr. Randolph Watson, who is the manager for Applications Processing at the National Environment and Planning Agency.

So, would you please put your hands together for him as he comes. Mr. Watson. (Applause)

Mr. Watson:

Good afternoon, everyone. All protocol observed. Thank you for the warm welcome to your lovely city. Our CEO, Mr. Leonard Francis, sends his greetings. He unfortunately cannot be here to today, but he has asked me to read a statement, and to just observe your proceedings today.

So, this is a statement from the National Environment and Planning



Agency re-the proposed construction of Overwater Rooms and structures over the sea at Sandals, Montego Bay, St. James by Sandals Resort International.

In September 2022, Sandals Resorts International applied for an Environmental Permit for the proposed construction of Overwater Rooms and Structures over the sea at Sandals Montego Bay, Montego Bay, St. James. Application No. 2022-08017 EP, 00212.

The information submitted in support of the application was reviewed and a decision arrived that an EIA, Environmental Impact Assessment would be required for the project. This public meeting is a preliminary action as required by the EIA process, and

thus, no final decision. Let me say that again, the EIA process is one that is required, and this meeting is part of that process. The agency has not made any final decision on this application.

Participants should note that the public meeting is deemed very important, and the outcome from the meeting will be submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Authority to guide the decision-making process. The agency's representatives, we have three persons along with myself here, and from the enforcement branch. We are here to support the process and to ensure that the public meeting is undertaken in accordance—in accordance with the terms outlined in the document titled, "The General

Guidelines for Public Consultation, EIA Applications”.

As a regulator, the Agency must remain objective, and as such, the team will not participate in making comments or answering questions in relation to the development. So, we are here as observers to ensure that the process is followed, in keeping with the EIA.

Of note, is a process with respect to the public presentation and the Agency wishes to highlight the following with respect to this public meeting.

- (1) A copy of the Verbatim Minutes of the public consultation is to be submitted to the Agency by the applicant within seven (7) days of

the date of this public presentation.

(2) The public is allowed up to 21 days after the public presentation to provide written comments to the Agency. All comments received..

(3) All comments received by the Agency will be collated and sent to the applicant for responses to be provided.

So, we are here for the meeting. You will be asking questions and answers at the meeting. The Minutes will be sent to us. We will go through the Minutes, the team—the residents and other members here, will have 21 days to provide a written comments to us, whether in support, objecting or asking for things to be done. All

right, so you have 21 days to do so, all right.

We will then take all the comments that come into the Agency, and we will send them to the applicant and ask them to respond, right. Okay.

(4) The issues raised, along with the responses provided by the applicant, are incorporated in the respective submission to the various committees and authority and will facilitate deliberation on the technical merits of the project.

(5) A recommendation will be made to the Natural Resource Conservation Authority, the NRCA, which is a body responsible for making the final decision.

Please note carefully, that the final decision on the application is the sole responsibility of the NRCA.

- (6) Written comments may be submitted to the applications Secretariat Branch of the Agency, that is NEPA at 10 Caledonia Avenue, Kingston 5, or via electronic e-mail, or electronic mails, two [applications@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:applications@nepa.gov.jm)

Let me repeat that, because you probably need to make a note.

Written comments may be submitted to the Application Secretariat Branch at 10 Caledonia, Avenue Kingston 5, or via electronic mail. And the e-mail address is, [applications@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:applications@nepa.gov.jm)

The agency views the public presentation and public consultation process as extremely important in the

processing and decision making. Public presentations provided, and an additional opportunity for stakeholders to air concerns, comments, opinions, views on the development, and afford the applicant the opportunity to address these concerns, comments, opinion and views.

Finally, please be reminded that the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and associated documents for the proposed projects are available for access by the public at the following locations:

- (1) The St. James Parish Library.
- (2) The St. James Municipal Corporation, that's Union Street, NEPA regional office in St. James, that is the RADA office, Catherine

Hall, and NEPA's Document Center at Caledonia Avenue, 11 Caledonia Avenue.

Also on the NEPA's website, which is [www.nepa.gov.jm](http://www.nepa.gov.jm) Again, comments can be sent to the Application Secretary Branch of the agency at 10 Caledonia Avenue, Kingston 5, or by electronic mail to [applications@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:applications@nepa.gov.jm)

Thank you very much for having us, and I hope we will have a very productive meeting.

Thank you. (Applause)

The Chairman:

Thank you very much. Mr. Randolph Watson, with that statement by the National Environment and Planning Agency, and quite a bit coming out of that application made in 2022. And the



decision was taken that an EIA was required, and this meeting is part of the preliminary actions that have to be taken.

No decision has yet been made, yes, so we need to reiterate that. But this meeting is very important because the outcome will be submitted to the NRCA, and NEPA is just here to ensure that everything remains objective, and they will not be participating in the Q and A later on. So, don't ask NIFA to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

And of course, Mr. Watson went through all of those points about the Minutes that will be submitted in seven days by the applicant, and that you,

members of the public, you have 21 days in which to provide written comments. All of your comments will be sent to the applicant, and they will have to provide answers to all of these questions at some point in time. And all of the issues that are raised, and the responses that will be given will be incorporated into the submission that will be made later on. And you can correct me if I am going wrong, Mr. Watson.

Your recommendations can also be sent to the NRCA, which has the final decision and the sole responsibility to approve the proposal.

Written comments, if you didn't get a note of the address, may be submitted to [applications@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:applications@nepa.gov.jm) or you can

send them to 10 Caledonia Avenue Kingston 5. And the agency views this public consultation as very, very important, extremely important, as it provides an opportunity for you to air your comments, your concerns, your opinions, your views on this proposal.

And if you wish to access the EIA, you have several routes through which you may go. You can go to the St. James Parish Library, just down the road at City Center. You may go over to our Deputy Mayor's office at the St. James Municipal Corporation, NEPA's Regional Office, which is located at RADA, which is in Catherine Hall. And of course, NEPA has a Document Center at Caledonia Avenue Kingston 5. You may also access the EIA there. And then,

you can go to the website as well;

[www.nepa.gov.jm](http://www.nepa.gov.jm)

I hope that summarizes all of what Mr. Watson said earlier, and that you would have made a note of that.

So, now we move to the presentation of EIA findings and measures to minimize impacts. I would like to bring to the lecture Mr. Paul Carroll, who is the Principal Consultant at Technological and Environmental Management Network Limited, who will take us through that presentation.

Please make him welcome. Lord man, we can do a little better than that. Clap him. (Applause)

**ENVIRONMENTAL                  IMPACT                  ASSESSMENT**  
**PRESENTATION**

Mr. Carroll: Madam, Master of Ceremonies, thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, very good evening to you all. I am Paul Carroll from Technological and Environmental Management Network Limited. It is a long name, so feel free to call us TEMN.

The Environmental Impact Assessment for Sandals Montego Bay, Overwater Bungalows and Villas, was done by Technological and Environmental Management Network (TEMN) and Environmental Solutions Limited (ESL).

Now, the presentation will cover some aspects, or most of the aspects that were covered in the EIA, but certainly not in the level of detailed that was

found in that 400 and odd page document, but enough for us to get an appreciation of what the project is about and impacts and approach to mitigation.

So, we will be looking, sorry a little bit. So, we will be looking like—at a description of the development, things like land use, and zoning for the area, proximity to protected area, the biological or ecological features of the area. Looking at things like the vegetation and species, flora and fauna. We are looking at land clearance that will be required, drainage, site drainage, sewage treatment, solid waste, chemical storage, buffer zones and setbacks. And finally, the project schedule.

So, the project involves construction of 18 Over Water Bungalows, and for the Bungalows, pylons will have to be done. And 10 Villa style suites, and this will involve wetland conversion and coastal modification, okay. And if you can see this, but this master plan shows the 18 Over Water Bungalows, the 10 suites, which are just east of the existing Sandals Mobay Boundary. And these are the 10 suites. And it shows the drawings which represent the coastal modification that is going to be required. And the cells between the drawings that are going to involve beach creation.

Now, the Sandals Resorts International has done developments like these at a

couple of locations. Sandals Royal Caribbean Jamaica, that is 17—where they did 17 units. Sandals South Coast, which is in White House, where there are 12 Over Water units. And Sandals Grand St. Lucian, St. Lucia, that development has nine units.

Okay, the location of the project. The proposed development, it is in this area, yeah... (Indicating on the slide) ...and it is east of the exist—the present Sandals Mobay propagation. So, it is located at the existing north—most existing—most eastern boundary of the Sandals Montego Bay Hotel. And it is east of the Montego Bay Harbour and north of MBJ, Sangster International Airport.



So, we looked at land use and zoning of the area. So, the predominant zoning within the area is for resort, and the land use within the area conforms with the resort zoning. The major land use and zoning along Kent Avenue is for airport and airport related.

Proximity to a protected area. You can see? This is a location of the project approximate, and this is the boundary, the nearest boundary to the project, site of the Montego Bay Marine Park. So, that is about two kilometers east of the Marine Park Boundary.

So, then we looked at the major habitats in the area, and we are talking mainly about seagrass meadows.

In shore, the seagrass meadows are very dense, near the reef crest seagrass is sparse. And you have a lot of macro algae, rubble and small coral mounds.

Ecological importance, common knowledge now. Seagrass are important nursery areas for fish and invertebrates. The seagrasses also stabilize sediment and improves water quality. They act as baffles in water quality and promote the settlement of sediment, keeping the water nice and clear. They also reduce coral erosion, and they also sequester carbon. We are talking about sequestering carbon. You know, everybody knows carbon dioxide is a very important factor in the global warming, and all plants

sequester carbon by trapping it from the air and converting it into biological mass in the plant.

The back reef area has dense *Thalassia testudinum*, also called turtle grass, and these are interspersed with macroalgae, including green algal species and brown algae such as *Sargassum*. These are typically found growing between the seagrass shoots. Seagrass cover observed ranged from 100 per cent inshore, and tapers off to about 38 per cent, near to the reef crest. On average, 86 per cent of the seagrass cover is attributed to turtle grass and 14 per cent to the *Syringodium filiforme*, otherwise called manatee grass.

The overwater structures could affect, we estimate up to point four hectares. Everybody should know. We know that a hectare is about two and a half acres, so that kind of gives you an idea of the scale. And about 200 square meters of grass will be directly impacted by the piling installation under the structures footprint. This is going to result in some seagrass loss. Okay, as you will see when we get further on, this is one of the things that we will recommend, relocation of seagrasses to be impacted, right. Two hundred (200) will be directly impacted, and then another 3,300 or so under the bungalows will be indirectly affected by shading caused by the walkways and the bungalow structures.

Groin installation for the coastal modification. That could result in up to loss of one hectare of seagrass.

Now, the seagrass we observed, or our ecological team observed, it is close to 100 per cent cover inshore, and it goes down to about 38 per cent at the reef crest. The shoot density is about—goes up to 587 shoots per square meter. And the blade lengths go up to 30 centimeters. And this indicates healthy, mature seagrass habitat.

Now, on the terrestrial side, mostly native species are observed. We didn't encounter any endemic species. You know, endemic species that are strictly only found in Jamaica, we didn't find any of those there. 75 per cent of the species were native flora,

and 25 per cent were exotic. Importantly, no vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered species were encountered at the site.

And I—just a little snapshot, a couple of snapshots from the site, which was, it is pretty much a degraded site, okay. We found plants like the woman's tongue trees, the black mangrove and the salt worth.

80 faunas. Our survey turned up 63 species of birds. 34 of those species were non-endemic and resident. Four Species were introduced, 21 were migrant species, and three species were resident, endemic. There was one species that we found with a special designated status, status by the IUCN, the International Union for the

Conservation of Nature, which we regard—which is regarded in the scientific community, as the reference for the status of species. This species was the white crowned pigeon, and this, the white crowned pigeon is listed as a near threatened species.

Okay, fish, on the reef crest and sea grass. Species richness, 31 fish species were recorded. All 31 were recorded on the reef crest, but—and 12 in the seagrass meadows. But we hasten to say that at the time of the surveying of the seagrass, visibility was not what we would have liked it to be, so that could be an underestimation.

Abundance and size, fish were primarily juveniles, reinforcing the importance of seagrass as habitat for—as nursery area for fish. And most abundant were the wrasses. You know, those very colorful reef fish and juvenile parrot fish. The Reef crests, therefore had high diversity abundance and it was dominated by juvenile parrot fish and wrasses. And the sea grass had fewer fish, as we said, this could have been likely underestimated.

Ecological importance, seagrass beds well-established. Sea grass beds are vital nursery and feeding grounds for juvenile fish.

The back reef. This is a section of the reef closer to shore, low coral diversity and abundance. We found six



species in this area, small colony size and the IUCN and status of these coral species were least concerned. On the reef crest, however, there was higher coral diversity and abundance. We found 15 species on the reef crest and the presence of *O. annularis* and *O. Faveolata*, the coral colonies predominantly were healthy, though some indication of the stony coral, crisp arm disease, infection, or the SCTL, which is a condition that is affecting corals throughout the Caribbean.

All right, so that is the basic features of the area. So, now we look at the economic impact.

The present room capacity of the Sandals Resort in Montego Bay is 272.

The intention is to expand and enhance this resort to a room capacity of 300. The 270 plus, the 18 Over Water Suites, plus the 10 Villa Style units.

The construction budget of US\$9 Million, approximately 120 persons would be employed during construction. And the project in the operational stage would provide 50 permanent jobs for the industry. And these industry jobs would be butlers, housekeepers, cooks, Chef, landscaper, waiters, concierge, representative and lifeguards.

So, now we went into the public to get an idea of what the public was thinking about this project and their views.

A total of 124 survey instruments were completed. We would have loved to add more, but you know, there were reasons that prevented us. But nevertheless, we consider that those 124 persons, their views were quite valid.

So, local stakeholders included Montego Bay Marine Park and Trust, and the MBJ Airport Limited.

Community residents within the study area, were 81. The business establishments within the study area, 32. And we were able to interview nine Fisherfolks from the White House, fishing Beach.

General concerns. Overall, 25 per cent of respondents had concerns, 73 per cent had no concerns. 2 per cent of

the respondents expressed uncertainty. For the business community, and a thread throughout the surveys was a lack of awareness of the project, we will see that. 84 per cent of the persons interviewed were not aware. 16 per cent were aware. 6 per cent had general concerns with the project as proposed. 81 per cent stated they had no concerns. 13 per cent expressed uncertainty.

Fisherfolks. Fisherfolks awareness. Same thread, low awareness. 73 per cent not aware. 27 per cent were aware. Concerns specifically with the bungalows being built over water. 55 per cent had concerns. 45 per cent had no concerns. Sort of close to 50/50.

Now, concerns expressed, specific concerns expressed included loss of fishing area, destruction of fish habitat, migration of fish, increased turbidity, loss of beach access, recreation area and fishing boat channel will be blocked. Now, let me hasten to say that these were the perceptions of the persons interviewed.

All right, so 64 per cent of interview Fisherfolks indicated that they had no concerns—no sorry, indicated that they had concerns about wetland and coastal modification being a part of the project.

Concerns expressed were as follows:  
There will be a loss of fish habitat,

72 per cent. 14 per cent cited increased turbidity, and another 14 per cent had no specific concerns.

MEJ Airport Limited. They saw it as a positive that the project would enhance Jamaica's tourism product offerings. But they were concerned about aviation safety, obstacle limitation surface. Obstacle limitation surface regards things that may be installed or used near to the airport that are of a certain height that could affect the movement of air traffic. Okay, and of course, they figured that the associated potential flight risk might in turn affect the airports operations.

The Marine Park Trust. Marine Park Trust representatives expressed concern about disturbing the wetland during construction and operation, and that that will negatively affect the existing ecosystems and marine life. They also brought up the point of possible surface runoff from construction and effluent discharge, and chemically treated water, particularly if this was going to be discharged from swimming pools that will be associated with the overwater villas.

Natural Resources valuation. Now, remember, we have been talking about how important sea grasses are, and corals are, and mangroves are. So, there is a discipline nowadays that is

called natural resource valuation, or ecosystem service valuation, and this recognizes that the value of these coastal resources is not just limited to the direct outputs that they produce, like the fish and the shrimp and so forth. But these resources have other very important and valuable services that they provide. So, demonstrating in economic terms, this is of these resources. It is very useful for policy and decision making regarding the use of an ecosystem. And this is in contrast to only considering the cost of values that we spoke about, like the fish that enters the traditional markets in the form of private goods. So, let's look at some of the other values, these values, okay.



So, ecosystem services that we are talking about here, that if we had to go and build those services through some physical structures, it would cost quite a penny. And we are talking about flood control, water quality improvement, water quality storm protection, commercial and recreation, fishing, shellfish harvesting, hunting, wildlife viewing, cultural services and regulatory services. And that has to do with the coastal ecosystem function, surface water detention, mangroves lining the coastal area. They prevent the free flow of water from land into the coastal region.

Mangroves also take up, very good at taking up nutrients. When we talk about nutrients, we talk about things like nitrates and phosphorus, nitrogen and phosphorus produced by human activity, by the phosphorus, and also by sewage effluent, the nitrogen, very important, mangrove, very good at taking that up sediment and other particular retention. It is also a good mangrove function, coastal storm surge detention, mangrove, shoreline stabilization, mangrove and coral reef and fish and waterfall habitat and so on. Those are the mangroves and habitat seagrass.

Now, another thing that we were asked to look at for the terms of reference was the archeological significance of

the site. So, an archeological impact assessment was done, and this was done by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. Now, the details, of course, are in the EIA. But the basic findings of the impact assessment for the archeological impact assessment, the basic findings were, they found no significant or tangible cultural assets or archeological items at the site. There was no evidence of occupation by Jamaica's Taino population. And there is little evidence to show that the proposed development area was utilized much during the plantation area.

Land clearance that will be necessary for the site. This land clearance will be carried out using heavy equipment,

excavators and trucks, including. And it would involve removal of trees, stumps, scrubs, stones and other obstacles from the area as needed to enable the construction. Of course, debris would be trucked away to an approved Solid Waste Management site for final disposal.

Drainage. No rivers or police are on the site providing direct runoff to the coastal waters. However, there is a major drainage outlet approximately—see that yellow, yellow label there, approximately 300 meters east of the site boundary. And this is for storm runoff, storm water runoff.

Now, because approximately to the sea this run off is tidally impacted, impacted—tidally impacted. Hence there are sluice gates. Sluice gates are

devices at the outlet of the effluent pipe that protects the on land from tidal movement.

Wastewater. In the near term, effluent is to be routed to the existing oxidation ditch wastewater treatment plant that is on property, on the Sandals Mobay property. And this treatment plant, the effluent of it does not go to coastal waters it is used on property for irrigation.

In the long term, the plan by the developer is to connect to the Rose Hall Sewage Treatment Facility.

Solid Waste. Solid Waste quantity is estimated for during construction, it is about 1400 cubic yards. And during operation, solid waste, solid waste is

expected to be about 22 cubic yards per month. Now, the plan is to send the solid waste to a compactor before being taken off property. Solid Waste will be removed by licensed contractors and taken to a site approved by the NSWMA.

Hazardous chemicals. No hazardous chemicals will be stored on site, and there is no demolition planned that will utilize explosives. Swimming pools will not discharge water to the marine environment.

Setback. The 10 villas, the closest one to the highwater mark, is greater than 100 feet.

Mitigation. Mitigation will include using silk curtains around all coastal construction that is to be done. Having on site an emergency preparedness plan with regard to mitigating spills, like oil spills and holding on site equipment to handle a small oil spill, such as sorbent pads.

Storm Water Management for the Overwater structures would include downspouts collecting run-off from the roofs using dispersion fixtures at the end to cut down as much as possible on the turbulence from the water hitting the marine environment.

The Site Waste Management Strategy would include having appropriate storage and provision of wastewater

bins for construction material and rubbish generated by workers. And there will be dedicated staff to collect rubbish that accumulates on the beach.

Mitigation will also include seagrass transplantation to identified recipients and sites. Use of turtle friendly lights, which are amber lights, as you can see in the middle photo to the top. A turtle monitoring program. Because, I hastened to say that even though we didn't see any turtle nest, or any evidence of movement of turtles, the beaches on the north coast is well established that they are used by turtles.



As part of the mitigation relocation of macroinvertebrates in the seagrass bed will also be done.

Collaboration with the Montego Bay Marine Park will be absolutely necessary, as with NEPA. And there will be training and outreach for staff and Visitors as a part of the Turtle Conservation Programme.

Also to be considered, is placement of structures on the floor of the sea, around the over water, rooms, including cladding on the pylons and walkways to encourage coral recruiting and improved marine biodiversity.

There has also been a commitment to engage with environmental stakeholders

to improve the marine environment of the area.

Project schedule. The project will take place over a period of two years and nine months, with construction happening within 11 months and the finishing and decorating taking place within nine months.

Thank you. Your questions.

#### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SESSION**

The Moderator: Thank you very much for that comprehensive presentation. Much food for thought. We are going to, at this time, open the floor for questions. Do we have any lights?

Mr. Ngozi: Hello.

The Moderator: All right, when you have the microphone, please just say your name

and the organization or community or whatever it is you represent. If you are just here as a citizen of Montego Bay.

Mr. Ngozi:

Hi. My name is Amarillo Ngozi. I am just a resident of Montego Bay, Architectural Designer, an Artist. I have a question about mitigation. I have had experience witnessing on a project where the relocation of—I think it was wetlands, like the mangroves were required for it to be approved, but the relocation was unsuccessful. But the project went along. Went along anyways. So, what I want to know is, is the successful relocation of the seagrass required for the construction to be like permitted, or is it just something that we are going to say we are going

to do, but it may not actually even happen?

The Moderator: Would you like to take that question?

Mr. Carroll: Thank you for your question. So, your concern is that you want to know if the mitigation is unsuccessful, if the project will still go ahead, okay?

Mr. Ngozi: Yeah.

Mr. Carroll: All right. Well, as you know, NEPA cannot answer any questions here. But in terms of NEPA's *modus operandi*, they are required, whatever mitigation methods they prescribe or they accept, they will be monitoring those methods. And as to how they react when they find, to the results of that that is to be seen. That is not something that we can really predict, okay. But I would think, I would think that they, if one particular initiative is not

successful, that they may consider something else okay. Bear in mind that mitigation sometimes is possible at the site of impact, but not all the time. It may have to take place at a national level. I will give you an example. I have known of recent mitigation where it couldn't be done at the site, but some mitigation was done somewhere else by funding some activity of an entity that was engaged in environmental work. So, you see, basically, we are saying that there has to be some—there will be, or there is always, some flexibility to actions.

Ms. Christie: Sorry, with regard to that exact question, we are aware that—I am not sure if you are, or your team. That when it comes to the...

The Moderator: Could you speak into the mic so that we can hear you better.

Ms. Christie: My apologies. Monique Christie from the Flanker Resource Center. And with regards to mangrove transplantation, that has been notoriously hard to do. In fact, it is almost always unsuccessful, and this is a natural barrier against what we, in this part of the world, in the Caribbean, are known to be prone to, storms and that cause massive flooding. And you are proposing to take away a natural barrier that we have and use methods that we know don't work to transplant them somewhere else, that may not be successful under the umbrella of it being replaced by another activity. Is that what you are suggesting, sir?

Mr. Carroll: To a certain extent, yes. But let me hasten to tell you that if you notice that one of the main mangrove found at this particular site was not the red mangrove, which are the real, the classic ones that protect the coastline, but black mangrove. So, it is a slightly different situation. Also, you will see in the EIA, especially the natural resource valuation section, that the wetland in question is heavily impacted at present. Okay, that is the—that is just the fact. So, we are not talking about your classic red mangrove, fully populated area. You are talking about an impacted area that had a lot of scrub as well as black mangrove.

Mr. Ngozi: I am going to say, I think the main concern, at least from me, I am sure

my friend here shares it, is that there is no incentive, really, for these projects to be successful, because they are proposed as mitigation, but it is not like they are prerequisite for the construction to begin. So, there is no real reason for Sandals, or any organization doing the construction to make sure that it is successful, to pour funds into it, to put it, to get research and resources here to make it happen. And even though maybe the concept of relocation itself doesn't solve the entire problem, it could really help in making these projects more sustainable. That is what I have to say.

The Moderator:

Point noted.



Ms. Christie: Yes, question, though. As we were saying, you see, I am afraid I have not gotten an answer. The transplantation of mangrove, to put it mildly, is difficult in an off itself. It is a natural habitat. Imagine we cannot replace it so too our corals, they take generation beyond which we are unable to appreciate to grow. And here we have a natural habitat that is sustainable and protecting the environment, providing nursery for our indigenous population, and you are proposing to remove it without saying, or saying, we will try, but we will be—we may be unable to replace it, but with one other activity. And I find that rather disingenuous and removing some of our resources from the environment. I just want to clarify

that is the fulsome of the situation,  
is that so?

The Moderator: I think you should just ask the  
specific question that you want  
answered, because, as it is, we are  
getting your sentiments which we want  
to hear but ask the specific question  
that you want to be answered, please.

Ms. Christie: My apologies. So, I am a psychologist,  
so, the transplantation of mangroves,  
which is notoriously hard to do. Are  
you—knowing that, since we have  
already established that, that is the  
case. What are the mitigations that  
you are proposing with regards to  
that? We know it is hard to do, and  
yet you are saying, oh, we are just  
going to put it somewhere else.

The Moderator: So, are you asking, based on what you  
have said, if these mangroves cannot

be transplanted. Is there another option in ensuring sustainability of the coastline?

Miss Christie: Yes, in a sense, my apologies.

Mr. Carroll: What I can say at this stage and again, is that the concern has been noted, and I am sure it will be in the verbatim notes that will be passed on to the regulatory agency. Because remember, in the final analysis, it is a regulatory agency that has to prove—that has to approve all the plans by the developer before granting that coveted Environmental permit. And based—and let me tell you, when a permit is granted, our experience is that it has—it is not just a permit granted. It is granted with certain specific conditions.

The Moderator: Thank you very much. We have a hand in the middle, and we have a gentleman in the back. We are going to take the lady first. Oh, we have a gentleman with the microphone in hand. Please go ahead, and then I will come to the lady in the middle.

Dr. Ross: I have three, hopefully, quick questions. My name is Dr. Andrew Ross. I work at Seascope Caribbean. We are a coral restoration firm, based here in Montego.

The first question is, where does the— where do these stilted villas sit in relationship—did you have a map to show us specifically where the reef crest, the back reef, the initial coral dominated back reef, and then where the sea grass would be, sort of, I guess, geographically? Just where

does the footprint of one overlap the footprint of the other?

Just point, just point, really, because I know where the reef is in that spot.

Mr. Carroll: The closest thing we had..

Dr. Ross: Just sort of put your hand over where the footprint of the thing will be. That will work.

Mr. Carroll: Okay, so this is the site. It is going to be developed for the 10 suites, and right on the border here at this ground, this is where the Overwater Bungalows are going to be.

Dr. Ross: Where they are going to stick out into—they are going to stick out under the seagrass, though, aren't they?

Mr. Carroll: Yes.

Dr. Ross: Could you just put your hand over where the specific location of where they will be, will be?

Mr. Carroll: Well, based on the scale of this, it will probably be about, about here.  
(indicating)

Dr. Ross: So, your fist?

Mr. Carroll: Yeah.

Dr. Ross: Oh, that is the end of the dock though. They are not maybe sticking out past that, aren't they?

Mr. Carroll: Right.

Participant: Fist or finger?

Mr. Carroll: Finger.

Dr. Ross: That is as big as the whole thing is?

Mr. Carroll: Yes, for the overwater bungalows.

Dr. Ross: You are fitting 20 bungalows at the size of the end your finger?

Mr. Carroll: Eighteen (18).

Dr. Ross: Eighteen (18) bungalows as the size of the end of your finger? How the heart shape will fit into that?

Mr. Carroll: Based on the scale of this, the scale of this. (Indicating)

Dr. Ross: I am looking at the top. And that would be about the same size as one villa, which would be about the same size as the end of your finger.

Mr. Carroll: Yes, I would say it is about here. (Indicating)

Dr. Ross: Okay, so how big of a circle will it make though, on that map? So, assuming it is the heart shaped thing that we are seeing.

Mr. Carroll: Difficult to say, but we are just...

Dr. Ross: The ballpark, it's fine.

Mr. Carroll: Yeah, ballpark is, yeah, I would say about that.

Dr. Ross: Okay, so you are in the high quality seagrass, but you are away from the from the coral?

Mr. Carroll: Yes.

Dr. Ross: Okay, that is good.

Mr. Carroll: Yes, we did identify that.

Dr. Ross: No, that is good.

Mr. Carroll: Yeah.

Dr. Ross: Okay. So, question number two is sort of answered. When did you do the coral surveys? Like, was it after the bleaching event of 2023?

Mr. Carroll: The coral survey that was in 20—the coral survey, I think that was about—close to the end of 2023.

Dr. Ross: Okay, so right in the middle that—there was a—why I asked, I guess, for the crowd, at the end of 2023, there was a major high temperature mortality event of the coral of that stretch of



basically the whole North Coast. And currently we are doing surveys to find certain species, looking for certain species. A lot of them are way back, but some of the ones that we are finding are in those sorts of, degraded back reef spots that you wouldn't necessarily expect to find them. So, as you are going through it now, that spot there, I don't see any reef, so I wouldn't expect to find anything there. But just my suggestion would just be to make sure that if there is any rock, have a really careful look for very specific verified species.

Mr. Carroll: Yes.

Dr. Ross: The third thing is, what we learned with the first set of villas at Sandals Royal was that basically,

well, I guess the question is, you are going to use—you spoke specifically to relocating seagrasses that were going to be directly impacted by the pilings. So, assuming the piling has a one-foot center, has sort of a one-meter footprint, what about all the sea grass that are going to be shaded that we know from the other site is very likely to perish? Is that going to be relocated, or is it just going to be quiet, is it just going to be sort of allowed to make its way?

Mr. Carroll:

That is an interesting question. Because, it is possible, as you will probably know, that the sea grass, sometimes they can respond to the shading by, you know, growing their blades a little longer, or something, you know, but you know.

Dr. Ross: the specific species that you are dealing with there are extremely light sensitive. They almost certainly perish. They placed with other species, and you got some great little relocation spots right there offshore.

Mr. Carroll: Well, we did—we have identified those as sort of, as also impacted, separate from those that will be removed. So that is something that will have to be addressed as well.

Dr. Ross: Okay, based on the experience of the other site, we can expect they are going to die. They are not going to persist.

Mr. Carroll: And sorry, let me add, there is also probably another consulate, something that could be considered as well, is making the walkway transparent.

Participant: We cannot support no more of this...

The Moderator: All right, we will soon come to you. We have one lady in the middle here who wants to make a point, and then we will come soon. Come to you, man, soon come to you, we want to hear from everybody.

Miss Evans: Good afternoon. I am Syrece Evans, I am a student of the University of West Indies. I study Marine Biology, and based on the EIA that you did, I can basically understand that the entire area is pretty degraded environmentally. The corals are degraded. The mangroves are degraded. And when you said that there weren't any black mangroves there, it is because the area was—the mangrove forest was already degraded, so the red mangroves are no longer present, and it is just black mangroves there.

Also, the proximity to the protected area is very concerning, because the major issue with this development is going to be sedimentation from establishing the overwater structures. So, sedimentation will travel towards the protected area, and sea grass and corals are very sensitive to sedimentation. So, what my question is, what is the long term—what is the responsibility that Sandal will have for the long-term destruction of the coastal environment, which is already affected because of climate change and other coastal and urban developments?

Mr. Carroll:

Question noted, and also of note that the—one of the key aspects of the mitigation; because we have studied the sediment movement in depth, and that is in the coastal dynamics

section of the EIA report. And we have identified that it will be extremely important to have those sediment curtains, or sediment traps that because the direction of movement is essentially from east to west, which is towards the marine park boundary. So, the use of the silk curtains will be extremely important, and will have to be monitored, not only just by using, but for their effectiveness. And they will have to be monitored by using, monitoring of turbidity at the site and turbidity down current. And it will have to be a situation where, if things get out of hand, then the construction is ceased, and it is going to—things can get out of hand, mainly by sea conditions. And that

will have to be monitored strictly and controlled.

The Moderator: And I do believe Mr. Watson had--Mr. Carroll had said earlier on that they will be working in very close partnership with the Montego Bay Marine Park Trust. And I do believe that it is one of the stakeholder groups that will help to hold them accountable.

Now, there was a gentleman in the back. Please go ahead, sir, please say your name.

Mr. Clarke: Linval Clarke.

The Moderator: A Fisherman?

Mr. Clarke: Yes, from 1996, I have been fishing from Flanker. And out of the channel that is Flanker there, from 1996 till they force us out, we go up a little place up a Harby beach where we have

to squeeze up about 20 of us up there. That piece of land down there, dem seh I am a boy we hear seh a fi Flaker land, fi put Flanker fishing beach, and for Salt Spring beach also. And we see nothing, Sandals take all of dem dumb, just because they want that land, and when dem working on it, the first bungalow, them take all of them dump and then pile it on the land and then pile it on the land. And that land was a level, you know, very smooth and pretty. The only thing that was over there is just the mangoes dem. nice, pretty mangoes, and a lot of birds, right. And threw dem want the land, what dem do now, dem teck the dump from the first bungalow and pile it—if you go over there you can see it. Stockpile the dump and dump



and dump. And then, now the Royal Caribbean, then build that bungalow up there, where they fisherman ever have access to when rough seas—we can't come through that channel up ah Harvey Beach, you know, because it is very dangerous. We have to take the White Church channel from down the bottom, because it is much wider. And then yuh come up in between and come up through Royal to come ah Tower Beach. You know what them do know? The jet was there, dem pushed the jetty further out now, and black us out. We don't have no more vacancy to come from that side, like from the White House side, to come up from Rio, to come up to inside—to the inside channel, to come to our beach in case of emergency, right. So, when you give Sandals those

access now to build those bungalows, you know what happens now, Sandals control the whole waterfront. So, in the case we go out there and weather back we up, we have no safe way to come in, because we can't come through the middle channel there, that is very risky, who is a fisherman knows that, very risky, you understand, and they just build the jetty without ask. NEPA not doing nothing for fisherman, unnu know, because NEPA should stop that. From they build the jetty and push it out and stop the free flow of the fisherman that should not allow, no way that should not allow. So, we can't take Sandals word for nothing what him talking about, you know. You give them the access they take the yard, you understand me. Sooner or

later, we have no access to inside from point to come up to Harvey Beach, we nah guh r have no access to that inside water, yuh nuh. Dem a guh teck over that channel and seh a fi dem. So, when sea rough weh have fi guh duh, we have fi guh sleep up there and mash up?

The Moderator: Point is noted, sir, thank you. There is another gentleman in the middle. Your name, good evening.

Mr. Ken John: Good evening. Ken John, the President for the White House Association, Fisher's Association. Just to clarify a couple of things that have been said. That area that you have been talking about, right, originally, it used to be a public beach, Providence Beach right. And Hurricane Allen did some damage to it, Hurricane Gilbert

came and finish it off, and the UDC, or whomever was responsible for that beach, was supposed to fix that beach that never happened water under the bridge. Anyway, just to point on something that that young lady was saying over there. That area has never been known for black mangroves, for red mangroves, just black mangroves. So, transplanting black mangroves that nuh make no sense, that is not going to happen. You have to kill it, because if you dig it out, and you plant it, it guh to dead, me and you know that true? Right. Now, along with the seagrass bed that Mr. Russ was saying, every time there is a development along the coastline, and you remove the seagrass grass-bed to replant the seagrass it never

happened, then dead. Them just come out and come ashore. And most everybody who is affiliated with Sandals know that, so that ah nuh new nothing. Anyway, if you move the seagrass bed, mi know it guh dead. But what I want to find out, how far from the shoreline of Sandals to the reef, the bungalows are going to be going. Because we use that area to go back and forth whenever we have bad weather, right, we set nets inside that area, certain times of the year, we set nets in there to get Jack fish and to get boney fish. So, we have been fishing in that area, we are going to lose that area, right, if you put that thing there.

Now, my concern is, if you put it out there, basically fisherman ah guh give

you, again a fisherman has always been giving up along the coastline. This is from Flankers to White House to Harvey's Beach to Lilliput, Success, we have always been giving. Now, I don't understand if Sanders wants to extend this thing out there, right, why take the beach? It was a public beach, wi nuh have no more, you ah tell mi seh we fi do down ah the park down in town. Who gwaan pay di children dem fee fi guh down there? You understand what I am saying? At that beach where I am living now, everybody from Flankers come there to bathe and it is a private land. So, my yard is like a public beach. When there is a public beach, you have right there, and you are going to take it away from us. I can't understand

why you want to do that. (Applause)  
You understand, this doesn't make no sense. This doesn't make any sense because quite a few years ago, I was approached by persons from NEPA and from the UDC. They come to my yard and ask me if I can't come and show them the boundary or the peg for that piece of property there, because I used to bathe on it. You understand, and a lot of people used to come there to bathe. And just because they don't want to fix the place, they leave it, because they have their plans a long, long time to do whatever they want to do. You understand. So, now then come on and them take it, and they are going to put it there. I am one of the persons who was canvassing when they came to find out exactly, how this

thing is going to affect the fishing industry, right? And me tell them plain. Mi listen, I am not approving it. I am going to say one thing, anything Sandals want Sandals get. That is the way it guh. Whether we say yes or no. If we say no, em a guh get it still. Ah suh mi look pon it, because with the point that he was making earlier, up by Sandals Royal...

Participant:

We have no access...

Mr. Ken John:

Hold on. With the point he was making up by Sandals Royal. All right, even with this meeting, I am the President for the group and I was never informed until Mr. Haggler called me last night and tell me about this meeting. And a customer of mine called me and tell me about this meeting. And we have a fishing group in White House,



and look how close Sandals—we don't have any bad blood between we and Sandals. But apparently, they don't want us to come to the meeting, because they don't want our voice to be heard. And I am feeling disgruntled about it, because we always have a good relationship with Mr. Stewart from the beginning. You understand what I am saying. And if it ah guh breakdown, it a guh breakdown, bad, bad, bad, bad, bad, bad, because this don't make no sense.

Along with the—let me finish. One thing to clear up with this gentleman round here. Up by Sandals Royal, we have a fishing village east of Sandals Royal. We have one west of Sandals Royal, and they were going to be extending the grinds, and them not

even have the common courtesy to call a meeting to say, look, how is this going to affect you? I was going at sea, and passing there, and they drive steel peg out in the water. Mi couldn't pass, you understand, and nobody nuh come to talk to we. That is a form of disrespect.

The Moderator: Thank you very much, sir, your comments are noted. We have somebody else who wants to speak on this side. Yes, go ahead, sir.

Mr. Haggler: Yes, Ron Haggler. Ron Hager, I live next door to Sandals.

The Moderator: Could you say your first name again?

Mr. Haggler: Ron.

The Moderator: Ron, okay?

Mr. Haggler: Yes.

Mr. Haggler: I live next door to Sandals since 1980, and I am telling you facts. No

joke. You mentioned waste disposal. Do you know the present situation, and for the last 25/30 years, of Sandals waste disposal?

Do you know that there is runoff, sometimes in the main road of human waste coming from sandals? Do you know that sandals have been spraying roundup and paraquat that make my guests, and my staff sick, and they keep denying it. They don't know what is happening. But the personnel who is spraying it, I asked him, what are you spraying? The first time, the gentleman told me it was Roundup. And I asked him; do you know what Roundup is? He said, No. And I explained to him what roundup was. I reported it to the General Manager of Sandals. Being reporting it for a long time. Then one

week ago, I came home, my staff was sick, coughing, wheezing. I saw the gentleman who was spraying. I asked him, what are you spraying? He said, paraquat. I said, "What"? He said, paraquat? I said, you are sure. He said, yes. Sandals denied it was paraquat. They sent the general manager to my colleagues. He said, we don't spray paraquat. I have all the invoices for the chemicals that come in here. You said something about chemical stored. You have any idea of what Sandals is spraying? Do you have any idea of their waste treatment plant when it locked down? Do you have any idea of the pipes that they have coming out of their building that is right next to me, that is pure things

in the sea, that turns the sea a different colour..

Participant: Six pipes run from Sandals go straight to the sea.

Mr. Haggler: Do you know anything about that? Can you speak on that? Can you speak on the chemicals and how they store them and where they store them?

Mr. Carroll: Well, let's take the last one first. The chemicals and how they store them. The work that we did, is related to the development that they are planning. The use of material that, you say, paraquat which is the same thing as roundup, same active ingredient. That is something that, yes, we didn't know anything about. We don't know anything. I can't—we can't speak to that. But if they, as we say, NEPA is here. All these things are

being recorded. So, I should trust that this is something that they will address.

Mr. Haggler: NEPA is aware of it. Because they have been out. They have been testing it. They test what was coming out of the pipes, but you never see them again. They are huge pipes, four-inch pipes coming out of Sandals. They tell me that it is the runoff from rainwater. I wasn't born yesterday. Rainwater doesn't turn the sea green, and it is right next to me. It has been reported to them over and over again, and nothing has been done.

The Moderator: All right, thank you very much for your comments, Ron...

Mr. Haggler: Hold on, hold on.

The Moderator: ...but I really would like for us to keep the conversation...

Mr. Haggler: I know that, but this...

The Moderator: In respect of the new development.

Mr. Ron Haggler: Yeah, this is people's health, because both of those chemicals cause cancer.

Mrs. Dalley: Your point is noted. I am just saying, let us try and keep the discussion in line with the proposal that we have before us, this evening. We have a hand in the back, and we have a hand in the middle here. Doc.

Mr. Whittingham: All right, good evening, good evening. Nayan Whittingham is the name. I am a resident neighboring Norwood Community, which we literally live on the top side of Flankers, so, I use the beach that you are talking about, all right.

So, I have a few concerns from the presentation that was made, yeah. I am not sure who is going to answer it,

if you can answer it, or if there are representatives whether the Government or the private entity that is the main shareholder, or stakeholder in this conversation.

For first thing, I heard conversation relating to a lot of wildlife, but I don't hear much about the community conversations that exist with this development. So, we hear all the seaweed and the mangrove, and all these things. What about all the communities that are impacted by the shift that this development is going to cause, which is a change. And what plans are in place for change management, if any at all, to get the people to be able to acclimatize to the changes, yes or no?



Another thing that I noted, and I have a question for..

The Moderator: Would you like him to take one question at a time?

Mr. Whittingham: I just wanted to run through it, because there are others. He doesn't have to answer all of them, but I will point to the one that I definitely want him to answer.

The Moderator: So, you don't need an answer to the question that you just asked?

Mr. Whittingham: Which is the one—which is the one that has to do with the research that is done, right. You talk a lot about 124 survey instruments, yeah. And I was asking the question across what stakeholder population was that done? Whether or not you applied parameters relating to ethical or moral or social concerns, and whether or not the

sampling, the sampling technique used was a simple one, or a stratified one, and why not a clustered one, which would more take into consideration the communities that are in immediate surroundings that would be impacted by this, versus asking people in greater Montego Bay about something that you said, 84 per cent of them were not aware, and so, could not say they had a concern for the project. Whereas, the people that would be impacted by the project were neither made aware of it, nor were there concerns reported in this research. That is what—those are questions for him specifically.

Mr. Carroll: All right, so let's take—let's say, first of all the change and the adjustment to change. The survey, as I pointed out very early, it is always—

the more you have is the better, okay. But the communities around, around the development, with the sample we used, they were surveyed about their perception of the project, and we think that has been expressed in the report. The other one—remind me of the other one? Keep the mic.

Mr. Whittingham: So, you want to hear the other question that I was asking?

Mr. Carroll: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Mr. Whittingham: So, first of all, well, first was asking, what were the parameters used to design the survey instrument, whether they were based on the data, is it on ethical, moral or social or economic variables? Because I hear a lot of economic variables coming out about the business community, and jobs and money, but I don't hear about the

ethical concerns for which many of them were raised just now. The moral concerns as it relates to pollution and waste management and the social concerns about the disruption to community life, the life of children that will be losing an opportunity, a green space for which they can play. And even the public beach, because we are talking about public versus private interest conversations here. A land owned by the public, but being presented here for private interest conversations. I don't mind a private interest, you know, because we all need development. But where the public is being impacted, we have to first measure things on what the public interest is and how is that being protected by the Government entity

that is involved in this conversation. So, that is what I was talking about. So, the second one again, ethical, moral, social or economic parameters were used to design the survey.

Mr. Carroll: Okay, and I am sorry. I am going to have to ask you to consult the detailed Environmental Impact Assessment.

Mr. Whittingham: I thought that was what we were here for.

Mr. Carroll: Ahh, well remember, the document is like hundreds of pages, so we really couldn't cover that all in here. But remember, there is a window, please. And if you--I trust you can find the time to review the very comprehensive social economic---socio-economic section of the report. And these questions, of course, that you have

raised will be addressed in the final analysis.

Mr. Whittingham: So, in concluding, though, my recommendation then, so no more questions. Is that a new study be conducted, better planned, better design and with better consultation, because it seems to have been rushed and missing a lot of critical parameters that would inform the type of output and outcome that we would need for a policy related thing. Because, make no mistake about this, this is not a business investment. This is a policy because now you are talking about something that is going to impact the public, where Government is involved, and how their decision may have a positive or negative impact

on the neighboring communities and peoples.

Thank you.

Mr. Carroll: All right, your comments and questions are highly appreciated. And I am sure that they will be recorded by our—by the Secretariat and dealt with.

Dr. Dixon: Good afternoon. I am Dr. Stuart Dixon, I am the psychotherapist at this Campus of the University, and I am way outside of my area. However, what I am hearing from the discussion that is that although this is an environmental assessment, there are issues that is far wider than the environment that comes to community health, mental health, livelihood and families. And I am not sure if this assessment that looks at, you know, moss and seagrass, I know it is very, very relevant. But

I am wondering if there is another type of assessment that is necessary to help us to determine how families and community, and family life are going to be impacted by this project.

Now, NEPA might not be the relevant agency to take on that piece of the evaluation or the assessment, but maybe we need to be partnering wider to find out which other government entities need to be brought on board to help us really begin to understand what is the impact of having this project in our community, not just how it is going to impact our coral and our climate change and our mangroves. But how is it going to impact families? How is it going to impact children... (Applause) How is it going to impact the fishermen? How is it



going to impact access to fish and shrimp and all the other pieces that does not seem to be adequately captured in this assessment. Albeit I think it is very thorough in the area in which it is covered. There is just a wider scope that I think we are missing. So, I don't know if this is a question for you to answer, or if it is for me to be recorded, that is really my interest, for it to be recorded, not necessarily...

The Moderator: We are recording all of the comments, verbatim.

Dr. Dixon: Yes, I know, not necessarily for it to be answered, but for it to be recorded for further dialogue.

The Moderator: Point is noted, Dr. Dixon.

There is a hand to the front and there is a hand to the back. Yes, sir, the microphone is coming.

Mr. Felix: Thanks a lot. Felix Montego Bay resident, this might be obvious by now, but I think I missed it. Sorry, Ma'am, are you the Sandals representative?

The Moderator: No, I am the moderator.

Mr. Felix: Right. Okay, well, that is even more confusing. So, if Mr. Carroll is not able to answer many of the questions. Who are we supposed to direct the questions at this evening? Because if NEPA is also not answering the questions, is it Sandals that we are supposed to ask the questions too? So, for example, those questions have been raised about the access to the formerly public beach, and on each

occasion, you have responded, thank you for your points that have been noted. But that is honestly not acceptable, actually, because it is essential at this time, this is your last opportunity. This is the public—this is the public meeting that the CEO of Sandals, or the Sandals representative, whose absences is noted, which speaks volumes. Say at this time, whether or not you do, in fact, intend as per Sandals' track record of locking off sections of the coastline from the general public. If this is an exception to that or not?

The Moderator:

Do we have a Sandals representative who is designated to speak this evening? I am not sure—this is really to look at the Environmental Impact

Assessment, and that is why Mr. Carroll is actually on stage with me. There is a young lady in the front with a microphone, but I believe, just to say that everything is being recorded verbatim. So, even if you do not get a direct answer this evening to your question, it will be noted, and everything will be sent back to NEPA. The point that Dr. Dixon made earlier on is also well taken that perhaps it needs to be more than just an Environmental Impact Assessment that is done. And something that is deeper and wider, that will include the social aspect of the project, be considered. Yes, but just to assure you that all of this is being recorded and it will be taken into consideration.

All right, Ma'am in the front.

Miss Berd:

Kimisha Berd, and I am resident of Flankers District. I want to express the concern on the aviation concern that was discussed on the projector here. The coral reefs to actually have the bungalows out in the coral reefs is going to displace the planes landing position, of course. And we have seen where the airport has expanded its proximity along the highway, along Flankers, it has expanded. So, my concern is, if the aviation comes into play, where the plane has to displace from its normal route, what is going to happen to the community that is directly in front of the airport. What is going to happen to the highway? Is it that we are going to have the highway like in our

yards, in our backyards? Because, as you can see, there are a lot of, you know, houses. There is a high density of people that live, like right there, right where the airport is. So, that is my concern, really.

The Moderator:

Thank you. Your concern is noted. There is a lady in the back with her hand up. Could you pass the microphone to her for me? Please give her an opportunity to air her concerns.

Mrs. Clarke:

Sandra Monroe Clarke, President for the Flanker, CDC. And just for the record, I was informed of this meeting by a text yesterday. The community was not informed. We were never consulted. I have never seen anyone doing an evaluation in the community, because when I got the notice, I asked. So, I too support Mr. John's point that I

think it is disrespectful for something that impacts Flanka and White House and no community consultation was done to say what impact it will have on us. What will it have on the Fisherfolk? How it will impact the children who go to the beach to swim. And that is all—we are concerned about, the corals, yes. And the mangrove, but we are not concerned about the people, and I think we need to look at that. Thank you.

The Moderator: Thank you very much, Madam President of the CDC. Let me give that gentleman in the back an opportunity to air his voice.

Mr. Headley: Yes, mi realize that you have over..

The Moderator: What is your name, sir.

Mr. Headley: My name is Roy V. Headley, I am a concerned citizen from Norwood. But

what happened? We have over 40,000 residents around this community, between Norwood, Flanker, White House. So, it is over 40,000 residents, but sitting down here, and here you say, you do not have everybody to answer the community's questions, the questions that, things that going to affect the community, that is an insult, straight.

Second, I heard that when the project starts for two years and finish, they will connect in the future. And I don't know that date in the future, with the system to Rose Hall Treatment Plant, so in the future. So, that might be the future will never come, because every year is in the future, simple.



You see, I realize there is—all the time, there' i a pie that is sharing, and pie nuh carry crumbs, but sometime the community wants a slice of it, and might be the slice is too big for the community, and that is the reality of life. So, residents around the community and around Jamaica have a beach problem, and they want to access the beach whether they are returning resident with their friends and family, neighboring community, and that is the problem. So, we need fi get the relevant authority that can answer the questions that the community has to ask, straight forward.

The Moderator:

All right, let me just remind us that the representative from NEPA said earlier on that a copy of the

verbatim, that is as it is said, exact word for word, is being captured, and it will be submitted to them in seven-  
within Seven Days of this meeting taking place.

Also, be reminded that as citizens of Montego Bay, you have 21 days to provide written comments. You can write your concerns, you can submit them, and I believe they can be submitted electronically, or you can take them into Kingston to 10 Caledonia Avenue Kingston 5, which is where the NEPA office is. And all of the questions and comments that come from this evening's consultation will be sent to Sandals Resorts International, and they must provide written answers to all the questions that you have raised this evening. So,

don't feel anyway if you don't get an answer right away today. All the questions, all the concerns, all the comments, the opinions that you have shared, are being captured and will be sent to Sandals Resorts International, and they will be expected to provide a written response.

All right but go ahead and let me just take somebody who has not had a chance to speak. My friend in the back with the microphone, please go ahead. I will come back to you, Ma'am.

Mr. Bernard:

Thank you very much. My name is Allan Bernard, and I am the People's National Party candidate for Northwest St. James. But most importantly, I am also from Flanker, and I am familiar with this beach. This was my stomping ground, public beach, Flanker

Providence Beach. I too got wind of this just two days ago. I saw the newspaper article. I think it is quite misleading. It says that Sandals was about to build bungalows in the articles, on, I think, April 17, and that, you know, send up a red flag. Because, for over a year now, the community has been, you know, making moves to clean up their beach, as was outlined earlier. A lot has happened where we, in good faith as a community, would have allowed for certain activities to be conducted on the beach, the expansion of Sandals and dumping the rubble, I mean, the expansion of the airport, a lot has happened. And so, I heard a term used in the EIA, and I was quite taken aback. And I wrote the term, and the-

you said it was disregarded site was that it, if I get that correctly. It was a degraded site, that is what it was. I don't know what that means, but it doesn't sound good to me.

You know, we use it, and we were again in good faith, allowing other activities to take place. S

I have 35 questions. I read the document. I read the EIA document. There are 35 questions. Obviously, I can't ask all 35 here, but I am certainly going to add some more to it and submit it for consideration, and hopefully we get some response.

But I think the main—I have two major questions. One has to do with really our prescriptive rights as a community, and our customary rights as a community, to recreation and

fisheries access to our beaches. I read the report, and I can go back to it if I miss it. But I am not certain if it was captured when this was being put together. And it is important; this is not the only thing. You would have heard in the news that we have concern with the beach, as was outlined earlier. And then I am not clear, I am not clear as to where ownership of this property is when we requested the documentation from the Land Agency. All the properties around it were numbered with requisite numbers. These two properties that we knew belong to the community, they were blank. So, we are not clear. And when we saw the newspaper article we were wondering if it was sold, and then we have bigger concerns, because

we know, you know, you can't sell the sea, you know, is it a least arrangement that was made, and if so, there is no Act. So, there must have been some agreement that should have gone through our Parliament. I am not certain what has happened that certainly was not captured in the report. These are important questions for beach access, you know, fisheries and our recreations, we are very concerned.

I am going to make one point here, one point that is based on our prescriptive rights and our customary rights, and I am hoping that the laws ultimately will be adjusted to reflect this, because we cannot continue to lose our beaches. But we are very keen that until this matter is settled, the

community will continue to use its beach, and as was the case in some other areas, we will not allow for any, under any circumstance, any fencing of this property to happen. I know you said it, it is a consultation, it is not a done deal, I heard that. But, I am making it unequivocally clear, now, that we will not, because we know what our rights are, and we will not allow for any fencing of the property to take place. (Applause) And we are watching it. Already people are watching it around the clock. And if there are attempts to do that, we are going to remove it, because we know what will happen when it is fenced. Our access will be restricted until this is resolved. And we know the time it will take to



resolve this. And we know that concurrently, in other instances while these things are being resolved, other things are happening that will further distance us away from having access to our beach.

We have 35 Christians to submit for your responses. And I gather that we have four more that I heard coming out of this. So, 39 Christians will be submitted from us, and we hope that Sandals will respond. And it is not going to take us two weeks to submit them. They are getting them next week.

The Moderator:

You have 21 days. Thank you.

A hand in the front, and one more in the back, and then we can perhaps say good evening. Unless we have any other burning questions. You have a burning one too. All right, go ahead.

Ms. Christie: This I would like noted to Sandals International-Sandals Resorts International. From the conception of Sandals Resorts International when it was just Sandals, the surrounding communities, as well as this organization, Sandals Resorts International, enjoyed a partnership, and this partnership, we in good faith, the communities surrounding, Flankers, Norwood and White House. We took that on with the understanding that this relationship would benefit us both. At no point did we, the communities surrounding this organization, think that there would come a day when this organization would choose to, (teary-eyed) I am getting emotional, sorry. Okay, would choose to deny us access to the beach.

It was originally our beach. We were using all the beach. There was never a crowding issue at a beach. And now, through continued expansions after expansions after expansions, we have always said what benefits Sandals benefit us. But now it is getting to the point where the greed of this organization is disenfranchising the communities. We will not give you our beaches. We--look, look at it, look at the size of Sandals Resort, and the size on that map of what we have left. Grant, all that you see continuing onwards, we had free access. I grew up. I was born in 1984, I wasn't here in 1984, but I grew up accessing all the beach, access, access, access. And with the development of that organization, we said, Yeah, and we

cheered you on. We participated, we helped to build and now, look at what we have left. Look at that, that little section, that is all we have left.

Participant: And they want it.

Miss Chrisite: And you are proposing to say, oh, guess what, I will give you 50 jobs. What? Fifty low-level skilled jobs, and you give us your beach, you give us access, which we will never give you again. No fisherman. (Applause) When—the only reason that they do not deny the gentlemen in the kayak is because they cannot rule the beach, and they tried their best, they tried their best. They can't put their foot on the sand you know. They have to stay in that little canoe and kayak, sorry, and sell their wares.

It is at the point now, where this relationship is no longer of—can we say it is no longer a symbiotic in relationship, you are becoming a parasite, and we will not allow you to take everything from us and give us 50 jobs. That is not acceptable.

(Applause)

The Moderator: Thank you very much. Your point is noted, and we just want to have a final comment from the gentleman beside you, the gentleman in the back, and Dr. Dixon, you will have the parting words this evening.

All right, let's move it along, please.

Mr. Ngozi: I did have a question about the silt nets, because I am imagining like, if you have a net for silt, it is probably too small for the fish, the

small fish, the juvenile fish, to be able to pass. Is it that that the silt net is going to be a barrier, physical barrier, like separating the ecosystems, and the how would that affect? So, does the silt net itself have an ecological footprint, an ecological impact, if it is supposed to be a mitigation?

I do have one more..

The Moderator: Let me just ask Mr. Carroll to respond to that one, please.

Mr. Carroll: The silt curtain. It is really a curtain, and what it does. It slows down the movement of the water so that the sediment has time to settle out. It doesn't go right to the bottom, because most of the sediment that you are trying to control is moved by surface current. So, it just extends

down, just as much as is needed to give that surface, sediment in the surface enough time to settle.

So, in theory, it should not really affect the movement of the fish.

Mr. Ngozi:

This is, I guess, something to be noted, because there is no one from NEPA here to answer. And based on the concerns raised by the people who actually live in the community, and the fishermen and the neighbour of Sandals, I am puzzled as to why this development, new development, is even considered when the sustainable—the social and ecological sustainability of the existing development is something that can be questioned? So, like it is obvious that there are issues here. So, I feel like these things should be solved first before

anything else is even considered.

Thank you.

The Moderator: Thank you, thank you as well. You wanted to address...

Mr. Ken John: I just wanted to get...

The Moderator: We are not hearing you, so just wait until you get the microphone to speak.

Mr. Ken John: What distant will the bungalows be from the reef, from shore, from the shoreline, out? What distant out you are talking about, 50-feet, 300 feet, what?

Mr. Carroll: All right, well, let me say, first of all, the bungalows will not—will leave enough space between the reef and the bungalows to allow access to fishermen.

Mr. Ken John: Okay, I take your word for that. right for that.



Mr. Carroll: Well, I like that after comment, and I am sure it will be noted. Because remember, one of the things that we noted from the survey was concerned with access to the boat channel.

Dr. Dixon: My question is really more about process, because I am recognizing that there is a lot of social issues that come outs. And one of the last recommendations I made was about maybe we need another type of assessment. Now we have people here from NEPA, and we have representatives here from Sandals. So how would it transition to the next level for that type of dialogue to occur? Which agencies are we going? How do we get it there? So, we are hearing that there is a need for it, but yet, I don't think the

entities here can address that. So, how do we get it to the next stage?

The Moderator: Your question has been noted, and Mr. Carroll wants to respond.

Mr. Carroll: All right, to that question, I would say that yes, yes, yes. I would say that this meeting being a part of the process, but being an old NEPA man myself, but actually NRCD myself, I understand that functions like these not only influence or affect the specific development under consideration, but can also influence policy, broader policy going forward to other developments. Because—yeah, exactly right.

The Moderator: Okay. Thank you very much. And a final comment.

Participant: Okay, 21 days is not long enough, because the community was not

notified. So, more than half of the people don't know anything about this project. So, it is not really fair at all to give us 21 days for us to organize and submit all the questions, because there are a lot more questions out here in the community. This is a community thing, not just the few people that is here, like the gentleman said, it is 40,000 residents in this area, and all of them, every one of them, need to know what is happening? Where are the beaches, the access? What happened to their land? What happened to access? Because it is a Jamaican culture, on Saturdays and Sundays, to take your family to the beach they are trying to take that away, cannot happen. That is culture.

The Moderator: Thank you very much. All right, I hope we have exhausted all of the questions here this evening, the comments. You have a final one, sir, a parting shot. All right? So, one final comment before we close this evening.

Dr. Ross: I think we are just—everybody sees the Tik Tok, talking about playing sounds on reef to bring corals and fish back. You are talking about nine months of piling sound. So, is there going to be mitigation to the sound and the concussion and so on related to driving the piles into the heavy construction?

Mr. Carroll: Well, one approach to the mitigation would be to use piling techniques that are less impacted. You know, the low noise piling techniques. I don't know, my associate, Mr. Diaz, our

oceanographer. Pier, you want to add a little to that for me?

Mr. Diaz:

Good everyone. Andrew Ross how are you doing. As far as that issue with the piling and the sounds, that is not something that normally is taken into consideration. I guess that is some new break in technology.

What I want to say, generally, overall, though, is that, for the record, I think NEPA needs to have, not only a meeting for the environmental assessment, we need a town hall meeting to introduce the proposed project to the community. So, that—just a general layout to say, we propose to put these villas and hotels here. What are the concerns of the community? The fishermen are the most important, because they are the ones

as well as the neighbours. But the fishermen are using the channels. One good thing I can realize is that Sandals needs to keep their water sports alive. They use the channel, so they will be maintaining that channel for themselves. So, you can be assured that the access won't be cut off in that, in that scenario.

But we need to have just a town hall meeting for everyone to air all of these concerns. These will now be taken into account by the architects and the planners of the whole project, and then it can be put together in a more holistic way to so as not to impact especially the community, that sometimes you are not really thinking of every little thing that can go wrong. And you need the input of the

community to surface and bring these issues to life. The issue of the beach access is interesting because I am not, maybe you guys can let me know how much was this beach being used before? Is it regularly used by the community? Is it something that—we know it is degraded, but that is because it has been through a couple hurricanes, and because it is in a bad state, and maybe it is not being used.

*(Sotto voce comments by participants)*

Well, NEPA is the ones who are responsible for the Beach Control Act, and we must know ensure that NEPA is working in our interest as the Government body. We know that we have a shortage of beach access, and we

have to preserve public beaches. We have 80 public beaches around the island that can be rehabilitated into very good, wonderful beaches as they were in the past. We must impress upon NEPA, with all this development going on, leave public beaches and rehabilitate them. In most cases, I am an oceanographer, so I studied the beaches, they have been through many hurricanes, and they have just been thrown down, and the only time they have been rehabilitated is when NEPA will divest them to somebody to put up a restaurant or charge people to open the bar or something. In the older days, they used to have the beach up-kept by the Government, bathrooms, changing rooms, free access. You could come to the beach on the weekend,



bring your rice and peas, and your food and everything with your family, and you have free access. This is Jamaica. It is a beach country, we shouldn't be climbing through fences and all kinds of things.

Participant: Every hotel have an access to the beach.

*(Sotto voce comments by a participant)*

Mr. Diaz: Exactly. Yes, in the sea because the hurricanes have damaged it. So now out of this meeting...

Participant: The UDC and the Parish Council, they don't come back and fix it.

Mr. Diaz: No, the Beach Control Act is administered by NRCA. They are the ones that must, this must fall in their lap, and they must now, take up the reins and ensure that we as the Jamaican public have access to good

beaches, even if private developers need to do their thing, otherwise. We can't stop development. It is what drives the whole country. But at the same time, we have to have our thing for ourselves.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

The Moderator:

Thank you. Thank you very much.

All right, I believe we are at the end of an interesting evening. Many persons have had an opportunity to say what is on their heart, to have their say. And as I close, I want to thank Mr. Carroll for his presentation and for walking us through and for answering the questions that he could answer. Unnu clap him nuh man. (Applause) You had Mr. Carroll on a firing line up here. And I think he

did well to answer as many of the questions as he could.

But before I close, I just want to remind you, I know it is an emotive kind of a situation. It is not something that you come, and you are just bland. People feel strongly about what you are talking about this evening. And so, we appreciate hearing from you, from your heart.

So, the copy of the minutes for this evening, as I said earlier, will be submitted within seven days, seven days from today is what? Today is Wednesday, so by next week, Wednesday morning, yes, which would be eight days, but I am not sure it includes the weekend days. So, let's say Thursday, it should be submitted to

NEPA, and you have, the gentleman, Ron down the back said 21 days was not enough, but that is what we have to work with. So, I encourage you to knock heads, come together, say what you have to say, within the 21 days. Those comments should be written, and you can send them to NEPA. NEPA will then compile the information, all of what has been said, and they will send it to Sandals Resorts International, and they must provide written answers to the questions that you have raised this evening. And responses will be incorporated into the submission, which will go to the NRCA, which has the final decision and the sole responsibility to approve this project.

The point that was made earlier on by Dr. Stuart Dixon, I think that is something that perhaps my friend from NEPA will have to take to another level to see whether some sort of assessment outside of an economic impact assessment can be done.

And also, the point that was made by our oceanographer that perhaps a town hall meeting is something that NEPA could consider putting in as part of the process before you actually get to an Environmental Impact Assessment, so that more people are advised, and are aware of what is happening in their communities.

I note the fact that some people have said that you were hearing about this for the first time yesterday, or the day before, and somebody just sent you

a text and say, you know about this. And some of the community groups that are represented here this evening by at least two Presidents, I think the Fisherfolk President and our CDC President, they are both here, and so, there is obviously some more room for collaboration and partnership, and the discussion has to continue.

But please remember that you can submit your written comments to NEPA. You have two means. You can send it in to 10 Caledonia Avenue, Kingston 5, or you can e-mail in to [applications@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:applications@nepa.gov.jm)

So, make a note of that e-mail address [applications@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:applications@nepa.gov.jm) or if you prefer, you can get it into Kingston, and I am sure someone will sign to say they have received your correspondence

and get your information and your concerns logged by that means as well.

I do believe that NEPA is serious in having this consultation, and that it is a very important part of the process.

Also, if you wish to read the Environmental Impact Assessment, you have as many as five avenues, and I will read them again for you. I made a listing when Mr. Watson was speaking. You can access them at the St. James Parish Library. You can go to the St. James Municipal Corporation, our Deputy Mayor is here, I am sure he will be happy to guide you to exactly where at the St. James Municipal Corporation, you can get the document.

NEPA's Regional Office, which is located at RADA Catherine Hall, and NEPA's Document Center, which is housed at Caledonia Avenue, at their head office. And if you wish to go onto their website, you can also access the information at [www.nepa.gov.jm](http://www.nepa.gov.jm)

So, let me thank you for being here this evening. I think it was a worthwhile encounter, and we will be listening in the days ahead to hear the outcome of the deliberations.

Thanks again. God bless you, and we invite you to have some refreshments before you go.

Good evening.

The meeting adjourned its sitting at 7:56 p.m.



