



City of Sanibel Planning Commission

Planning Department Staff Report

Planning Commission Meeting: May 12, 2026

Application Number: PL20260015

Applicant: Rachel L. Bielert

Address: 2330 Palm Ridge Road Units 1 and 2 (Palm Ridge Place)

PUBLIC HEARING DESCRIPTION

Consideration of an application filed pursuant to Land Development Code Chapter 82, Article III, Division 3, Subdivision V – Conditional Uses, Section 82-201 – Authorization, and Section 82-204 – Application and hearing, for a Conditional Use Permit to allow an institutional use (FISH of SanCap) to operate in units 1 and 2 of Palm Ridge Place, located within the TCG – Town Center General Commercial District, at 2330 Palm Ridge Road – tax parcel (STRAP) no. 26-46-22-T2-0030A.0010. The application is submitted by Rachel L. Bielert, RLBCM (the applicant) on behalf of Nancy Bass Cooke (the property owner). **Application No. PL202060015.**

ISSUES

Pursuant to Sanibel Code Section 82-202. – Requirements and Section 82-203 – Conditions, the subject application has been referred to the Planning Commission to address the following issues:

1. Does the proposed development comply with the general requirements of a conditional use provided in Sanibel Code Section 126-82 – general requirements?
2. Does the proposed development comply with the specific requirements provided in Sec. 126-33 Institutional uses?
3. If the Planning Commission approves the application, what additional conditions should be required?

ATTACHMENTS

A	Applicant’s application narrative
B	Applicant’s response to general requirements (Sec. 126-82)
C	Applicant’s response to specific requirements (Sec. 126-33)
D	Survey
E	Location of units
F	Floor Plans

BACKGROUND

FISH of Sanibel-Captiva, Inc. (FISH), is currently providing critical community services out of buildings at 2422/2430 Periwinkle Way (Figure 1). Their current facility will be demolished and a new facility will be constructed. FISH proposes to locate in two existing units within Palm Ridge Place (2330 Palm Ridge Road) to continue operating while their current location is redeveloped. FISH currently leases unit 18 within Palm Ridge Place for office space which is not part of this application.

Figure 1 – Location of FISH and Palm Ridge Place



Palm Ridge Place is located on the northeast corner of Periwinkle Way and Palm Ridge Road. The property is located within the Town Center General Commercial District. The east property line abuts two commercial developments in the Town Center General Commercial District and a multifamily development. The north, west, and south property lines are adjacent to the shared use path and roadways.

Prior to Hurricane Ian, unit 1 in Palm Ridge Place was Rosie's Café and Grill restaurant with 82 seats and 16 bonus outdoor seats. Unit 2 was a health club, Sanibel Fitness. The owners of Palm Ridge Place are working on completing the conversion of the parking lot from shell to pervious pavers (DP-2025-021270). Additionally, a commercial landscape buffer waiver was approved in 2022 (WVR-2021-000017; Planning Commission Resolution 21-28). The implementation of this waiver has been delayed due to the hurricanes. City staff recently

met with the landscape contractor onsite to verify the conditions that need to be followed to bring the site into compliance with the waiver. Additionally, the owner has the option to submit an application to revise the waiver based upon any revisions that are adopted by City Council to the landscape buffer standards.

PROPOSAL

This application requests a conditional use approval for the Institutional Use of FISH with all affiliated uses necessary to accomplish their mission in units 1 and 2. The primary use of unit 1 (+/-2,493 sf) is for the food pantry, the adjacent unit 2 will be used as office space for the administrative functions of the staff. Ancillary uses may include programs to supply school backpacks and miscellaneous activities to support the community. The temporary relocation is due to the reconstruction that is slated for the existing properties on Periwinkle Way. Upon completion of the redevelopment projects, FISH will relocate back to Periwinkle Way. However, the services provided by FISH, whether permanent or temporary, require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to operate from this commercial center.

A copy of the applicant's narrative of the proposed use is **Attachment A**. The applicant's responses to general requirements for conditional uses is **Attachment B** and specific requirements for institutional uses in Section 126-33 is **Attachment C**. A copy of the Palm Ridge Place survey is included with this report as **Attachment D**. The location of the units to be occupied by FISH are shown in **Attachment E** and the floor plans for unit 1 and unit 2 is **Attachment F**.

ANALYSIS

Consistency with the Sanibel Plan

Conditional Use Permits are required to be consistent with the Sanibel Plan. Staff finds the proposed commercial use consistent with the Sanibel Plan as detailed below:

1. The proposed commercial use is consistent with the Plan for Scenic Preservation (Section 3.2.5) as follows:
 - a. The existing parking area consists of pervious pavers (front parking area) and shell (rear parking area) maintaining a casual retreat atmosphere.
 - b. The approved waiver for vegetation buffers will ensure compatibility of the building with the community, while also providing for bicycle and pedestrian circulation.
2. The transportation element (Section 3.3.3) encourages transportation alternatives to the automobile while also maintaining adequate onsite parking. Many of the people who visit or volunteer for FISH use bicycles for transportation. Therefore, the CUP includes installing a bicycle rack for a minimum of 10-bicycles and maintaining the pedestrian pathway interconnecting to the shared use path. Also, adequate onsite parking will be maintained since the proposed use is less intense with lower demand for parking spaces than the previous restaurant use.
3. Palm Ridge Place has an approved storm drainage plan consistent with the storm drainage element (Section 3.3.6) that is being restored post-hurricane through the development permit for the pervious paver front parking lot.
4. The proposed use is located within the Town Center General Commercial District and provides services to the residents consistent with the future land use element (Section 3.6.2),

Table 1: Consistency with the Sanibel Code General Requirements of a Conditional Use		
Sanibel Code Requirement	Staff Comments	Requirement met?
Sec. 126-82. – General requirements. The planning commission shall authorize conditional uses in the zones in which they are permitted, after public hearing, only upon the following requirements being met:		
(a) The proposed development shall not adversely affect compatibility with other uses, either on, adjacent to, or nearby the parcel; and shall not adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of the community or its goals and objectives. The proposed development shall not adversely affect the traffic flow to a significantly greater extent than permitted uses; however, there shall be a rebuttable presumption of no such relative adverse effects, absent competent, substantial evidence presented to the contrary.	The proposed use will be located within existing units at the end of the commercial building (Figure 1) and a lower intensity than the previously existing restaurant. The lower intensity reduces the parking demand. In addition, FISH clients and volunteers often ride bicycles to the food pantry. Staff finds the proposed use to be compatible to other uses on, adjacent to, and nearby the parcel; and that the proposed use improves the health, safety, and welfare of the community.	Yes
(b) A request for conditional use approval shall be accompanied by a site development plan prepared in accordance with the requirements of subsection <u>82-382(m)</u> .	Staff finds the site plan (Attachment E) and the proposed floor plan for unit 1 (Attachment F) meet this requirement.	Yes
(c) In reviewing requests for conditional uses, the planning commission may impose, as necessary, conditions to protect adjacent or nearby parcels and in furtherance of the public interests, with regard to location design intensity of use, architectural treatment, siting, landscaping, maintenance and operation of the uses.	Staff finds recommended conditions relating to bike parking and landscape buffers will protect public interests detailed by this standard.	Yes, with recommended conditions of approval
(d) The developer must demonstrate that the proposed use is coordinated, to the greatest extent possible, with adjoining developments. Where applicable, this coordination shall include examination of all opportunities to share or combine drives and entry points, parking areas, sewage treatment facilities, pedestrian walkways, and other service facilities.	Staff finds the existing commercial center with a parking lot interconnection with the Village Shops to the east; an entrance on Palm Ridge Road; an entrance on Wooster Lane, shared use path located along the north, west, and south sides of the property; and connection to the city's sewer system meets this requirement.	Yes
(e) The planning commission shall consider the nature of the site, its size, and its configuration to determine whether the parcel is adequate to: (1) Accommodate the placement and arrangement of structures so as to promote the best possible vehicular and pedestrian access and internal circulation; (2) Maximize energy efficiency and compatibility with adjoining uses on and off the site; and (3) Minimize the need for additional off-site transportation improvements.	Staff finds the existing commercial center meets this requirement.	Yes

<p>(f) In considering a proposed conditional use for approval, the planning commission shall evaluate the proposal in consideration of the following factors:</p> <p>(1) <i>Conformance with Sanibel Plan.</i> No conditional use may be approved unless it is in accord with the Sanibel Plan.</p> <p>(2) <i>Internal compatibility.</i> Any proposed conditional use must be compatible with other existing or proposed uses on the same site; that is, no use may have any undue adverse impact on any neighboring use.</p> <p>(3) <i>External compatibility.</i> All proposed conditional uses must be compatible with existing and planned uses of surrounding properties; that is, no internal use may have any avoidable or undue adverse impact on any existing or planned surrounding use.</p> <p>(4) <i>Intensity of development.</i> The residential density and intensity of commercial use of a conditional use shall be compatible with (that is, shall have no undue adverse impact upon) the physical and environmental characteristics of the site and surrounding lands.</p> <p>(5) <i>Environmental constraints.</i> The site of the proposed conditional use shall be suitable for use in the manner proposed without hazards to persons, vegetation, or wildlife, either on or off the site, from the likelihood of increased flooding, erosion, or other dangers, annoyances, or inconveniences. Condition of soil, water level, drainage, and topography shall all be appropriate to the pattern and intensity of development intended.</p> <p>(6) <i>Off-street parking.</i> Sufficient off-street parking, for bicycles and other vehicles as well as cars, shall be provided. The specific requirements of this Land Development Code shall be used as a guide only. Parking areas shall be constructed in accordance with such standards as are approved by the planning commission to ensure that they are safe and maintainable and that they allow for sufficient privacy for adjoining uses.</p>	<p>Staff finds the existing commercial center meets this requirement with the recommended condition for additional bicycle parking. Figure 2 shows recommended locations for bicycle racks.</p>	<p>Yes, with recommended conditions of approval</p>
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Table 2: Consistency with the Sanibel Code Specific Requirements of a Conditional Use		
Sanibel Code Requirement	Staff Comments	Requirement met?
Sec. 126-33. – Institutional Uses. Institutional uses shall be permitted as a conditional use subject to the following conditions:		
(1) There shall be a landscaped buffer strip between the subject use and adjoining residential zones. Such buffer strip shall provide adequate screening of the proposed facility from residentially zoned property. Such screening shall be appropriately planted as approved by the planning commission.	The Palm Ridge Place commercial center has an approved landscape buffer waiver (WVR-2021-000017; Planning Commission Resolution 21-28). Staff finds the proposed CUP meets this requirement with the recommended condition of approval regarding the implementation of the landscape buffer plan approved through the waiver or a revision thereof.	Yes, with recommended conditions of approval
(2) The lot shall be otherwise appropriately landscaped.	Staff finds this requirement is met with the existing landscape areas between the parking lot and building.	Yes
(3) No institutional use shall be permitted on the parcel except those principal and accessory uses specifically identified in the conditional use approval.	This CUP application is for Units 1 and 2 within Palm Ridge Place. Staff finds this requirement to be met with the recommended condition of approval specifying the permitted uses.	Yes, with condition of approval
(4) Regardless of the regulations and required conditions set forth for the applicable district, the planning commission may authorize an institutional use to be developed with up to 45 percent coverage with impermeable surfaces, and with up to 50 percent vegetation clearance and developed area, for lands located in the altered land, mid-island ridge, or upland wetland zones, whenever: a. The institutional use requires more than 50 parking spaces; b. The planning commission finds that the majority of the required parking spaces will be used only infrequently; and c. The lot or parcel on which the institutional use is to be developed fronts on an arterial or collector road.	N/A	N/A

- a. The permit application shall include a site plan identifying additional bicycle parking racks sufficient to accommodate a minimum of 10 bicycles and the 12-foot by 50-foot loading area consistent with figures 2 and 3 of the staff report.
 - b. The permit application shall include a floor plan demonstrating compliance with ADA requirements.
 - c. The unit shall receive approval from the Sanibel Fire Marshal prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy.
5. A Business Tax Receipt shall be obtained prior to commencement of operations.
 6. A permit shall be obtained for any proposed signage.
 7. An approved landscape buffer plan must be implemented within 12 months after approval of this conditional use based upon either of the following:
 - a. The approved landscape buffer waiver (WVR-2021-000017); or
 - b. A new landscape buffer waiver obtained based upon the recent revision to the land development code buffer standards for commercial and institutional uses.
 8. 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.