



City of Sanibel

Land Development Code Review Subcommittee

Planning Department Agenda Memorandum

Land Development Code Review Subcommittee Meeting Date: February 24, 2026

To: Land Development Code Review Subcommittee

From: Craig J. Chandler, AICP, Deputy Planning Director

Date: February 24, 2026

TITLE: LDC Review of Section 126-853. – Front yards.

REVIEW TIMELINE

Date	Meeting Type	Summary
12/09/2025	Planning Commission	Discussion of 2026 Planning priorities
02/24/2026	LDC Review Subcommittee	Proposed amendment for discussion

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Consideration of an amendment to Section 126-853. – Front yards to strike a provision that prohibits accessory buildings from front yard areas.

Front yard means an area, unoccupied, except by structures specifically permitted, extending across the full width of a lot and lying between the abutting street line and the nearest part of the principal structure on the lot per Section 78-1.

The section raises some questions regarding consistent application:

- The prohibition refers to accessory *buildings* but goes on to list exceptions that are accessory *structures*.
- Some accessory structures, including ground signs, fences and walls, are allowed in front yard areas by other sections of code but are not included among the exceptions of this section.
- There are numerous examples of accessory structures which have been permitted in front yards that comply with minimum setbacks, such as swimming pools, detached garages, storage sheds, generator stands, pergolas, planters greater than 3 feet in height, and recreation courts (at multi-family developments). This pattern is especially noticeable at (but not limited to) multiple frontage lots.

Staff researched the origins of this standard and found limited information. Ordinance 85-26 adopted the Land Development Code replacing the former Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). The only amendment, Ordinance 88-02, pertained to marine accessory structures.

Staff find front yard setback requirements, in lieu of the prohibitive text of Section 126-853, are adequate to achieve Sanibel Plan objectives, such as protection of rights-of-way from encroachment of buildings (Transportation Element) and the plan for housing and scenic preservation generally.

The proposed legislative text, including strikethroughs (red) and underline (green) to signify proposed deletions and additions to the existing Land Development Code, is provided as an attachment.

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend a motion to move this item to the next scheduled Planning Commission agenda for further consideration of a draft resolution.