



City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road
Sanibel, FL 33957

Meeting Minutes - Draft Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

9:00 AM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

1. Call To Order

The meeting convened at 9:02 A.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

All Committee Members were present.

Present: 7 - Larry Schopp, Eric Pfeifer, James Evans, Nicole Decker-McHale, Bob Moore, Calli Johnson and Jeffrey Muddell

4. Consent Agenda

a. Adoption of Minutes

Vice Chair Pfeifer moved, seconded by Committee Member Evans to adopt the October 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

5. Old Business

a. Steering Committee Tentative Schedule of Topics

Planning Director Paula McMichael briefed the Committee regarding a workshop scheduled for February 18, 2026. She noted that the workshop coincides with a regular scheduled meeting of the Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee and requested director on whether both Committee Meeting and the workshop should be held.

After discussion, the Committee reached consensus to cancel the regularly scheduled Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee meeting and proceed with the workshop.

b. The Sanibel Vision Statement

Planning Director Paula McMichael provided an overview of the City's Vision Statement, including background on its original adoption.

The Committee engaged in discussion regarding potential revisions to the Vision Statement, including whether additions or amendments were needed. Topics raised included multigenerational families, diversity, strategic resiliency, and related plan elements.

The Committee inquired about the process for incorporating suggest revisions and how any recommended changes would be presented to City Council. Planning Director McMichael outlined the procedural steps and anticipated timeline.

Discussion ensued regarding the hierarchy of values expressed within the City's guiding documents. The Committee noted some recommendations may be more appropriately incorporated into specific sections of the Sanibel Plan rather than into the Vision Statement.

Discussion continued regarding the differences between challenges faced by current residents and those experienced by the City's founders. The committee spoke to the need for goals, objectives, and policies that balance community well-being with the preservation of the island's sanctuary.

Discussion ensued regarding housing afford ability and concerns about Sanibel becoming solely a vacation oriented barrier island.

Discussion ensued regarding identity and the types of attractions that shape it. Deputy Planning Director Craig Chandler commented on the songwriters festivals, noting that while the Vision Statement has provided philosophical context during discussions about such events, it has not served as a determining policy standard.

Ms. McMichael spoke to the Vision Statement being intended to be philosophical in nature and is not an enforceable regulatory document.

The Committees consensus indicated a desire for additional community input on the Vision Statement.

Public Comment:

Nancy Gurney - Commented on the concept of resilience, stating the Vision Statement does not need to convey triumph but rather reflect interconnected values, none of which should be prioritized above others. She noted that "We live in a new world" and must adapt accordingly.

Jason Halibourt - Expressed uncertainty regarding the authority of the Committee and noted similar concerns conveyed in individual conversations with both Committee members and City Council. He emphasized that the core

vision for Sanibel remains largely unchanged from 1974 and stated that the community must define what it wants Sanibel to be over the next 50 years. He stressed the importance of identifying both desired qualities and those the community seeks to avoid, stating that the sanctuary and community should remain coequal values. He noted that without a strong community, the sanctuary cannot be effectively protected.

6. New Business

a. Review of Housing Element

Planning Director Paula McMichael provided an update on ongoing work related to Below Market Rate Housing (BMRH). She noted current efforts and referenced coordination with appropriate stakeholders.

Chair Johnson provided comments, after which Director McMichael spoke regarding the City's efforts to engage with a consultant to assist in further developing BMRH strategies.

Discussion ensued regarding the forthcoming updated information expected from the consultants. The Committee noted that without the updated data available for review, it is difficult for the Committee to formulate well supported recommendations to City Council.

Discussion continued regarding potential amendments to the Sanibel Plan and this history of previous changes. Deputy Planning Director Craig Chandler summarized the discussion held at the most recent BMRH meeting, including considerations related to increasing allowed for BMRH units.

The committee proceeded with a page by page review of the Housing Element of the Sanibel Plan to identify suggested modifications and comments.

The Committee discussed record keeping practices related to affordable housing units located outside of CHR. Discussion continued regarding CHR's internal system for tracking inquiries and housing activity.

Discussion ensued regarding addressed opportunities for mixed-use development and the importance of economic diversity within the housing framework.

The Committee sought clarification regarding the term "other homes," and Ms. McMichael confirmed that this terminology originates from the State of Florida.

Ms. McMichael requested feedback from the Committee regarding whether maintaining a target of 3% of the City's population as resident workers living on

Sanibel should continue to serve as a guiding goal.

Discussion ensued regarding on matters relating to funding opportunities, grants, potential state legislative actions concerning resort district housing, and relevant provisions within the City's building and land development codes.

b. Review of Historic Preservation Element

The meeting convened at 10:52 A.M.

Planning Director Paula McMichael reported that the consultants had no additional information to present at this time but provided an update for the Committee's review.

The committee inquired why the Sanibel Lighthouse does not appear on the local register of historic sites. Director McMichael clarified that the lighthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but not on the local register.

The Committee proceeded with a page by page review of the Historical Preservation Element of the Sanibel Plan, offering comments and recommendations for revisions.

Discussion continued regarding potential ecological impacts of elevating dunes, including the effects on berms and dune vegetation.

Additional discussion addressed the history of the Sanibel Lighthouse, noting that its original design intent included the ability to disassemble and relocate the structure if necessary.

c. Citywide Public Workshop - February 18, 2026

Planning Director Paula McMichael provided a brief overview of the City's intent for the upcoming workshop and explained the proposed operational format. Ms. McMichael requested the Committee's feedback regarding both the workshop structure and the information presented by the consultants.

The Committee expressed that it is important for the community to feel seen and heard during the workshop process. They also inquired about the possibility of holding more than one workshop to ensure broader participation.

Discussion continued regarding recommendations for scheduling a future workshop date, the potential distribution of a survey to gather community input prior to the next City Council meeting, and considerations for organizing the next workshop. Options discussed included hosting a smaller, focused workshop or holding a larger session similar in format to the City Council's strategic

planning workshop.

7. Next Meeting Date

- a. December 17, 2025

8. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:57 A.M.