



City of Sanibel Planning Commission

Planning Department Staff Report

Planning Commission Meeting: February 24, 2026

Application Number: PL20250010

Applicant: West Bay Contracting

Address: 661 Anchor Drive

PUBLIC HEARING DESCRIPTION

Consideration of an application for a variance filed pursuant to Land Development Code Chapter 82, Article III, Division 3, Subdivision II - Variances, Section 82-138 – Application and hearing, to request a variance from Section 126-875(2)(b) - Waterward extension, to allow the installation of a boat lift with a waterward extension more than 33 percent of the width of the waterway and provide navigable channel less than 20-foot-wide located at 661 Anchor Drive - tax parcel (STRAP) no. 20-46-23-T4-00002.001F. The application is submitted by West Bay Contracting (the applicant) on behalf of David Bradley Andres and Lucille Will Andres (the property owners). **Application No. PL20250010.**

ISSUES

Pursuant to Sanibel Code Section 82-138 – Application and hearing, the subject application has been referred to the Planning Commission to address the following issues:

1. Does the proposed development comply with the seven standards for granting a variance provided in Sanibel Code Section 82-140 – Standards - Generally?
2. If the Planning Commission approves the application, what additional conditions should be required?

ATTACHMENTS

A	Applicant’s narrative of variance request
B	Applicant’s narrative response to variance standards
C	Survey
D	Site Plan
E	Applicant’s narrative on maintaining navigable channel with aerial photographs

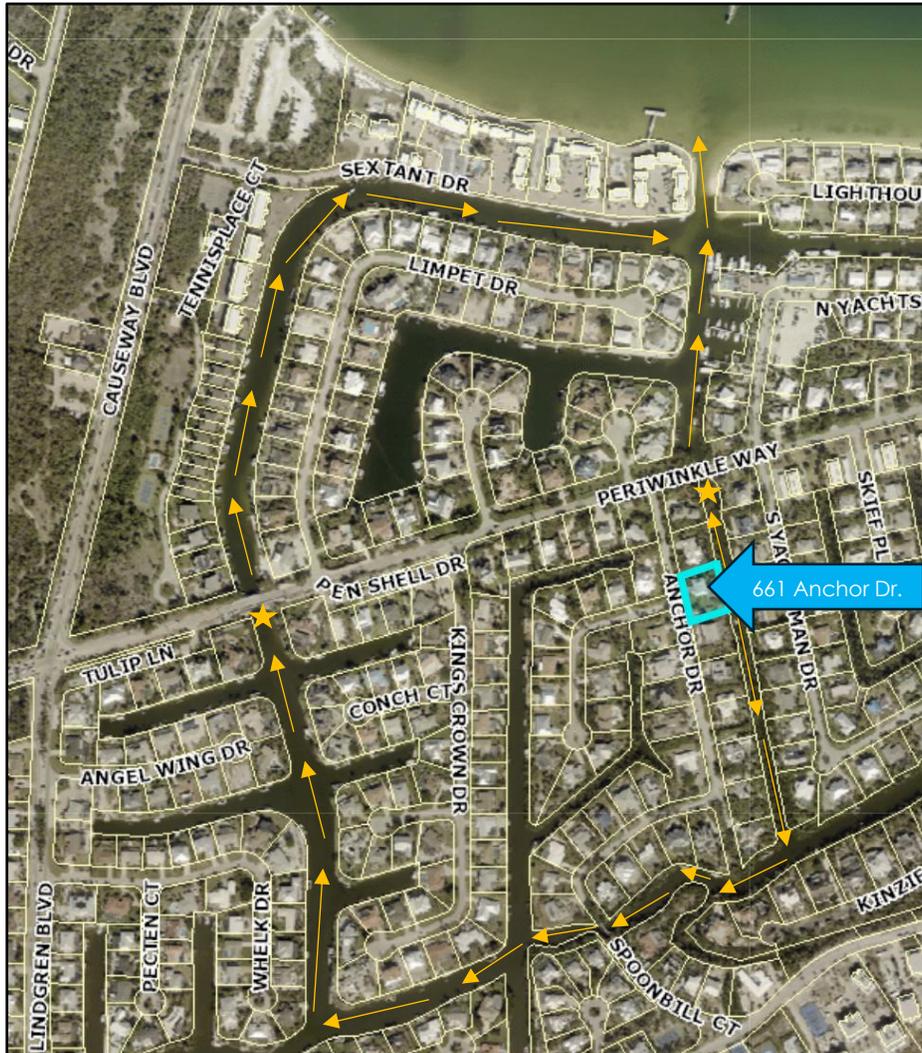
BACKGROUND

The project is located at 661 Anchor Drive within the Anchors Aweigh subdivision (Figure 1). This single-family residence lot abuts a humanmade canal. There are mangroves established along the shoreline. The existing boat dock was constructed just waterward of the mangrove root line with an approximately 4-foot wide by 30-foot

long dock. An elevator style boat lift was previously approved on the north end of the existing dock within the mangrove. Only the support beams remain of that boat lift.

The canal width at the location of the proposed boat lift is 66-feet 11.75-inches based upon the submitted survey. There are two routes for boats (shown with gold arrows on Figure 1) with passageways under Periwinkle Way (shown by gold stars in Figure 1) to reach San Carlos Bay.

Figure 1. Project location with boat routes



PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting a variance from the waterward extension standard for marine accessory structures pertaining to properties located on humanmade canals with a mangrove shoreline. Sanibel Code Sec. 126-875(2)(b) states *“For shorelines with extensive mangrove vegetation on land having navigable access to state waters (including Clam Bayou and Old Blind Pass), such structures may extend up to 15 feet waterward past the roots of the mangroves from which the structure projects, provided the extension is no more than 33 percent of the width of the waterway inclusive of the dock and boat lift, and provided a minimum 20-foot-wide navigable channel is maintained. The width of the navigable channel will be measured based upon applying the same maximum waterward extension to the property on the opposite side of the canal if that*

property has a mangrove vegetated shoreline, or the standard from subsection (2)a if the property has a seawall shoreline.” The variance request is to allow the boat lift to extend to 36% of the width of the canal or 2-feet 4-inches more than 33% of the width of the canal, allow a boat lift piling to extend 15-feet 1.88-inches waterward of the mangrove roots, and allow an 18-foot 1.25-inch navigable channel instead of a 20-foot navigable channel as shown in **Attachment D**. Again, the code specifies that the width of the navigable channel be measured based upon the property on the opposite side of the canal installing a dock and boat lift at the same waterward extension as the proposed project. The actual navigable channel would be 19-feet 10-inches if the same boat lift were added to the existing dock on the opposite of the canal.

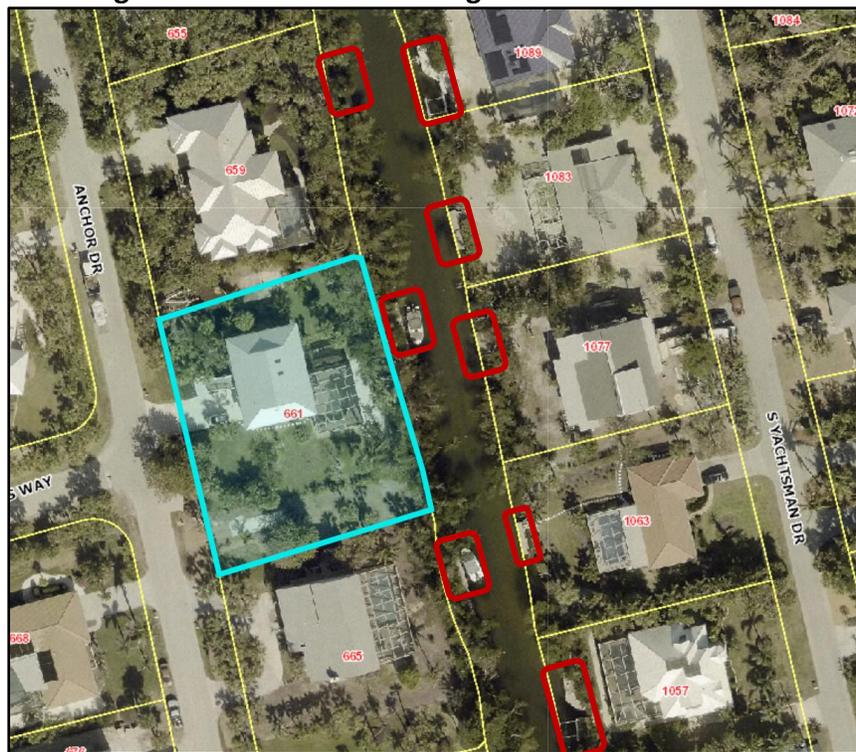
A copy of the applicant’s narrative of the variance request is **Attachment A**, responses to the seven variance standards is **Attachment B**. A copy of the survey is included with this report as **Attachment C** and the proposed site plan **Attachment D**. The applicant’s narrative pertaining to maintaining a navigable channel with aerial photographs is **Attachment E**.

ANALYSIS

Staff reviewed the subject application relative to the seven variance standards in Section 82-140. The table on page 4 includes references of notable standards and staff review notes.

Additionally, the location of existing docks near the subject property were identified as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Locations of Existing Docks Outlined in Red



Natural Resources staff conducted a field inspection and provided the following notes:

There were no potential impacts to mangroves or other native vegetation observed during the site inspection, and none are authorized in conjunction with this project. Any unauthorized impacts will be assessed for mitigation and/or restoration at the time of final inspection.

Table 1: Consistency with the Sanibel Code Variance Standards

Sanibel Code Requirement	Staff Comments	Requirement met?
Sec. 82-140 – Standards - Generally		
(1) A literal enforcement of the particular regulation would result in undue and unnecessary hardship to a property owner because the particular shape, size, location or topography of a lot or parcel, or of a structure thereon, would cause practical difficulties that would deprive the owner of reasonable use and enjoyment of such lot or parcel in the same manner as other properties similarly situated.	A literal enforcement of the waterward extension regulation would not allow a boat lift adjacent to the existing dock. Leaving a boat moored in the water results in degradation to the boat surface which negatively impacts the water quality of the canal.	Yes
(2) That the special conditions relate to unusual conditions peculiar to the specific lot or parcel or relate to special conditions of the structure involved, and are not generally applicable to other lands or structures similarly situated.	The establishment of an approximately 10-foot wide mangrove root extension into this approximately 67-foot wide canal result in special conditions peculiar to this lot.	Yes
(3) That the special conditions and circumstances do not result from actions taken by the applicant or proposed by the applicant, and are not otherwise self-imposed.	The special conditions and circumstance are not a result of any action taken or proposed by the applicant, and are not otherwise self-imposed.	Yes
(4) That the applicant has taken all reasonable steps to mitigate or eliminate the requested variance by the acquisition of adjacent lands or the relocation or redesign of the structure involved.	The width of the boat lift has been reduced by 1-foot to reduce the waterward extension.	Yes
(5) That the development or use of the subject parcel in some other manner than that proposed, in accordance with the applicable requirements, is not feasible.	The only other location for a boat lift would be either on the north or south side of the dock. These locations would require impacts to mangroves and may require dredging to obtain a water depth to allow boat access.	Yes
(6) That the requested variance will not be adverse to the developed neighborhood scheme and will not adversely affect the plan and scheme set forth in this Land Development Code, and will not cause the proposed development to be inconsistent with the Sanibel Plan nor adverse to the health, safety and general welfare of the community.	The requested variance will allow boat passage through an approximately 18-foot wide navigable channel if the property across the canal constructs a dock and boat lift meeting the same waterward extension as is requested through this variance. Elevating a boat out of the water when not in use is consistent with the Sanibel Plan.	Yes
(7) That the variance granted is the minimum necessary to mitigate the hardship demonstrated.	The applicant indicates the width of the boat lift has been reduced to the minimum necessary.	Yes

PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff has not received any public comment on this item.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

Staff has made the following findings in support of its recommendations:

Sanibel is and shall remain a barrier island sanctuary

- Staff finds the proposed use with recommended conditions meets the variance standards (Sec. 82-140).

Staff, therefore, recommends approval of application PL20250010 subject to the following conditions:

1. The boat lift may not occupy more than 36% of the width of the canal (24-feet 5-inches) consistent with the plan shown in Attachment D.
2. Reflectors must be installed on the outer pilings to assist with navigation per Sanibel Code Sec. 126-875(2)(c).
3. No impacts to mangroves or other native vegetation are authorized in conjunction with this project. Any unauthorized impacts will be assessed for mitigation and/or restoration at the time of final inspection for the dock and shoreline permit.
4. An as-built survey is required prior to final inspection for the dock and shoreline permit that approves construction of the boat lift to verify the boat lift pilings do not extend further than 24-feet 5-inches from the mean high water line.

Conditions contained herein are in addition to the requirements of the Sanibel Code. The applicant is required to comply with all regulations of the City of Sanibel. Some conditions stated herein reflect the current code requirements applicable at the time of approval of this permit. After the issuance of the completion certificate for this development or upon expiration of the development permit, any subsequent development or change of use for the parcel must comply with the regulations in effect at that time.