



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

August 1, 2018

MINUTES (draft)

PRESENT: Commissioners Jim Kielbaso, Ned Jackson, John Sarver, Kirk Lapham, Chair Bill McConnell
ABSENT: Marina Ionescu, Susan Masten
STAFF: Environmental Programs Coordinator LeRoy Harvey, Principal Planner Peter Menser
OTHERS: HOMTV, Ingham Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann, Wetland Mitigation Bank Administrator MDNR Steve Shine

1. Call meeting to order

Vice Chair Ned Jackson called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

GREEN THEME PRESENTATION: Wetland Banking

Steve Shine, Wetland Mitigation Bank Administrator (MDNR) shared an informative presentation on wetland banking – an effort to maintain or enhance the ecological benefits of wetlands in watersheds (or eco-regions) where development infringes upon, or destroys them. The idea is to sell credits to developers to help pay for restoration and preservation of new wetlands elsewhere. See a HOMTV story here: <http://bit.ly/wetlandbanking>

There is interest in further “digging” in to this topic, particularly if we can identify sites within the township (areas that were once wetlands) that could be restored – especially in cases where development low-quality wetlands can help pay for restoration on a 2-1 or 3 to 1 basis (lose a low quality acre, gain 2-3 higher quality acres).

View the Powerpoint Presentation here: <http://bit.ly/wetlandbankppt>

2. Approval of Minutes

3. Approval of Agenda

Chair McConnell suggests moving Wetland Ordinance and related up on the agenda.

4. Wetland Ordinance and Ember Oaks Discussion

The EC invited the Drain Commissioner to report on its work in Ember Oaks. Ember Oaks is the site of a major wetland preservation effort and drain improvement. Ingham Drain Commissioner distributed a copy of a restoration project his office was involved with at Ember Oaks. See report: <http://www.meridian.mi.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=13321&isPublished=False> A Wetland Delineation Report was recently received by the Township on behalf of a developer (www.meridian.mi.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=13324) and a Wetland Use Permit may be soon be submitted reviewed by the E.C. for further development on this site.

Lindemann commended the Township on its efforts to protect wetlands. He also provided some additional background on some of the projects he’s been involved with in Meridian and the region. He suggested that each project is unique and that creative solutions are not cookie cutter. Decisionmakers need to move beyond “checklists.” We also need to be thinking about a broad range of “low impact development” strategies – and the impacts of old style approaches to move water quickly off the site and down the drain. Lindemann cited the 100+ rain gardens in Towar neighborhood as an example. See examples in the June and Aug Packets such as <http://semcog.org/Green-Infrastructure>.

Further research is needed as we revise our Wetland Ordinance, Platt Ordinance and related Wetland Use and Soil Erosion Control Permits.

As we continue to consider revisions to our wetland ordinance, we should: (please help fill the blanks!)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

- 5. **PAH Ordinance:** There is interest in beginning to educate our Township Board and Staff about this issue. Sarver offered to provide language used by the League of Women Voters. We also have brochures on the topic. Harvey will prepare a memo to the Board.
- 6. **Green Themes:** The upcoming schedule is in the packet. Summary below:

Sep 5	Brent Forsberg	"Green" Placemaking
Oct 3	Karim Chatti	Pavement Preservation
Nov 7 -	Cathy DeShambo	East Lansing Environmental Initiatives
Dec 5	Garry Rowe	Wellhead Protection

- 7. **Social Media :** Elizabeth Hossink could not make the meeting but she has been helping promote environmental stories, including Green Themes. She encourages us to "like" the Green Meridian Page on Facebook and join the Green Meridian Group.

8. Reports and Updates

- A. CHAIR: None
- B. COMMISSION/LIASON/WORKGROUP REPORTS
 - A. Planning: None
 - B. Land Preservation: Kielbaso promised an invite to tour the new Serafine Preserve next Wed at 6 PM on the south side of Mt. Hope Road.
 - C. Energy: None
 - D. Green Team: See Packet
 - E. Other
- C. STAFF: See Packet
- D. OTHER: Commissioner Marina Ionescu has had to resign from the Environmental Commission due to other obligations. Appreciation was expressed for her contributions.

- 9. **Public Remarks:** None

- 10. **Adjournment:** Moved by McConnell, 2nd by Kielbaso, Unanimously supported.

