

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES
Meridian Municipal Building – Administrative Conference Room
April 26, 2016 – APPROVED**

SPECIAL MEETING

PRESENT: Chair McConnell, Commissioners Schools, Sarver, Kielbaso, Dickmann and Masten

ABSENT: Commissioner Jackson

STAFF: Harmony Gmazel, AICP, Associate Planner

OTHERS: None

1. CALL SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McConnell called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Approved by consent without objection.

3. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 6, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Approved by consent without objection.

4. REVIEW/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WUP #16-02 (T.A. Forsberg Inc. and Westpac Michigan)

The Commission had concerns about the public benefit of the project, development alternatives, planting activities and mitigation strategies. The following statement was provided to the Meridian Township Board as part of their May 3, 2016 packet:

- Township ordinances stipulate that Wetland Use Permits “shall not be approved unless the proposed activity is in the public interest, and that the permit is necessary to realize the benefits derived from the activity.” The Environmental Commission acknowledges that the application does not meet this criterion, and therefore we recommend that the applicant provide further information regarding the following topics as a condition of approval:
 - the relative extent of the public and private need for the proposed activity; and
 - the availability of feasible and prudent alternative locations and methods to accomplish the expected benefits from the activity.
- It appears that this site was mowed shortly in advance of, or during, the WUP application process. To mow within the natural vegetative strip around regulated wetlands would appear to constitute a violation of Township Ordinance.
- The applicant did not provide a clear discussion of the proposed mitigation wetland design. The design should include, at a minimum:
 - A description of the sources of hydrology, source and type of soil amendments,

- Plan view showing proposed condition of the mitigation wetland, including contour elevations, structures, conservation easement area,
- Typical cross-sections
- Water budget of inputs and outputs to the proposed wetland
- Vegetative establishment plan including plan view, methods for site preparation, seed sowing and care of plants post-construction.

In addition, the application should provide:

- The location of vegetative sampling transects, staff gages, monitoring wells
 - A schedule for completion of the mitigation site, including site preparation and soil erosion/sedimentation control measures to be used during construction
 - Information on current site ownership and provision for long-term protection of the site
 - Information on prevention and control of the establishment of invasive species, trash removal, etc.
 - Details regarding proper signage along the periphery of the wetland
- The applicant did not provide a clear discussion of the functionality of the wetland mitigation, for example with regard to the level spreader, which has proved problematic in previous wetland mitigation projects in the Township. Additional design details should be provided.
 - The Commission concurs with the four recommended modifications of the wetland mitigation plan found on page 3 of the Township environmental consultant's letter dated April 15, 2016.

5. OTHER

The Commission would like a clarification of Township policy addressing internal departmental reviews of Wetland Use Permits for their May 4, 2016 regular meeting.

The Commission requests a summary of wetland mitigation monitoring reports in order to understand the success rate of mitigation plans approved by the Township and if 5 years is a substantial enough time for monitoring.

6. PUBLIC REMARKS

None

7. ADJOURNMENT

Approved by consent without objection at approximately 5:05 p.m.