

## Exhibit J: Historic District Description

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Caneel Bay Resort Historic District Buildings and Other Structures**

Laurence Rockefeller assembled a team of prominent designers and construction professionals for the initial development of Caneel Bay. The team included architect Louis Bancel LaFarge of LaFarge, Knox & Murphy in New York; Henry Beebe, a construction engineer who had previously led construction at Colonial Williamsburg; and New York interior designer Ann Hatfield Rothschild.

Before becoming Rockefeller's lead architect, LaFarge served as a leader in the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) section of the Allied Armies, also known as the "Monuments Men," and was a founding member of the New York Landmarks Preservation League.

LaFarge and Rockefeller envisioned guest rooms and cottages positioned as close to the shoreline as possible, designed in a Mid-Century Modernist style. Their approach featured clean-lined, low-slung structures built of wood and concrete, painted in natural tones to blend seamlessly with the surrounding landscape.

#### **Caneel Bay Resort Historic District Designed Landscape**

Rockefeller commissioned Landscape Architect Bryan J. Lynch to create the resort's original landscape master plan. The design featured multiple clusters of guest units dispersed across the property, each nestled within lush plantings that framed views of the Caribbean Sea and natural beaches. A network of tree-lined roads and pathways connected these clusters to central facilities and to expansive turf areas planted with Bermuda grass. These open lawns offered long, unobstructed views toward the surrounding mountains and the sea.

The architectural character of the resort was Modernist, elegant yet understated, ensuring that the buildings did not compete visually with the landscape. RockResorts, Rockefeller's resort company, recruited horticulturists trained at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to manage the landscapes and curate a distinctive plant collection. With Rockefeller's approval, RockResorts horticulturists Roy Thomas and Alan Kettley expanded the plant palette over time, drawing on their Kew connections to introduce species that were rare or unusual in the Caribbean.

Historically, the turf areas were accented with palms and other specimen trees. However, a lack of maintenance since 2017 has allowed invasive species to overtake former lawn areas and planting beds, leaving the historic landscape overgrown and more difficult to interpret.

Historic master plans, planting plans, photographs, and interviews with horticulturist Eleanor Gibney and former resort architect Glen Speer were essential in reconstructing the character of the landscape during the Resort Era and identifying the components that remain today. The attached site map shows all buildings, structures, roads and the majority of pathways within the landscape leasehold premises, dating from the Resort Era. The initial priorities for preservation treatment of certain buildings are also identified.

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### **Caneel Bay Resort Historic District Building and Site Character Defining Features**

- **Window/ Louver Panel System-** This system is one of the more significant character-defining features (CDF's) throughout the Caneel Bay Resort. The window/louver system consists of a wooden jalousie/louver panel above and below three glass window-tiles. Some units have variations of this configuration and are full-height floor to ceiling along the facades facing the beach, while full-louvered panels or half glass/half louvered panels are primarily located on the facades opposite the beach facades.
- **Floating Stairways-** Floating staircases are structurally suspended without any support from the building wall. The floating staircases at Caneel Bay Resort are located along the exterior of many of the two-story buildings. The stairs are constructed of plank concrete steps with handrails. Floating staircases are a typical feature of Mid-Century Modern architecture.
- **Terrazzo Flooring-** Terrazzo flooring is a durable polished floor made of chips of marble and/or stone combined with concrete and resin. It can be poured in place or installed as tiles. Terrazzo flooring was popular in the Mid-Century period and is characteristic of a high end mid-century architectural surface. Many units throughout the district have terrazzo flooring.
- **Decorative Masonry Screen-** Decorative masonry screen walls were constructed with breeze blocks and were used selectively within the resort building clusters. The screens are made of concrete blocks with decorative pattern openings. The walls are typical of Mid-Century Modern design and provide privacy while allowing air circulation.
- **Decorative Stone Walls-** Decorative stone walls are located throughout the resort. Stone walls consist of mortared natural stone sourced locally. Stone walls utilize a variety of sizes of stone. The mid-century walls appear to be constructed of a block back-up wall and a stone veneer.
- **Stone Rubble Foundation-** Many of the buildings were constructed with a stone rubble-veneer foundation. A variety of sizes of local stone were applied as a veneer to cast-in-place concrete. The foundations integrate the buildings with the landscape.
- **Rustic Wooden Doors-** Select units have rustic wooden doors and rustic, surface-mounted hardware. Although dating from the mid-century, the doors reference the Danish-Era plantation history of the site.
- **Custom Exterior Lighting-** Select units within the district have rustic light fixtures. The typical hanging metal sconce lantern with a spherical globe and metal cage was likely designed for the resort. Although dating from the Mid-Century, the lights reference the Danish-Era plantation history of the resort.

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- **Flat Roof with Overhangs-** Many, but not all, units at the Caneel Bay Resort were constructed with flat roofs and a deep overhang beyond the building exterior walls. The flat roof emphasized the buildings' geometrically simplified shape, typical of Mid-Century Modern architecture. The roof overhangs provided additional shade and extended the interior living area to the exterior, also typical of the mid-century, and appropriate for this climate. From early photos, it appears that for drainage purposes, pyramidal shaped roofs were atop the flat roofs; although most of the roofs have been altered and no longer have this feature.
- **Poured Concrete Construction-** Mid-Century Modern architecture utilized concrete to create simplified forms that amplified the shape of the building rather than the texture (such as with siding). For the most part the concrete at Caneel Bay has been painted or sheet rock has been applied to the surface. This likely dates to the original mid-century construction.
- **Integrated Patios-** Many units have integrated patios made of stone or tile including private courtyards and courtyards shared with one other unit. These patios represent an effort to blend the exterior and exterior of the buildings and provide private outdoor living spaces.

### **Caneel Bay Resort Historic District Character Defining Landscape Features**

#### ***Vegetation***

There are 675 historically significant trees within the resort landscape representing 72 tree species. Most species date to the Resort Era, but some date to the Danish Era and the earlier Taíno Era. Smaller trees, shrubs and perennials designed to surround the guest units of the resort are still extant, as indicated in the historic design drawings. While many are in poor condition, some can be rejuvenated through encroaching vegetation removal and regenerative pruning. Due to time constraints, the smaller trees, shrubs and perennials were not mapped. Eleanor Gibney and the other resort Horticulturists worked to amass a collection of rare and unusual tropical species, to magnify the horticultural quality of the landscape.

Historically, the turf areas were punctuated with palm trees and other specimen trees. Lack of maintenance since 2017 has allowed invasive species to colonize the former turf areas and plant beds, resulting in the landscape plan becoming overgrown and more difficult to comprehend.

#### ***Small Scale Features***

There are many small-scale features associated with the landscape. Most of these features were associated with guest units. Features included stone retaining walls and free-standing stone walls, stone planter walls, and concrete foot baths. Domed light bollards were located along many of the pathways. While many of these features remain today, any future design should incorporate the existing features and any additional features should work to compliment the previous design concepts while not attempting to duplicate them e.g. the domed lights on the pathways were

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intended to provide downcast light, in designing a modern replacement for these lights the design should meet the function of the historic lights using modern technology but not attempt to be an exact replica of the original lights.

### *Circulation*

The circulation patterns within the Caneel Bay Resort Historic District reflect a deliberate and historically significant approach to landscape planning and guest accessibility. The curvilinear alignment of the asphalt cement concrete roads, typically 10 to 12 feet wide, demonstrates mid-20th-century design principles that prioritized both vehicular flow and aesthetic integration with the natural terrain. These roads remain clearly visible today underscoring their enduring role in site navigation and spatial organization.

Pedestrian pathways, constructed primarily of exposed aggregate concrete, were designed to foster walkability and intimate access to guest unit clusters. The variation in path widths, from 6 to 7 feet for main walkways to 3 to 4 feet for terminating paths, illustrates a hierarchy of movement that guided guests from communal areas to private accommodations. The use of concrete pavers near some guest units adds material diversity and reflects evolving design trends or phased development over time.

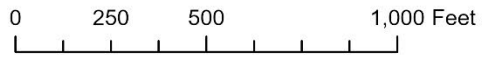
Although many paths are now partially or wholly obscured by debris, their underlying structure remains a testament to the site's original circulation logic. These pathways not only facilitated movement but also shaped the experiential rhythm of the site, contributing to its historical identity and architectural coherence.

The site map shows all roads and the majority of pathways within the landscape leasehold premises, dating from the Resort Era. Most roads are asphalt cement concrete and generally followed a 10-12 feet wide curvilinear alignment. Paths are exposed aggregate concrete and provide a way to access all guests unit clusters on foot. Main paths vary from 6-7 feet wide, and paths terminating at guest units vary from 3-4 feet wide. Some pathways near guest units were constructed of concrete pavers. Most roads are clearly evident due to debris clearing, but most paths are partially or wholly obstructed or covered with debris.



# Caneel Bay Resort Historic District

Virgin Islands National Park  
 Building Treatment Areas



- ..... Drainage Ditch
- ..... Pathway
- Road

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 Overseer's House</li> <li>8 Metal Gunset Hut</li> <li>9 Waste Water Treatment Plant</li> <li>10 Reverse Osmosis Plant</li> <li>11 Laundry Building</li> <li>12 Ice Plant</li> <li>13 Generator</li> <li>15 Uniform and Room Service Building</li> <li>16 Housekeeping Building (Human Resources 2)</li> <li>17 Central Storage</li> <li>18 Little Caneel Beach - Rooms 3-4</li> <li>19 Little Caneel Beach - Rooms 1-2</li> <li>20 Little Caneel Beach - Rooms 5-6, 8-12</li> <li>21 Little Caneel Beach - Rooms 13</li> <li>22 Main Building</li> <li>23 Gift Shop</li> <li>24 Factory</li> <li>26 Caneel Beach - Rooms 30-35, 40-45</li> <li>27 Caneel Beach - Rooms 36-39, 46-49</li> <li>28 Caneel Beach - Rooms 26-29</li> <li>29 Cottage Point - Rooms 50-51</li> <li>30 Cottage Point - Rooms 52-53</li> <li>31 Cottage Point - Rooms 54-55</li> <li>32 Cottage Point - Rooms 56-57</li> <li>33 Cottage Point - Rooms 58-60</li> <li>34 Cottage Point - Rooms 61-63</li> <li>35 Paradise Beach - Rooms 64-66</li> <li>36 Cottage 7 - Rooms 78-7F</li> <li>37 Scott Beach - Rooms 67-70</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>38 Scott Beach - Rooms 71-74</li> <li>39 Scott Beach - Rooms 75-78</li> <li>40 Scott Beach - Rooms 79-82</li> <li>41 Scott Beach - Rooms 83-86</li> <li>42 Turtle Bay Beach - Rooms 87-98</li> <li>44 Turtle Bay Estate House - Rooms 101-102</li> <li>45 Turtle Bay Estate House - Servants' Quarters</li> <li>46 Hawknest Beach - Rooms 106-109, 118-121</li> <li>47 Hawknest Beach - Rooms 110-113, 122-125</li> <li>48 Hawknest Beach - Rooms 114-117, 126-129</li> <li>49 Garden View - Rooms 136-138</li> <li>50 Garden View - Rooms 134-135</li> <li>51 Garden View - Rooms 139-140</li> <li>52 Garden View - Rooms 141-142</li> <li>53 Courtyard - Rooms 143-152</li> <li>54 Garden View - Rooms 153-163</li> <li>55 Garden View - Rooms 164-166</li> <li>56 Fitness Center</li> <li>57 Garden View - Rooms 132-133</li> <li>58 Managing Director's Guest House</li> <li>59 Managing Director's House</li> <li>60 Employee Gym</li> <li>61 Caneel Bay Pier / Main Dock</li> <li>64 Dive Shop</li> <li>65 Animal Mill - Sugar Mill Restaurant</li> <li>66 Original Manager's Cottage</li> <li>67 Caneel Beach - Rooms 22-25</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>68 Caneel Beach - Rooms 18-21</li> <li>69 Caneel Beach - Rooms 14-17</li> <li>71 Massage Center</li> <li>72 Overseer's Kitchen</li> <li>73 Servants' Quarters</li> <li>74 Mechanical Building</li> <li>75 Concrete Water Storage</li> <li>76 Modern Modular Unit</li> <li>77 Gift Shop Warehouse</li> <li>78 Facilities Office</li> <li>79 Engineering Warehouse</li> <li>80 Carpenter Shop</li> <li>81 Staff Dining Facility</li> <li>82 Security Office</li> <li>83 Staff Locker Rooms</li> <li>84 Motor Pool</li> <li>85 Engineering Storage</li> <li>86 Employee Lounge</li> <li>88 Welcome Center / North Shore Road Gate</li> <li>90 Carpenter Shop 2</li> <li>91 Human Resources</li> <li>92 Tennis Pro Shop</li> <li>93 Bus Shelter - Main Building</li> <li>94 Sugar Hill Restaurant - Annex</li> <li>95 Turtle Bay Estate House</li> <li>96 Cottage 7 - Room 7A</li> <li>97 Central Storage - Loading Dock</li> <li>98 Main Building - Open Kitchen</li> <li>99 Turtle Bay Estate House - Rooms 99-100</li> <li>100 Restroom - Hawknest</li> <li>101 Restroom - Scott Beach</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

Priority / Treatment Objective

- 1A
- 1B
- 1C
- 1D
- 1E
- 2A
- 2B
- 2F
- 3B
- 3C
- 4F
- NA

