



# City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road  
Sanibel, FL 33957

## Meeting Minutes - Draft

### Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee

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Wednesday, December 17, 2025

9:00 AM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

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#### **SUPPLEMENT 1: ADDED ITEMS TO AGENDA ITEM 5c & 5c i**

#### **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**

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

a. Motion to excuse absent member(s):

All Committee Members were present.

#### **4. Consent Agenda**

a. Adoption of the November 19, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Discussion ensued regarding scrivener errors.

- Under Public Comment Jason Halliburton is spelt incorrectly.
- Page 2 paragraph 2 affordability should be one word.

**Committee Member Evans moved, seconded by Committee Member Schopp to adopt the November 19, 2025, meeting minutes once Scrivener errors are fixed. The motion carried.**

#### **5. Old Business**

a. Steering Committee Tentative Schedule of Topics

Planning Director Paula McMichael noted that agenda topics were rearranged due to staff availability.

The Committee discussed a scheduling conflict involving Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF) board members and inquired about rescheduling the February 18th workshop. Ms. McMichael stated she would check with the

Sanibel Community House regarding alternative dates or the possibility of using the Recreation Center

**b.** The Sanibel Vision Statement

Informational item only.

**c.** Citywide Public Workshop - February 18, 2026

Planning Director Paula McMichael suggested moving to the next agenda item while awaiting the consultants' arrival.

Committee Member Moore requested that the Committee revisit the housing discussion from the November 19, 2025 meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding a potential increase to the 3% affordable housing requirement and funding related to affordable housing initiatives. Committee Member Decker-McHale provided an overview of the background and procedures of Community Housing Resources (CHR).

i. Presentation from CGA re: public participation plan and community survey questions

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced Mr. Craig Pinder, who presented the public engagement plan and proposed survey questions. The February community input efforts will include live surveys and interactive mapping tools.

Methods of community engagement were discussed, including the creation of a webpage to enhance transparency. Mr. Pinder outlined the purpose of the stakeholder meetings and public workshops.

The Committee spoke to partnering with the Sanibel School or CECI to engage younger residents, using the first workshop to educate the community on foundational planning concepts to encourage constructive feedback, and providing context on the roles and interactions of the Vision Statement, Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code (LDC), and City Charter. The Committee also discussed conducting a SWOT analysis, whether to accept input from non-residents, and adding "Environment" as an additional factor, including clarification of the term "Community."

The Committee further spoke to the survey timeline, method of distribution, anonymity of responses, prevention of duplicate submissions, and the inclusion of additional demographic questions. Discussion ensued regarding the survey being directional.

**6. New Business**

a. Presentation from Natural Resource & Chief Resiliency Officer re: Vulnerability Assessment

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced the City's Chief Resiliency Officer, Ashlee Painter, to review key points from the Vulnerability Assessment presentation previously provided to City Council on January 16, 2025.

Chief Resiliency Officer Ashlee Painter presented a PowerPoint overview of the Vulnerability Assessment.

The Committee requested clarification on whether future flooding impacts may be underestimated based on the percentages provided. Ms. Painter explained that the figures are based on state regulatory requirements and may not fully reflect conditions specific to the City.

The Committee also inquired why roadways were not included on certain sensitivity maps. Ms. Painter responded that roadways are shown on a separate sensitivity map.

The Committee spoke to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) vulnerability framework, the potential expansion of the adaptation plan scope following state statutory requirements, and the prioritization of flooding-related projects for future funding.

The Committee discussed vulnerabilities to conservation lands due to sea level rise and storm impacts, including questions regarding whether protection strategies are planned or if natural adaptation is anticipated.

The Committee raised questions regarding projected sea level rise, infrastructure concerns such as the East End Bridge on Periwinkle Way, and whether consultant input had been informed by the findings of the assessment. Ms. Painter noted that bridge considerations were related primarily to boating access rather than water level concerns.

The Committee inquired about the inclusion of affordable housing assets on the maps. Ms. Painter explained that the maps reflect the ten highest-risk assets, while all City assets were evaluated and assigned risk scores within the assessment framework.

The Committee discussed the integration of the study's findings into the Sanibel Plan update to ensure consistency and avoid a standalone document.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the presentation, report, and GIS StoryMap

**b. Community Resiliency & Environmental Stewardship**

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced Natural Resources staff members Holly Milbrandt and Dana Dettmar to provide an overview and outlook on Community Resiliency and Environmental Stewardship as part of the Sanibel Plan.

Ms. Milbrandt stated that, based on staff review, no major changes to this section of the Plan are currently recommended; however, staff acknowledged the significant changes that have occurred on the island.

The Committee inquired about clarification related to resiliency considerations within the Plan.

Ms. Dettmar noted that Natural Resources staff participate in multiple technical advisory committees and provided an overview of each plan element individually.

Discussion ensued regarding water management and how it will be addressed in the Plan update, carrying capacity considerations, beach management, inlets, and updated language related to page 19, including questions regarding berms.

**i. Review of Coastal Zone Protection Element**

Discussion ensued regarding water management and how it will be addressed in the update, carrying capacity considerations, beach management, and inlet conditions, including inlet closures.

The Committee also inquired about updated language on page 19, including berms.

**ii. Review of Conservation Element**

Environmental Biologist Dana Dettmar provided background on the Conservation Element.

Member Decker-McHale stepped out of the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Discussion ensued regarding air quality, red tide, exotic lizards, and native predators, as well as proposed changes and updates to the Conservation Element. The Committee also discussed vegetation, including buttonwoods and potential protection measures for Australian pines.

Further discussion focused on reclaimed and irrigation water, including input from IWA, and the enforcement of two existing water conservation policies in the Land Development Code (LDC). Committee members also discussed updating verbiage to

reflect current standards.

iii. Review of Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Element

Environmental Biologist Dana Dettmar provided background on the Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Element.

Discussion ensued regarding septic systems on Captiva and strategies for retaining additional water while adhering to Plan goals, with caution regarding potential flooding. The Committee also discussed state fertilization policies and maintaining the City's existing fertilization ordinance.

iv. Review of Scenic Preservation Element

Environmental Biologist Dana Dettmar provided background on the Scenic Preservation Element.

Committee Member Moore left the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Discussion ensued regarding Australian pines, desired flexibility in building height language, and the use of permeable pavers.

## 7. Next Meeting Date

- a. Next meeting January 21, 2026 at MacKenzie Hall

## 8. Public Comment

Nancy Gurney - Spoke regarding issues in developed areas, noting concerns about nutrients, fertilizer, and water. She emphasized that natural elements should not be excluded and that the Sanibel Plan should focus on future planning. Ms. Gurney also discussed community perspectives on variances for raising homes and the need for rapid adaptation. Discussion ensued regarding variance permit implementation.

Calli Johnson - Shared her personal experience regarding why some residents may choose not to raise their homes.

Lyman Welch - Thanked the Committee for their efforts and stressed the importance of engaging younger families in the Sanibel Plan. He suggested outreach through events like the Seahorse Festival, flyers via schools, and the Recreation Center. Mr. Welch also recommended additional survey questions and spoke on conservation topics including marine debris, beach trash, living shorelines, and Sanibel's role as an environmental leader.

Jason Halliburton - Thanked the Committee and focused his comments on the survey and workshops. He suggested that the City's PIO provide guidance on what to expect from the workshops, recommended holding the first workshop over two nights to maximize participation, and provided ideas for survey design including: using a 1-10 rating scale, adding open-ended questions, including "unsure" as an option, and adding waterfront amenities as a suggested activity on the island.

## **9. Adjournment**

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:52 A.M.