



**Environmental Commission
Meeting Packet
November 7, 2018**

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AGENDA: November 7 2018

Town Hall Meeting Room – 5151 Marsh Rd. Okemos

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM
2. GREEN THEME: **East Lansing Environmental Initiatives**
 Cathy Deshambo, East Lansing Environmental Services Administrator
3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
5. PUBLIC REMARKS
6. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Environmental Commission Application from Aparna Krishnamurthi
 - B. Upcoming Wetland Use Permits
7. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Environmental Commission Growth and Recruitment: <http://bit.ly/commission-app>
 - B. Wetland Ordinance Work Session in December (How should we prepare?)
Latest draft can be found in [Oct Packet](#).
 - C. PAH update
 - D. Other
8. REPORTS & UPDATES
 - A. CHAIR
 - B. COMMISSION LIAISON, COMMITTEE AND STUDY GROUP REPORTS
 - A. Planning
 - B. Land Preservation
 - C. Energy
 - D. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
 - E. Green Team (Citizens' Recycling Advisory Committee)
 - F. Other
 - C. STAFF
 - D. OTHERS
9. OTHER
10. PUBLIC REMARKS
11. ADJOURN

Environmental Commission Minutes: October 3, 2018 (draft)

1. ATTENDING: John Sarver, Bill McConnell, Kurt Lapham, LeRoy Harvey (staff), David Premoe (Planning Commission), Aparna Krishnamurthy (Okemos Action, Interested Commissioner)
2. MEETING Called to order at 7 PM by Chair McConnell
3. GREEN THEME: **Solar Meridian Project** , Roger Eberhardt, Meridian Energy Team. See the presentation at <http://meridianmi.swagit.com/play/10032018-1685>
4. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. **Green Community Recognition:** A press release was recently distributed about this recognition. Harvey mentioned that the Environmental Commission has had much to do with the environmental reputation of Meridian Twp. He also invited some brainstorming about how to respond to a Trustee's request to better elevate awareness about our eco-friendly community (and the recognition/award). Chair McConnell suggested reviewing the checklist. Harvey will meet with the Communications Director on Friday to discuss further.
2. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. **Commissioner Nominations:** <http://bit.ly/commission-app>
Aparna Krishnamurthy introduced herself and gave a report on the recent recycling event, to which she helped recruit half of the volunteers (40+). She is interested in applying and serving as the a Student Rep. to the Commission. McConnell mentioned Dave Chapman (instructor
 - B. **Wetland Ordinance Revisions**
Elise Tripp's recommendations were added to the current Ordinance draft, in the [October Packet](#). There is interest in determining if other local governments have done "local" wetland banking projects. McConnell suggests a separate work session to discuss further revisions. Lapham and McConnell mention further discussion of "essentiality" and "internal" wetland banking. McConnell asks if other Townships have used internal wetland banking and how we might satisfy State compliance.
 - C. **PAH memo**
Ned had some comments that were integrated in to the latest version. McConnell will sign the memo and we'll pass on to the Staff and the Board.
8. REPORTS & UPDATES
 - A. CHAIR: McConnell recently purchased a solar panel to power an electric fence. He's hoping that we can all find opportunities to use renewable energy.
 - B. COMMISSION/LIASON/WORKGROUP REPORTS
 - A. **Planning:** Dave Premoe mentions that the Planning commission is reviewing their goals and priorities. The Okemos Rd. bridge project is moving forward. It will be an opportunity to preserve wetlands, connect pathways, and view wetlands. This project will be paid for largely by a grant. Also strategizing on form-based code and how to move that forward. Downtown Okemos is a big project that may be impacted by FBC. FBC will hopeful simplify procedures. Chair McConnell mentions that our prior Green Theme presentation by Brent Forsberg, a developer, revealed some approaches that might be relevant to the evolution and development of FBC. McConnell asked if there were future public discussions planned about FBC. Premoe agreed that a dialogue with builders and developers could be fruitful. He also mentions Lansing's FBC progress – in relation to the Grand River Corridor – and the regional relevance. The Corridor Improvement Authority could be a good

venue. Premoe is optimistic that developers and projects will benefit from greater clarity, streamline approval, and flexibility in achieving desired outcomes.

B. **Energy:** Sarver reports that there has been good participation in the Solarize Meridian Workshops. People are asking good questions and seem interested in “solarizing” their homes. He also mentions that we will be getting some help on our 100% Township Renewable Energy goal from Consumers Energy who is committed to 40% renewables by 2035. He also mentions that energy efficiency will also be an important part of reaching our goal. The Energy Team is also exploring alternatives to reaching the 100%

C. **Land Preservation:** Kelsey Dillon shared a written update about the Nemoke Project (pasted below). LeRoy also mentioned the recent article in “Prime Meridian” describing “preserves.”

D. **Green Team:** Aparna provided an update earlier on the Recent Recycling Event.

C. STAFF: See the packet [October Packet](#)

9. PUBLIC REMARKS: No additional public remarks.

10. ADJOURN: Sarver motioned to Adjourn.

MINUTES: September 5, 2018 (draft)

PRESENT: Chair, William McConnell; Commissioner John Sarver; Commissioner, Kirk Lapham
ABSENT: Vice Chair, Ned Jackson; Commissioner, Susan Masten; Commissioner James Kielbaso
STAFF: LeRoy Harvey, Environmental Programs Coordinator; Elizabeth Hossink, Social Media Intern;
HOMTV Interns
GUEST: Brent Forsberg, T.A. Forsberg, Inc. and Urban Systems

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McConnell welcomed Brent Forsberg, the Green Theme Presenter at 7:02 **pm**.

2. GREEN THEME PRESENTATION

Brent Forsberg shared his perspectives on “Green Placemaking” and Green Building. Forsberg was recognized at our last meeting as a developer who is leaving a “green” mark on our region and gaining a reputation as a local leader and innovator in the industry. He explained the challenges of creating sustainable/green, vibrant, walkable, affordable, and livable communities/places/developments while making a profit. He mentioned incentives (like density bonuses) and PACE financing as tools that can help achieve these goals. View his presentation at <http://meridianmi.swagit.com/play/09052018-830>

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No changes.

4. PUBLIC REMARKS

None

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair McConnell suggested that we hold on approving the minutes until staff have had a chance to review a recording of last month’s Green Theme: <https://youtu.be/eEDHKVwxByA> on Wetland Banking.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Social Media Discussion and Update:** Elizabeth Hossink gave a brief update of her work posting environmental related news on the Facebook Page. Ms. Hossink is a Social Media Intern with HOMTV. Chair McConnell asked to be updated about postings. The Commission (and the public) is also encouraged to “like” the Green Meridian Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/GreenMeridiantwp/> and “join” the Green Meridian Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/greenmeridian>
- b. **New Commissioner Recruitment:** All Meridian residents interested in environmental issues are encouraged to join the Environmental Commission and/or nominate interested citizens (apply at Meridian.mi.us – Gov’t -- Commission) <http://bit.ly/commission-app>

7. OLD BUSINESS

- c. **PAH Memo:**
Several edits were suggested. A revised memo is attached and will be distributed in next month’s Packet.
- d. **Wetland Ordinance Next Steps:**
Chair McConnell suggested a possible discussion with member(s) the Land Preservation Board about wetland ordinance changes. Harvey will notify Commissioners about their next meeting.

8. **REPORTS & UPDATES**

a. CHAIR: None

b. COMMISSION/LIASON/WORKGROUP REPORTS

G. **Planning:** Planning Commissioner David Premoe mentioned the upcoming project to build a bridge across the wetlands on Okemos rd. to connect two major pathways in the Township. I will improve accessibility and an opportunity to view the wetlands.

The Planning Commission is learning about form-based codes.

H. **Land Preservation:** None

I. **Energy:** Commissioner Sarver mentioned upcoming Solarizing Michigan workshop on Sept 12 and a Solar Open House on Oct. 6.

J. **Green Team:** Harvey shared information about the upcoming Meridian Regional Recycling Event, a need for volunteers, & update on an Apartment Recycling Survey.

c. **STAFF**

Harvey shared a Board Memo from Dreyfus about creation of a new position called "Director of Community Sustainability" to help assist with sustainability-related issues including development, planning, Master Plan visioning, greenspace preservation, energy usage, and others areas. The Environmental Commission may wish to weigh in on Dreyfus' proposal.

9. **PUBLIC REMARKS:** None

10. **ADJOURN:** Commissioner Lapham moved to adjourn. Seconded by Sarver. Motion passed.

MINUTES: August 1 2018 (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.

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	Energy Team	Solar Meridian
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

K. Planning: None

L. 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.

M. Energy: None

N. Green Team: See Packet

O. 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

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

STAFF UPDATE

	Summary
Green Community Recognition	Tom Frazier (Mich. Township Association) & Bill McConnell presented the Green Communities Award at a Twp Board Meeting in October. More at http://migreencommunities.com
Green Infrastructure Project	Students assisted with a weeding day at the Hidden River Roundabout. Working on a brochure on eco-landscaping.
Recycling	Update in October Green Gazette http://bit.ly/greenOK The “Green Team” works on this and related recycling initiatives. LeRoy’s working with a committee at Grange Acres to improve recycling options for residents.
Social Media	Elizabeth Hossink is hoping to get more involved. Visit and join the FB group and page . Also – share your stories with HOMTV
<u>Green Gazette</u>	Current issue includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Solar Array • Solar Resources • Compost your Pumpkin • Catch a Green Theme • Where Can I Recycle...? • Recycle Right Subscribe here . Story ideas to Harvey@meridian.mi.us
Wetlands	Elise Tripp’s edits are included in the draft distributed in your last packet . (our wetland consultant) shared a list of Michigan Communities with wetland ordiances . Work session planned for our December meeting.
Energy	A 1-yr report on the climate action plan is underway. More on the new solar array at http://bit.ly/meridiansolar
PAH Memo	Derek reviewed the memo and suggests that we focus on education first before exploring a ban. This would include updating our own bidding specs and trying out alternatives in our lots.
Other	

GREEN THEME SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

Nov 7 -	Cathy DeShambo	East Lansing Environmental Initiatives
Dec 5	Work Session	
Jan 9	Garry Rowe to be confirmed	"An Update on the Ingham County Groundwater Survey and Important Issues for Well Head Protection Management."
Feb 6	Karim Chatti	Pavement Preservation
2019	Ideas	
Jan 2 or 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure • Low Impact Development – Green Building • 	
Mar 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wetland Person – model ordinances – Elise Tripp? • Blue Trails -- (large county grant) 	
Apr 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Burial Plots (Williamstown Twp – Wanda B.) 	
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt: Suggested by Rebecca Essleman • Radon (Susan) 	
Jun 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EL's Sustainable Building Ordinance – Green Building 	
Jul 3 or 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% Renewable Goal of Traverse City – Kate Madigan (John) 	
Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological Landscaping – Bill Schneider - WildType • Wayfinding: (related to our 2018 goals) 	
Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenspace Plan 	
Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Sustainability - review ordinances 	
Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relation between Greening and Economic Development/ attracting green businesses • Collaboration with the Land Preservation Advisory Board 	
Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green chemistry (Ned) • Green Businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (Hopcat has a landfill/waste diversion is 90%) ○ Buddies' composting food waste https://livegreenlansing.org/scraps-to-soil/ ○ Others? Possibly a "Green Panel" of business people 	

View Past Green Themes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qFiWiZQA9A&list=PLYCL9BfEG5RX5LMXKoAde3LCmdRhwrCF>