

**SEMINOLE COUNTY
LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY/
PLANNING AND ZONING
COMMISSION COUNTY SERVICES
BUILDING
1101 EAST FIRST STREET
SANFORD, FLORIDA
BOARD CHAMBERS, ROOM
1028**

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2025
6:00 PM**

MINUTES

The Cigar Lounge Special Exception – Consider amending an existing Special Exception for an alcoholic beverage establishment to allow for expansion in the PD (Planned Development) district on 2.29 acres, located on the northwest corner of W. State Road 426 and Via Loma Drive; BS2024-05 (Ryan LaBarre, Applicant) District1 – Dallari (Hilary Padin, Planner).

This item is a request for a special exception for The Cigar Lounge to amend an existing special exception for an alcoholic beverage establishment to allow for expansion in the Loma Vista Planned Development on 2.29 acres, located on the northwest corner of W. State Road 426 and Via Loma Drive. The Applicant currently operates an existing cigar lounge in a shopping plaza via a Special Exception approved on October 25, 2010 for on-premise consumption of beer and wine as an accessory use to the tobacco products offered for sale. The Applicant is requesting to amend the Special Exception to allow for expansion of the operation into the adjacent unit to continue serving beer and wine. The cigar lounge has increased from 1,350 square feet to 2,500 square feet in size and seats twenty-five (25) patrons, with no outdoor seating. The hours of operation are currently Monday through Wednesday from 12:30 pm to 9:00 pm, Thursday through Saturday from 12:30 pm to 11:00 pm, and Sunday from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The Seminole County Land Development Code states that any establishment selling alcoholic beverages for consumption on-premise shall maintain separations from all churches and schools. The cigar lounge meets all separation requirements and will continue to meet these requirements with the proposed expansion. The Land Development Code states that certain criteria must be met for the Board of County Commissioners to approve a Special Exception request. Staff finds that the request meets the 4 criteria. On July 15, 2025, the Applicant held a community meeting in compliance with the Land Development Code. Details of the community meeting have been provided in the agenda package provided to the Board. Staff requests approval of this request.

Commissioner Carissa Lawhun asked about the picture showing outdoor seating, but it was stated that there is no outdoor seating. Ms. Padin stated that the applicant is opting to remove the outdoor seating.

Ryan LaBarre, the applicant, of Windermere, Florida, stated that he bought the cigar lounge which has been in business for approximately twelve (12) years and they bought it about (2) two years ago. They served beer and wine, which they tried to renew, but the previous owner put in an “L” to the bar into the next space, which required them to re-apply to go through the whole thing again and which has been a dilemma.

Commissioner Lourdes Aguirre asked if the expansion of the square footage requires exhaust fans and Mr. LaBarre responded that they are already installed. He further stated that the previous owner blew out a wall and made the bar into an “L”, but all it did was add approximately three to four more seats to the bar, with the rest of the space serving as retail space and holding products, but there is no additional seating.

No one from the audience spoke in favor or in opposition to this request.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brandy Ioppolo, seconded by Commissioner Carissa Lawhun to approve and refer The Cigar Lounge to the Board of County Commissioners. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Ayes (5): Chairman Mike Lorenz, Vice Chairman Tim Smith, Commissioner Lourdes Aguirre, Commissioner Carissa Lawhun, and Commissioner Brandy Ioppolo