



# City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road  
Sanibel, FL 33957

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

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Tuesday, January 27, 2026

9:00 AM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

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### 1. Call To Order (Meeting Temporarily Chaired by Attorney Agnew)

Attorney Agnew convened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

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

Commissioner Steiner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. Roll Call

**Present:** 6 - Vice Chair Erika Steiner, Commissioner Tiffany Burns, Commissioner Larry Schopp, Commissioner Kate Sergeant, Commissioner Ken Colter, and Commissioner Lyman Welch

**Absent:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

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

**Commissioner Schopp moved, seconded by Commissioner Colter, to excuse absent Commissioner Nichols. The motion carried.**

**Excused:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

### 4. Election of Chair (Attorney Agnew)

Attorney Agnew spoke to the election process and requested nominations, advising that Commissioner Nichols had notified staff he would accept nomination for Chair if received. Commissioners Schopp and Colter nominated Commissioner Nichols. There were no further nominations. By unanimous voice vote, Commissioner Nichols was elected chair.

### 5. Election of Vice Chair (Commission Chair)

Attorney Agnew requested nominations for vice chair. Commissioner Sergeant nominated Commissioner Steiner. There were no further nominations. By unanimous voice vote, Commissioner Steiner was elected vice chair.

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

There were no public comments from the audience.

### 7. City Council Liaison Report

Mayor Miller congratulated Chair Nichols and Vice Chair Steiner upon their

re-elections, and Commissioners Colter, Sergeant, and Welch upon their reappointments to the Commission. He then provided the following brief report of the last two council meetings:

Land Use:

- Approved ordinances temporarily allowing administrative approvals of certain land use actions that otherwise would have had to go through the Planning Commission and extending the expiration of such measures to 12/31/2026. The affected actions include:
  - \* Waivers for non-conforming commercial properties
  - \* Development permits relating to variances, waivers, conditional use permits and build backs.
  - \* Conditional use permits (including Commission's recommendation of excluding: eating places, restaurants, grocery stores, etc.)
- Approved the ordinance allowing administrative approval of deviation of coverage rules pertaining to certain electrical and mechanical equipment including necessary stairs and platforms if developed before specified dates.

Other Major Items:

- Moving forward with the existing plan for the reconstruction of the East Periwinkle bridge.
- Extended a request from a resort to allow beach day passes until July 31.
- Received a status report from the City Manager on recovery of the fishing pier and decided to proceed with a two-phase option that, if it is determined to be structurally feasible, will involve doing above-water repairs first allowing re-opening of the pier and later dealing with the below water structural repairs. Under this plan, the City will contribute \$223K (the estimated cost of demolition) and a private fund raising effort will be initiated to fund the remaining \$428K.
- Received the Draft Vulnerability Assessment measuring the exposure of the City's critical assets to flooding and sea level rise. By accepting this report, we will be able to begin the Adaptation Plan work. Both studies are financed by an FDEP grant.
- Enacted a resolution necessary to proceeding with the creation of a storm water assessment district and approved a consultant study of possible funding methodologies.
- On traffic congestion issues:
  - \* In December we received the Kimley-Horn report regarding options for widening the causeway.
  - \* Then in January, we considered an MPO grant to fund the 30% design of a roundabout at the four-way intersection. No vote was taken, the consensus was to move forward with the 30% design.
- Received a preliminary report from Johnson Engineering on vehicle speed data at various island locations. Johnson Engineering will provide a complete draft report to include recommendations on speed limits and a possible three-way stop at the Rabbit Road - San-Cap intersection in an upcoming meeting.

- Lastly we approved a grant agreement from Lee County in amount of approximately \$15M for CDBG-DR funding for construction of a new police station.

Discussion ensued regarding the speed report coming back to Council and if action would be taken regarding the proposed three-way stop at Rabbit Road and Sanibel Captiva Road.

**8. Selection of Subcommittee Members and Election of Chairs**

**a. Below Market Rate Housing Review Subcommittee**

Discussion ensued regarding the previous membership of the subcommittee and that Chair Nichols advised he would like to remain on the subcommittee. Commissioner Sergeant advised she would like to remain chair. Commissioner Steiner advised that due to her position on the board for Community Housing & Resources (CHR), she would not participate on the subcommittee to eliminate any conflict of interest.

**Commissioner Welch moved, seconded by Commissioner Colter, to appoint Commissioners Burns, Nichols, Sergeant and Welch to the Below Market Rate Housing Review Subcommittee, with Commissioner Sergeant as Chair. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 with Chair Nichols excused.**

**Excused:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

**b. Capital Improvement Projects Review Subcommittee**

Discussion ensued regarding current members wishing to remain, Commissioner Steiner to remain as Chair, and Commissioner Welch to join.

**Commissioner Sergeant moved, seconded by Commissioner Colter, to appoint Commissioners Burns, Colter, Schopp, Sergeant, Steiner, and Welch to the Capital Improvement Projects Review Subcommittee, with Commissioner Steiner as Chair. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 with Chair Nichols excused.**

**Excused:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

**c. Land Development Code Review Subcommittee**

Discussion ensued regarding current members wishing to remain and Commissioner Schopp to remain as Chair.

**Commissioner Colter moved, seconded by Commissioner Sergeant, to appoint Commissioners Burns, Colter, Nichols, Schopp, Sergeant, Steiner, and Welch to the Land Development Code Review Subcommittee, with Commissioner Schopp as Chair. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 with Chair Nichols excused.**

**Excused:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

d. Permitting Process Review Subcommittee

Discussion ensued regarding current members, with the exception of Commissioner Welch, wishing to remain and Commissioner Colter to remain as Chair.

**Commissioner Sergeant moved, seconded by Commissioner Schopp, to appoint Commissioners Burns, Colter, Nichols, Schopp, and Steiner to the Permitting Process Review Subcommittee, with Commissioner Colter as Chair. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 with Chair Nichols excused.**

**Excused:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

## 9. Consent Agenda

a. Adoption of Minutes: December 9, 2025

b. Approval of the Liaison to City Council Report Schedule

Commissioner Schopp requested amending the minutes on page 3, at the paragraph beginning with "Commissioner Schopp spoke ...": correcting "Sanibel Plan" to "Code amendment" and clarifying "... Charter Amendment, specifically Section 3.10.2 in 2005, that there would be limitation on redevelopment after a storm or other natural disaster because the rules of the Plan were much stricter than at the time the developments in the resort district were built."

**Commissioner Schopp moved, seconded by Commissioner Sergeant, to adopt the December 9, 2025 minutes with amendments as deemed appropriate, and approving the liaison report schedule. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0 with Chair Nichols excused.**

**Excused:** 1 - Chair Paul Nichols

## 10. Discussion Items

a. Planning Department - 2025 Recap

Senior Planner Savannah White provided a brief PowerPoint presentation recapping the efforts and actions during 2025.

Commissioner Colter stepped out of the meeting at 9:23 a.m. and returned at 9:25 a.m.

Discussion ensued regarding review times, requesting a report of review times for all departments, appreciation for the new permitting system and public portal, and information provided in the report relative to rental units (specifically West Wind Inn, Sanibel Sunset, and Island Inn) included in the residential inventory. Planning Director Paula McMichael advised West Wind

Inn had not submitted an application at this time and work on the site is staging for the construction permitted at Beachview. Staff spoke to Island Inn having been permitted and should be starting construction soon, and Sanibel Sunset not having applied as of yet.

## 11. Report from Planning Department

- a. Upcoming meeting dates:
  - i. Planning Commission - Tuesday, February 10, 2026 - Commissioner Nichols
  - ii. Report to City Council - Tuesday, February 3, 2026 - Commissioner Steiner
  
- b. Planning Reports
  - i. Planning Permit Review Report
  
  - ii. Planning Projects 2026
  
  - iii. Plan Application Status Report

Planning Director Paula McMichael spoke to there being no hearings or business items scheduled for February 10th so that meeting was expected to be cancelled. Ms. McMichael advised items scheduled for February 24th as well as the Land Development Code Review Subcommittee scheduled to follow the Commission meeting that day. She further spoke to the reports included in the agenda packet.

Deputy Planning Director Craig Chandler summarized the plan application report and provided permit status updates. Mr. Chandler advised additional public comments would be added to the record. Discussion ensued regarding the timeline for upcoming hearings, whether a convenience store qualified as "eating place, etc.", and the difference between formula retail and formula restaurants.

Commission inquired as to missing documents and what information had been provided to the applicants with notices of insufficiency. Discussion ensued regarding an update relative to the underground tanks from the previous gas station, and the hearings coming to Commission were due to the public comments and request for public hearing.

Further discussion ensued regarding the request from Cielo for adding seats. Mr. Chandler spoke to the request being to join parcels to add an addition to building, and noted a notice of insufficiency had been provided to the applicant.

Attorney Agnew advised the definitions of formula retail and formula restaurants are both in Code Section 78-1.

## 12. Report from Commission Members

**a. Steering Committee Updates**

Commissioner Schopp provided a brief update from the Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee discussions, advising of the upcoming public workshop and a possible survey for public participation. Ms. McMichael advised the workshop is from 6-8 p.m. on February 19, 2026 at the Sanibel Community House. Discussion ensued regarding there not being a virtual participation option for the workshop.

Vice Chair Steiner provided a brief update from the Transportation Master Plan Steering Committee discussions, advising the public workshop scheduled for March 26, 2026. Mr. Chandler spoke to the process as it includes the consultants.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Burns spoke to sustainability and resilience being key components.

Commissioner Sergeant spoke to concerns with the clearing of the lot at the Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) substation site. Mr. Chandler spoke to working with the applicant and contractor regarding the site, speaking specifically to Florida Statutes relating to regulations and mitigation. Discussion continued regarding Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) permitting and regulations and the timelines for mitigation of the wetlands.

Commissioner Welch requested the presentations made at the upcoming public workshops be recorded and published for the public.

Vice Chair Steiner spoke to Community Housing & Resources (CHR) being under contract to purchase the old Fish House building to create mixed use of the parcel including 39 below market rate housing units.

**13. Public Comment**

There were no public comments from the Audience.

Attorney Agnew provided additional information regarding the LCEC site mitigation and noted the proposed development from CHR would be coming to Planning Commission for consideration and advised members not to discuss it outside of a meeting.

**14. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.