



# City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road  
Sanibel, FL 33957

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

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Tuesday, April 14, 2026

9:00 AM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

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### 1. Call To Order

The meeting convened at 9:01 a.m.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance (Commissioner Sergeant)

Commissioner Sergeant led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. Roll Call

**Present:** 7 - Chair Paul Nichols, Vice Chair Erika Steiner, Commissioner Tiffany Burns, Commissioner Larry Schopp, Commissioner Kate Sergeant, Commissioner Ken Colter, and Commissioner Lyman Welch

#### a. Motion to excuse absent member(s):

All Commissioners were in attendance.

### 4. Public Comments on Items Not Appearing on the Agenda

There were no public comments from the audience.

### 5. City Council Liaison Report

Mayor Miller provided a liaison report covering the March 30 City Council meeting. The council spent significant time addressing conditional use permit and variance applications for the affordable housing development on Periwinkle known as Riverview 2, which the Planning Commission had approved in February. Mr. Miller explained that during the preliminary approval process in March, council added several conditions including specifying tree heights for the front buffer, requiring landscaping for the proposed commercial building area until developed, and ensuring any property subdivision would require City Council approval.

At the second reading, council approved both ordinances 26-004 and 26-005 but added one significant additional condition requiring each resident to be either: an employee or owner of a business on Sanibel, an employee or owner on Captiva of a business with principal operations on Sanibel, or an individual who previously worked on Sanibel for 20 years and is retired or disabled. Staff is working with the county and HUD to ensure this condition doesn't violate federal fair housing rules.

Mayor Miller also reported that council conducted a quasi-judicial hearing upholding the Planning Commission's decision allowing a new bike rental company at Islanders Center, approved a 6% raise and \$5,000 performance bonus for the city manager, approved a \$2.1 million TDC grant for a new fishing pier construction, and approved a \$2.5 million DEP grant for shared use path resurfacing.

Commissioner Welch asked whether the affordable housing condition should be added to the land development code as a requirement for below market rate housing. Mayor Miller responded that section 102.102 of the land development code's scoring mechanism will likely need amendment, advising Section 102-102 would be going before Commission for updating.

**6. Consent Agenda**

- a. Adoption of Minutes: March 24, 2026

Vice Chair Steiner moved, seconded by Commissioner Sergeant, to adopt the March 24, 2026 minutes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

**7. 9:05 - Public Hearings:**

- a. 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 (Santiva Islanders) to operate in unit 11 of Palm Ridge Plaza, 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 Bernard Arroyo (the applicant), on behalf of Nancy Bass Cooke (the property owner). **Application No. PL20260011.**

Planning Director Paula McMichael read into record the description of Application PL20260011.

City Clerk Scotty Lynn Kelly polled the commission for site visit, ex-parte communications, and conflict:

Chair Nichols	Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict
Vice Chair Steiner	Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict
Commissioner Burns	Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict
Commissioner Colter	No Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict
Commissioner Schopp	Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict
Commissioner Sergeant	Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict
Commissioner Welch	Site Visit	No Ex-parte	No Conflict

Clerk Kelly swore in the following:

- Bernard Arroyo - Applicant on behalf of property owner Nancy Bass Cooke
- Savannah White - Senior Planner, City of Sanibel

Senior Planner Savannah White provided a brief PowerPoint presentation demonstrating the proposed use and application. Bernard Arroyo, Treasurer and Applicant, expressed his appreciation for staff direction and assistance.

Commission inquired as to the maximum occupancy for the unit, ADA compliance inside the unit and outside. Mr. Arroyo advised having spoken with the Fire Chief to determine occupancy units. Ms. White spoke to the ADA review being handled by the Building Official, noting there is a current development permit for the center for repaving/shelling the property. Discussion ensued regarding updating the conditions to include a site plan as well as a floor plan for ADA compliance.

Continued discussion ensued regarding the locations for the additional bike racks, including specification near the specific unit. Ms. White noted updated verbiage to the condition for bike racks. Discussion turned to handicapped parking spots at the center. Ms. White spoke to the requirements for handicap parking spots, advising it would be inspected by the Building Department prior to approval of the development permit.

Clerk Kelly swore in Robin Christian, Vice President of Santiva Islanders, who spoke to having larger gatherings at other locals on the island. Mr. Arroyo spoke to the membership being approximately 225 though only 40-50 participate at any given time. Discussion ensued regarding previous use of another unit in the center and not having parking or participation issues.

Ms. White advised there were no public comments received.

Mr. Arroyo requested the ADA conditions be removed. Staff advised the requirements were mandatory and could not be waived.

**Commissioner Welch moved, seconded by Commissioner Sergeant, to adopt Resolution 26-11, approving application number PL20260011 with 8 conditions as amended (including the two amendments for ADA site plan compliance and bike rack location specificity), to close the public hearing, and to authorize the chair to execute the resolution without bringing it back for further consideration. The motion carried by unanimous vote.**

## **8. Report from Planning Department**

- a.** Upcoming meeting dates:
  - i. Planning Commission - Tuesday, May 12, 2026
  - ii. Report to City Council - Tuesday, April 21, 2026 - Commissioner Nichols
  
- b.** Planning Reports
  - i. Planning Permit Review Report
  
  - ii. Planning Projects

### iii. Plan Application Status Report

Director McMichael reported that the April 28 meeting was canceled but confirmed a May 12 meeting with items being scheduled. Ms. McMichael announced that Senior Planner Savannah White would be leaving for a position with Haley Ward in Fort Myers, with this being her final Planning Commission meeting. She noted the planning department would consist of herself, Principal Planner Kim Ruiz, and support staff, with new Deputy Planning Director Gabriel Quintas starting April 27. She advised Commissioners would meet Mr. Quintas at the May 12 meeting.

Ms. McMichael provided planning permit reports, project lists, and application status reports, noting Chair Nichols would report to City Council on April 21.

Commission inquired about timing for adding workforce housing requirements to the land development code. City Attorney Agnew explained Staff was waiting for HUD review of current regulations and the Riverview 2 conditions before proceeding, with plans to expedite once guidance was received. Commission suggested sending the matter to the Land Development Code Review Subcommittee first. Mr. Agnew noted this could slow the process since Council wanted to expedite, but subcommittee review remained an option if desired.

## 9. Report from Commission Members

Commissioner Colter inquired as to the change of the Senior Center being staffed by the City in cooperation with the Senior Group. Discussion ensued regarding the current situation.

Commissioner Welch inquired if the BMRH discussion could be added to the May agenda. Attorney Agnew advised it would be added to an agenda following discussions with HUD. Mr. Agnew spoke to the process for getting the topic to Commission.

Commissioner Sergeant asked about the transition from the city-supported senior center at the old library to the current 900 square foot private facility. McMichael explained the Library Way facility was damaged before Hurricane Ian and destroyed by the storm, with subsequent disagreements leading to the current independent arrangement.

### a. Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee report

Commissioner Schopp reported the steering committee would meet the following day to examine potential transportation element changes and a proposal from Bob Moore to enhance electric power language beyond current LCEC deferrals, focusing on

city-controlled initiatives.

**b. Transportation Master Plan Steering Committee report**

Vice Chair Steiner reported on a well-attended March 26 workshop that provided the first glimpse of consultant recommendations, including creating carve-outs for slow-moving vehicles to allow passing. She noted public comments about roundabouts were outside the consultants' scope. The Transportation Steering Committee hadn't finalized recommendations for the Sanibel Plan Update Committee yet.

Chair Nichols noted the consultant's observation that making island access easier increases visitor volume, requiring careful consideration of desired capacity levels. He referenced Bob Moore's recent newspaper letter about AI-based traffic sensing as an alternative to roundabouts.

Director McMichael confirmed the transportation consultant would attend the next Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee meeting for coordination.

**10. Public Comment**

There were no public comments from the audience.

**11. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.