



PRESS RELEASE

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Port St. Maarten Management Updates Down Street Business and Community Council Association about Walter Plantz Square

September 01, 2015 – Port St. Maarten Management Team led by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mark Mingo recently met with the Down Street Business and Community Council Association (DSBCCA) headed by Godfried Richardson to discuss the Walter Plantz Square Cruise Heritage Development.

The meeting was held to give an update about the project and to further build upon the relationship between Port St. Maarten and DSBCCA especially looking at the long-term.

DSBCCA will be a tenant of one of the booths at the heritage square, and will be providing the opportunity to local vendors of locally made products to showcase them at the booth to cruise and stay-over visitors.

A number of points were discussed during the meeting which included the official opening of the Walter Plantz Square; upgrading of the area; entertainment initiatives; Jazz program; street fair; safety and security; lighting; taxi area; among other issues.

The parking in the area was also discussed with the DSBCCA as it is indeed a challenge. Port St. Maarten is looking into the possibility of acquiring properties in the area that could be turned into a parking lot with turn-around space for taxi's and tour busses. This would be done in consultation with Ministry VROMI with respect to development regulations for the area.

Port St. Maarten and DSBCCA are planning to work closer together and on a more structural basis by having regular meetings in order to ensure that all stakeholders get the maximum benefit out of the Walter Plantz Square Cruise Heritage Development.

The Walter Plantz Square at Down Street will generate a new spirit of life into the Down Street area for locals and visitors alike.

Eight small buildings have been constructed according to the traditional St. Maarten architectural ginger-bread design to reflect the national heritage of the destination which is part and parcel of Port St. Maarten's reinventing cruise tourism.

The essence of the project is to bring in the heritage value of the destination by showcasing the ginger bread homes of the past. This is part of the country's cultural heritage and what makes us who we are, port management pointed out. "It's part of us and this is interesting to cruise and stay-over visitors."

The Walter Plantz Square at Down Street is just one of several change community projects that will further enhance the country's tourism product.

These types of projects in the various communities will anchor them into tourism. It is a ground up approach



where Port St. Maarten wants to bring back the rich traditional heritage of the country's forefathers.

As Port St. Maarten management has pointed out before, "This is the future where product enhancement is concerned. We are not only talking about cruise, but stay-over tourists as well. No other destination has a duplicate of our cultural heritage. We are all unique in each of our own way. These change community projects will also be a showcase for our youth and generations to come."

The approximately US\$2 million project entailed the construction of a square with cabanas to be used for a bar/restaurant, the selling of arts and crafts and other tourist related goods; water fountain; palm trees; toilet/bathroom facilities; lockers; the square will be disabled accessible; parking for five taxi's; parking on the beachside and around the area; small splash pool for kids; water fountain illuminating 30 different lights at night; 24-hour security.

The square is strategically located next to the Walter Plantz Tender Jetty which connects to the boardwalk/beach promenade, Down Street and Front Street which allows for a broader distribution flow of passengers.

The square will be fully equipped for local musicians, artists and bands with a 'plug and play entertainment' feature. Entertainment is an important part of heritage square which will also feature a stage, speakers and a generator.



PHOTO OUTLINE: Port management officials along with members of the board of the Down Street Business and Community Council Association at the Walter Plantz Square.

For further questions, please contact: comments@portofstmaarten.com