

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Town Hall Room  
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra  
(6:01 P.M.)  
ABSENT: Trustee Wilson  
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Director of Community Planning & Development  
Mark Kieselbach, Director of Public Works and Engineering Ray Severy, Assessor  
David Lee, Police Chief David Hall, EMS/Training Chief Bill Priese

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor LeGoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor LeGoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A. Introduction of Derek N. Perry – Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works  
Township Manager Walsh introduced Derek Perry, the new Assistant Township  
Manager/Director of Public Works who will join Meridian Township on March 16, 2015.

B. Wayne Beyea, Michigan State University (MSU) School of Planning, Design & Construction –  
Sustainability Assessment  
Mr. Beyea gave a Powerpoint presentation on the summary findings and recommendations of the  
Sustainability Audit conducted by the Mid-Michigan Program for Greater Sustainability through a  
grant awarded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Board and presenter discussion:

- Strategy for methods to include street trees between the sidewalk and the street as part of placemaking
- Streets trees between the sidewalk and the street are a buffer for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) does not want street trees on any primary roads between the sidewalk and rights of way in Meridian Township
- State adopted complete streets policy indicates a willingness to look at right of way corridor for more than the movement of trucks and cars
- Communities around the state are making improvements in the right of way
- Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) standards are more relaxed than Ingham County standards regarding this issue
- Safety considerations with street trees
- Dialogue with ICRD about “how it’s being done” in other communities in Michigan with specific examples may be one way to effectuate change within the county
- Need to address safety considerations with having street trees
- Safety, aesthetic and economic value with street trees in a way that can complement the complete streets policy adopted by the State of Michigan
- Possible LED lighting to illuminate sidewalks on certain segments along Marsh Road which must be appropriate to the neighborhood scale
- Strategic placemaking includes density (which creates walkability) balanced with open space
- Open space is often referred to as the “third place”
- Safety and efficiency are key aspects of transportation planning
- Board member inquiry as to the minimum set back distance from railroad tracks for residences

- New concept in transportation planning of balancing with all user groups
- Each road commission in the state operates differently
- Adopted regulations and policies should support the Township's vision
- Private/public partnerships aid in promoting development for strategic properties in the Township
- Importance of land assembly and due diligence with environmental aspects are key to redevelopment ready communities

#### 5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, expressed concern with alleged lack of transparency in the process of hiring the Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works. He believed the Board needs greater oversight in decisions such as this made by the Manager.

Township Manager Walsh outlined in detail the transparent public process used by the Township to hire the Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

#### 6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager Walsh reported on the following:

- Township Manager's rationale for his selection of interim legal counsel
- Appraisal arrived on the central fire station/MARC property
- Process of hiring a local realtor for the central fire station/MARC property
- Blue Card training for EMS/Training Chief Priese begins Monday
- Meeting with the Planning Commission Chair and Vice-Chair on how to move forward with the Master Plan

#### 7. BOARD COMMENTS & REPORTS

Trustee Veenstra spoke to the premise that the Board should approve the creation of new positions. He reported his attendance at the regular meeting of the Tri County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) on Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> where the reduction of \$40 million in the cost of the Bus Rapids Transit (BRT) was discussed. Trustee Veenstra addressed the effect of bills tied barred to voter passage of the sales tax increase from 6% to 7% on May 5, 2015. He announced the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) wrote a two-page briefing on the tie-barred bills.

Trustee Scales expressed opposition to previous Board comment regarding the Board approving the creation of a new position. He addressed the process in place whereby the Board reserves the right to select the person to act as the Acting Township Manager. Trustee Scales suggested Bill Conklin, Managing Director of the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) be invited to make a presentation on the road package in an effort for interested citizens to have information to make an informed choice at the polls.

Treasurer Brixie reported on the Township's water meter replacement process. She requested residents south of Grand River Avenue who have received mail from the Township on this issue to contact (517) 853-4120 to schedule an appointment. Treasurer Brixie addressed the concept of use of the Police Department lobby for residents to conduct Craigslist transactions and asked Police Chief Hall to expound.

Police Chief Hall stated other police departments around the country have provided a place for conducting Craig's list transactions as it is a safe environment. He noted there would be no cost to the Township for implementation and this action would provide Township residents with another valuable service.

Trustee Scales inquired if firearm sales would be allowed and the Police Chief responded in the affirmative, providing it is a legitimate transaction.

Trustee Styka attended a webinar on the “road sales tax”, noting it is a change in how education and municipalities are funded. He stressed residents should carefully study the effects of this proposal. Trustee Styka stated the Attorney Search Committee met to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) which will be mailed to prospective law firms on March 6<sup>th</sup>. He indicated the goal is to have applications from law firms back by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Trustee Styka reported the Fire Station Committee met yesterday and final bid approval is on tonight’s agenda. He stated the agreement between Comcast and Meridian Township was signed by all parties on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Trustee Styka noted March is National Women’s History Month, acknowledging there is still a 26 cent gap in per dollar wages between men and women.

Clerk Dreyfus reported Precinct #11 polling change location has transitioned smoothly, and the Clerk’s office has mailed out a notification with new voter registration cards to registered voters in this precinct. He addressed interest expressed to the Clerk’s Office by a reporter in Freedom of Information Act policy changes for 2015.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor LeGoff reviewed the consent agenda.

**Trustee Veenstra moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALLVOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried 6-0.

A. Communications

(1) Board Information (BI)

- BI-1 Beth Hubbell, 1158 Woodside Drive, Haslett; RE: Trees
- BI-2 Karla Hudson, 6009 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Consumers Energy and Meridian Township Resident
- BI-3 Eckhart Dersch, 2203 Butternut Drive, Okemos; RE: Commercial Planned Unit Development Concept Plan – Meridian Mall

(2) Staff Communication (SC)

- SC-1 Associate Planner Martha Wyatt; RE: Site Plan Review Decision as of February 27, 2015

**Trustee Veenstra moved that the communications be received and placed on file, and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALLVOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried 6-0.

B. Minutes

**Trustee Veenstra moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the February 17, 2015 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board discussion:

- Clarification on the process used to include communications in the Board packet

- Township requirement that resignation letters of appointees be sent to the Clerk as the official keeper of the records

ROLL CALLVOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried 6-0.

C. Bills

**Trustee Veenstra moved that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows:**

Common Cash	\$ 1,251,204.57
Public Works	\$ 124,279.43
Total Checks	\$ 1,375,484.00
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 10,726.51
Total Purchases	<u>\$ 1,386,210.51</u>
ACH Payments	<u>\$ 415,458.16</u>

**Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALLVOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried 6-0.

(Bill list in Official Minute Book)

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

11. HEARINGS (None)

12. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Mark Clouse, Chief Financial Officer and Legal Counsel, Eyde Co., 300 S. Washington Square, Suite 400, Lansing, spoke in support of the request to extend the Final Preliminary Plat approval for Georgetown Estates.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

A. City of Williamston Recreation Agreement

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the “agreement for Administrative Services for Recreation Program Management” with the City of Williamston to provide youth recreation programs including softball, baseball, tee-ball, flag football, tackle football, cheerleading, and basketball from March 1, 2015 through March 31, 2017 for an administrative fee of \$32,446 in 2015-16 and \$33,419 in 2016-17, and to authorize the Township Manager to sign the agreement on behalf of the Township. Seconded by Trustee Styka.**

Board discussion:

- Agreement is a testament to regional cooperation
- Agreement is mutually beneficial and provides for more efficient government
- Language means the Township will apply its ordinances relative to non-discrimination
- First agreement began in 2011

ROLL CALLVOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

- B. Final Preliminary Plat #05012 (Eyde), Request to Extend the Final Preliminary Plat Approval for Georgetown

**Trustee Veenstra moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby grants the extension of Preliminary Plat #05012, Georgetown, for a period of two years, March 5, 2015 to March 5, 2017, with the following condition:**

1. All previous conditions placed on the preliminary plat approval shall remain in effect.

**Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board, staff and representative discussion:

- 55 of the remaining 77 lots will be before the Board for final plat approval in the very near future
- Board member suggestion for conditions 11 and 12 to be amended to require the applicant to construct the pathways in addition to granting the Township a 15-foot easement
- Township agreed to construct the pathway if the applicant provided the easement when the plat was approved in 2006
- Pathways in conditions 11 and 12 were not on the Pathway Master Plan when the preliminary plat was approved
- Pathways noted in conditions 11 and 12 are not within the subdivision
- Link between Phase 3 and 4 should be placed on the Pathway Master Plan
- Only way to currently get from Cornell Road to Powell Road is along Grand River Avenue or Haslett Road, due to the difficulty in walking or bicycling on Tihart, a dirt road
- Benefit of providing alternatives to motorized transportation
- Board member inquiry if the pathway along the Foster Drain and the one noted in condition #11 are now on the Pathway Master Plan
- There was a conceptual pathway connecting Powell Road to Cornell Road across the subject property on the pathway Master Plan prior to Georgetown being developed
- Board member request for staff to add these pathways on the Pathway Master Plan

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

- C. Central Fire Station – Final Bid Approval

**Trustee Styka moved to approve construction of Fire Station No. 91 and the construction budget not to exceed \$3,086,600. Seconded by Trustee Scales.**

Board discussion:

- Bidding process was different with Board authorization of a construction manager
- Lowest qualified bid was selected
- Prevailing wage will be paid to workers on this project
- Weiland-Davco overhead and profit (WDCOHP) of 3% at a cost of \$86,777
- 18 additional parking spaces are being provided to accommodate community room usage
- Appreciation to the central fire station committee members for their diligence in seeing the new central fire station construction through to fruition
- Trees and landscaping will be added at the conclusion of the project to avoid paying the construction manager a 3% fee on that component
- Natural gas generator is an emergency generator and included in the electrical bid price
- Natural gas generator was originally going to be funded through the Township's general fund and was able to be included in the bid
- Any change orders to the contract must be approved by the Township Manager as a safeguard to avoid cost overruns
- Contingency fund of \$100,000 is set aside to deal with cost overruns
- Total package is less than the available cash from the voter approved bond proposal

ROLL CALLVOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried 6-0.

### 13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, spoke to the noise generated by trains and the ability of residents to acclimate to that noise. He believed a solution to train noise could be the construction of concrete walls to muffle the sound.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

A. The Avenue on Grand River, Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) Concept Plan  
Director Kieselbach summarized the MUPUD concept plan as outlined in staff memorandum dated February 25, 2015.

John Gaber, Williams, Williams, Rattner & Plunkett, 380 North Old Woodward, Suite 300, Birmingham, attorney for Campus Village Communities, provided an overview of the surrounding uses on both sides of Grand River Avenue. He noted this component of the 12.65 acre site has been vacant for more than 17 years. Mr. Gaber displayed the layout of the site design for 219 multi-family residential units at a density of up to 18 dwelling units per acre (accompanied by corresponding permissible amenities), pointing out the commercial component which is already home to Foods for Living, State of Fitness and a Salvation Army Store. He stated the average of 1.9 beds per unit focuses on graduate students and graduates as tenants who are interested in starting their own businesses, with the ability for free use of a proposed entrepreneurial hub which contains conference rooms, meeting rooms, offices, group work spaces, computers, etc. Mr. Gaber addressed the “synergy” created among the residential and retail components. He indicated his intent to provide some type of safety measure to compensate for the reduced distance from the Grand Trunk Western Railroad.

Ray Behling, Director of Design and Construction, Campus Village Communities, 919 West University Drive, Suite 700, Rochester, offered an extensive overview of the layout of the proposed housing development and surrounding amenities, delineating site features which included a series of four (4) pocket parks on the property, walkability, bikability and public transportation.

Board, staff and applicant discussion:

- Location of the proposed distillery on the west side of Dawn Avenue
- Location of tenant parking on the property
- Approximately 335 parking spaces are near units, with additional shared parking of 244 spaces near the commercial component
- Board member concern with the combination of the distillery, students and a railroad track
- Board member belief the proposal is not mixed use, but an apartment complex
- Board member suggestion that the applicant may be better served to request a rezoning to a multiple family designation
- Northern most building contains shared office space
- Concern with odors from the nearby future brewery
- Engineering for the site has not yet commenced
- Distance from the railroad tracks to the closest residence is approximately 40 feet
- Four (4) foot tall barrier wall to buffer the railroad would extend from property line to property line
- Thickness of the barrier wall would be one foot
- Property for the nearby parking area is higher than the railroad track
- Residential setback from railroad tracks in our ordinance is 175 feet
- Board member preference for use of LED lighting
- Interior green space for the south building is approximately 100 by 50 feet

- Amenities will include four (4) pocket parks, two (2) recycling centers, business center, grill decks and picnic areas, fitness park, underground utilities, relocation of the transit stop with shelter, sidewalk planters and public seating plaza
- As this is only a concept plan, the amenities are still being formulated
- Applicant's belief the Township ordinance does not state a MUPUD must be built together as one project or have multiple uses in one (1) building
- Project is proposed for infill development
- 22% of the concept plan are four (4) bedroom units, 25% are two (2) bedroom units, 52% of the units are one (1) bedroom and one (1) percent are handicapped units
- Project has a total of 418 beds
- The three tax parcels, totaling 12.65 acres, are owned by the Eyde Company
- Concern the concept plan was not created on a progressive sustainable model
- Board member belief that the proposed MUPUD does not meet the intent of Meridian's MUPUD ordinance
- Concept plan does not reduce impervious surface
- Relocation of an existing bus stop is not a true amenity
- Fitness park is a new urban planning concept and a true amenity
- Amenities should be available to the public at large, not just residents of the apartments
- Majority of pocket parks are too narrow
- High density student apartment complexes do not align with the Township goal of single family ownership
- Concern the pervious/impervious ratio does not meet the Township's ordinance requirement
- Discussions between the applicant and CATA indicated the applicant would install the eastbound bus shelter and CATA would install the westbound bus shelter
- Bus rapid transit (BRT) concept has resulted in the resurgence of economic interest in the Grand River area
- Township is trying to move toward pedestrian oriented design and the site is not configured toward that end
- Concern with the apartment complex layout as it relates to the "active" industrial zoned property immediately to the west
- Narrow amount of frontage on Grand River provides an entrance to the commercial area in the back of the property
- Board member preference for traditional mixed use (apartments on top of another commercial use) with the building linked to the existing "strip center"
- Aforementioned linkage would allow for an active recreation area in the buffer behind the buildings and tracks and would be more isolated from the industrial uses to the west
- Board member request for the development to have a more positive impact on the Grand River corridor
- Building height needs to be up front on Grand River (not in the back of the property) as it helps create pedestrian oriented design on the street
- Fitness park is not inviting as it is surrounded by the parking lot
- Possible pathway connection to the owner's property to the south (across from the railroad tracks), installation of a bridge over the Red Cedar River and railroad tracks, and connection to the commercial area at the Hannah Complex as true amenities toward pedestrian oriented and non-motorized oriented living
- Board member belief because the Township's ordinance does not prohibit something does not mean it is something that is desired
- Acreage of the apartment component and its parking is 5.64 acres
- Three (3) story buildings would not have elevators
- All four (4) bedroom apartments have four (4) bathrooms
- South end of the apartments are too close to the railroad
- Importance of using LED lights throughout the inside and outside of the development
- Large exercise room in the clubhouse

B. Township Legal Services – Search Process

Manager Walsh synopsisized action of the search committee, noting the request for proposals (RFPs) will be finalized and sent out by Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>. He stated the committee will pair applicants down to three (3) after the March 31<sup>st</sup> application deadline, and will then present the names to the Board to begin the interview process.

Board discussion:

- Facebook notification will assist in “getting the word out” that the Township is seeking new legal counsel

14. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, spoke to the duty of the Township to keep its pathway system shoveled and free of snow. He addressed the safety of children who walk to school using the pathway from the south end of Hillbrook Park towards Benson Hill Apartments.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

15. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Trustee Veenstra addressed the Township’s pathway clearing policy, suggesting pathways be cleared if there is one (1) inch of snow. He voiced his appreciation for the letter from the Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation regarding energy conservation at Township facilities.

Trustee Scales reported on his field trip to the Detroit Historic African American Museum at the end of February with the Black Student Union from Haslett High School.

Township Manager Walsh clarified an earlier comment which alluded to the addition of engineering staff. He stated the Township is reducing the number of full time employees by one and two (2) Township vehicles from the fleet.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 9:09 P.M.

---

ELIZABETH LEGOFF  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

---

BRETT DREYFUS  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary