



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 5151 MARSH RD, OKEMOS  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5 2019 7:00 PM

**PRESENT:** Vice Chair, Ned Jackson; Commissioner, John Sarver; Commissioner, Susan Masten; Commissioner, Jim Kielbaso; and Commissioner Kirk Lapham  
**ABSENT:** Chair, Bill McConnell (out of the country); Commissioner, Linds Burghardt (caring for mother); Commissioner, Aparna Krishnamurthy (exam)  
**STAFF:** LeRoy Harvey, Environmental Programs Coordinator; Ben Holland, Engineering Intern; HOMTV Crew  
**CITIZENS:** John Scott-Craig, Chair, Planning Commission; Lynne Page; Susan Andrews; Fred Cowles, President of Middle Grand River Organization of Watersheds (MGROW)

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI) PRESENTATION:** Fred Cowles of MGROW shared a presentation on Green Infrastructure. See PPT at <http://www.meridian.mi.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=18567> and view on-demand at <http://meridianmi.swagit.com/play/06052019-977>. Cowles shared a comprehensive overview of green infrastructure and a description of MGROW ([www.mgrow.org](http://www.mgrow.org)). Highlights:

- **Definition:** GI uses plants, soils, and nature itself to manage stormwater and create healthier urban environments. GI is an approach to water management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle.
- **How?** Water runoff -- GI slows it down, spreads it out, and lets it soak in
- **Types:** green roofs, planter boxes, rain gardens, bioswales/bioretenion cells, vegetated swales/tree trenches, ponds, porous pavements, green streets/complete streets, wetland/riparian areas, rainwater harvesting, etc.
- **Benefits:** Stormwater Management, Climate Adaptation, Urban Heat Island Reduction, Biodiversity, Air Quality Improvements, Clean Water, Healthy Soils, Recreation, Quality of Life
- **Ways to implement:**
  - Regional Stormwater Planning
  - Low Impact Development Requirements
  - Stormwater Ordinances
  - Zoning & Building Codes
  - Shared Parking
  - Volume Reduction Requirements
  - Minimum Street Setbacks
  - Counting GI as Landscaping
  - Promote Tree Canopy
  - Riparian Setbacks
  - Re-evaluating Street Width and Parking Requirements
  - Stormwater Utility Fee Structure

**PUBLIC REMARKS:** Lynne Page encourages the Township to explore ways to promote apartment recycling including offering incentives, highlighting participating apartment complexes, and other strategies. A commissioner mentioned that the Environmental Stewardship Awards might be another

promotional tool. Ms. Page also encouraged Commissioners and the public to review and comment upon an upzoning request off Bennett (#19060). (north side of Bennett/West of Hullet)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved with changes.

NEW BUSINESS: Wetland Permit Application for the Central Meridian Trail Connector will likely be on the July Agenda.

OLD BUSINESS: Wetland Banking Discussion: There is the possibility of a joint commission meeting with the Land Preservation Advisory Board in July. The LPAB will discuss at their June meeting.

Environmental Stewardship Awards

CHAIR'S REPORT: Vice Chair Jackson mentioned speaking to Bill McConnell about the Transportation Commission's interest in keeping downtown Okemos walkable, bikable, etc.

STAFF REPORT:

- Ben Holland, former Commissioner, is now working as an Engineering Aide with Department of Public Works.
- LeRoy Harvey shared an update (see attachment below).

COMMISSION/LIAISON/WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Planning: John Scott-Craig reports that:
  - An \$25,000 Economic Study will be conducted on Downtown Haslett.
  - Village of Okemos public hearing – brownfield work will start this year
  - Delta Dental Landscaping public hearing (landscaping)
  - Development (Old Leo's) in the floodplain (Grand River and Okemos Rd)
  - New Farmers Market Plan will likely be approved. (permeable surface)
  - Hearing on Bennett Rd. housing complex next week. (ecologically-sensitive)
  - Form-based code discussion will occur soon – pilot area between Park Lake and Brookfield
  - Brownfield – Elevation Project – in Smith Drain
- Land Preservation:
  - Commissioner Kielbaso mentioned a 40-acre addition to the Towar Woods with help from a grant from the US Forest Service
  - June 15 at 10am – there will be a work day to remove invasive species on the Serafine Property. Meet at the dead end of Del Mar
  - Kelsey Dillon recently had 100+ students at the Davis-Foster Farm project planting seeds with mudballs
- Energy:
  - The Meridian Energy Team is sponsoring 5 solar open houses in June
  - The focus is on the neighborhood level – invite neighbors, friends, co-workers
  - Still working on the 100% goal of renewables. We've had discussions with Michigan Energy Options
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority: June 20 meeting is scheduled. Several topics already mentioned.
- Green Team: Mentioned in Staff Update

PUBLIC REMARKS: None

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30pm

## Staff Update – June/LeRoy

Solar Rain Garden and Bioswale is being designed at the municipal complex.

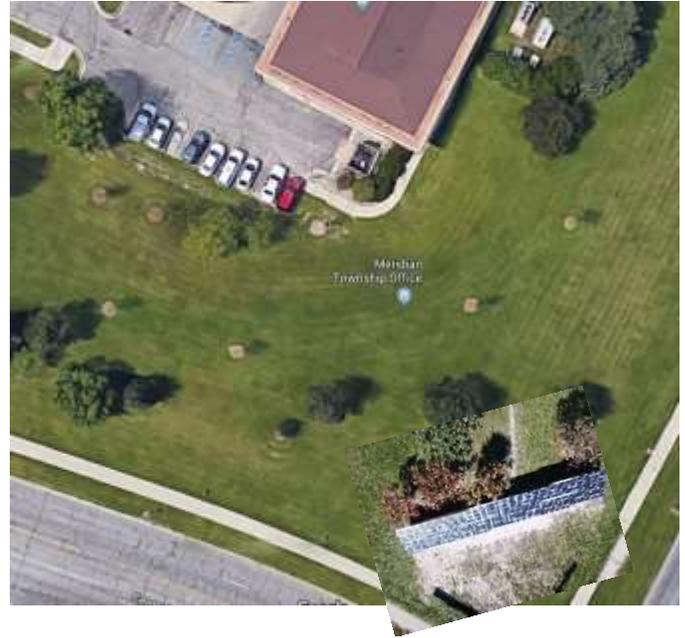
Rain Garden Factsheet/Resources

Park Lake/Burcham Roundabout Work Morning 6/10 at 10am -

Public Works Brochure (in the works ;-)

Recycling

- Multifamily – Hamilton Trace Apartments (Elizabeth Stepnowski)
- Electronics Recycling



### Secrets to Success in Apartments

- On-going education and outreach
- Strong economic incentives to increase motivation
- Support from specific properties and management
- Clear and effective container signage
- Adequate indoor and outdoor recyclables storage
- On-site volunteers/staff engaged in recycling success

Other:

Energy: Tours in June, Streetlighting Update: June 12 at 12:30 in Lansing – Interest?, Submission to Michigan Sustainability Conference:  
[https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3308\\_3333-393527--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3308_3333-393527--,00.html) for Solarize Meridian.

PAH – hope to bid for non-coal-tar sealcoat on Municipal Lot after Celebrate Meridian

Environmental Stewardship Awards:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/envirosteward>