

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 13, 2011**

APPROVED

**5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room, 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners Beyea, Deits, Goodale, Honicky, Jackson, Norkin, Scales
ABSENT: Commissioner Cordill
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak, Ray Severy, Director of Public Works and Engineering

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Deits called the regular meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

Commissioner Honicky moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 23, 2011. Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

Commissioner Scales moved to approve the Work Session Minutes of May 23, 2011. Seconded by Commissioner Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

4. Public Remarks

Chair Deits opened the floor for public remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, spoke to the necessity of dealing only with the issues of health and safety relative to restrictions on flag standards.

John Veenstra, 320 Piper Road, Haslett, spoke in support of an 8' x 12' flag (96 square feet) standard for Meridian Township as well as increasing the flag pole height to 40 feet.

Chair Deits closed public remarks.

5. Communications (None)

6. Meridian Township Water and Sewer Systems – Ray Severy, Director of Public Works and Engineering

Director Severy offered a brief overview on the water and sewer systems for Meridian Township.

Planning Commission and staff discussion:

- Meridian Township water comes from the East Lansing-Meridian Water Sewer Authority and the Lansing Board of Water and Light
- Inflow and infiltration (storm sewer which seeps into the sanitary system)
- Concern with sump pumps in the older areas of the Township where they pump directly into the sanitary system
- Differential between water used and sewer used

- 20% more sewer used than water last year
- Rate limiting step is the present sewage capacity
- As the Township grows, new construction methods will allow numbers between water and sewage to more closely parallel one another
- Age of Meridian Township's system is between 45-50 years
- Wells solely for irrigation cannot be installed if Township water is available
- Prohibition on wells solely for irrigation as a groundwater protection measure
- History of the two sections of sewer along Grand River Avenue beyond the "old" urban service boundary (USB)
- Water line stops at Wellington Estates along Grand River Avenue, St. Martha's Church and one subdivision on the south side
- Any property which fronts onto Grand River Avenue in that area would have access to the existing water main
- Mud Lake lift station was designed approximately ten (10) years ago to service almost the entire eastern part of the Township
- Grand River Avenue water main is a 12" line and was installed with the idea that it could extend further east and service a larger area
- Developers pay for extension of water and sewer systems
- Cost of water and sewer system maintenance is recovered through user fees
- Water and sewer systems are self supporting systems through user fees
- USB redrawn to facilitate additional development to the east
- How the Capital Improvement Program has contributed to the water conservation efforts
- 6" water mains in the older areas have been upgraded to 8" for better fire protection flow
- Creation of water main "loops" to provide a secondary source in the event of water main breaks
- Focus on eradication of I & I in the sanitary system which reduces both flow to the plants and water treatment costs
- Latest agreement with Board of Water and Light includes a water conservation program which focuses primarily on education
- Long term planning with the Board of Water and Light
- Ability to expand the water authority plant by 50% on its current footprint
- Regional trend is a decline in water usage

7. **Public hearings** (None)

8. **Unfinished Business**

- A. Zoning Amendment #11050 (Township Board), proposal to amend Section 86-402(3) pertaining to the size and display of flags in commercial zoning districts.

Commissioner Goodale moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby recommends approval of Zoning Amendment #11050 to the Township Board. Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

Commissioner Honicky moved to amend the flag size to 6 x 10 feet (60 square feet) and the flag pole height to 40 feet. Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Standards for flag pole height are contained in a separate ordinance

Commissioner Honicky offered the following friendly amendment to his motion:

- **Delete the language "and the flag pole height to 40 feet"**

The amendment was accepted by the seconder.

Continued Planning Commission discussion:

- Previous staff report, overview of the Township Board’s discussion and American Legion recommendation indicate the largest size flag that would fit would be 5 X 8 feet
- Flag pole height not a consideration in this zoning amendment
- Concern that the federal flag standard ratio of 1:1.9 makes the appropriate flag size not readily available
- Flag pole height at Belle Tire is 35 feet
- Flag pole at Belle Tire is not near the road
- Concern with abuse of the flag as a commercial landmark
- Federal law prohibits the use of US flags for advertising purposes
- Focus should be on safety and health
- 6 X 10 foot flags are commercially available
- Flying a 6 x 10 flag at half mast on a 35 foot flag pole would present a safety concern in some circumstances
- Reminder that a change in flag standards would apply to any site zoned C-1, C-2 and C-3
- Level of patriotism is not proportional to the size of the flag
- Respect for the flag is not proportional to the size of the flag
- Township Board request to the Planning Commission was to amend the flag standard ordinance to 40 square feet
- Larger sized flags would require a comprehensive look at both flag size and pole height
- Consideration of an ordinance which includes similar language to the American Legion resolution
- Appropriate for the Township to take aesthetic perspectives into consideration

ROLL CALL VOTE YEAS: Commissioners Honicky, Norkin, Scales
 ON THE NAYS: Commissioners Beyea, Goodale, Vice Chair Jackson, Chair
 AMENDMENT: Deits
 Motion failed 3-4.

ROLL CALL VOTE YEAS: Commissioners Beyea, Goodale, Norkin, Vice Chair Jackson,
 ON THE MAIN Chair Deits
 MOTION: NAYS: Commissioners Honicky, Scales
 Motion carried 5-2.

9. Other Business

A. Resolution of Appreciation – Adrienne Goldsberry

Commissioner Jackson moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN as follows:

The Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, by means of resolution, extends to Adrienne Goldsberry grateful thanks for her voluntary effort on behalf of all residents of the community during this period of dedicated service on the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Scales.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Commissioner Goldsberry as a valuable and level-headed member of the commission
- ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Commissioners Beyea, Goodale, Honicky, Norkin, Scales, Vice Chair Jackson, Chair Deits
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 7-0.

10. Township Board, Planning Commission officer, committee chair, and staff comment or reports

Commissioner Beyea reported his attendance at the American Planning Association Sustainable Codes Workshop in Chicago last Friday and Saturday. He stated he looks forward to sharing resources gained from that workshop with fellow Commissioners.

11. New applications (None)

12. Site plans received (None)

13. Site plans approved

A. Site Plan Review #11-07-02 (Extendicare), request to add parking spaces at 5211 Marsh Road.

Planning Commission discussion:

- Allowance for 35 additional parking spaces by moving the original proposal to the north
- Parking during shift change (2:15 P.M.-2:30 P.M.) is problematic

B. Site Plan Review #11-92 (Park Commission), request to construct a fishing dock in the Central Park lake

14. Public remarks

Chair Deits opened and closed public remarks.

15. Adjournment

Chair Deits adjourned the regular meeting at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Otto
Recording Secretary