



SUMMARY
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
JOINT MEETING OF ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMISSION AND LAND PRESERVATION
ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7PM

ATTENDING: Jon Mayes, Jim Kielbaso, Roland Harmes, Dan Opsommer, Linda Burghardt, Jesse Lewter, Dave Premoe, Ned Jackson, Bill McConnell, John Sarver, Susan Maston, LeRoy Harvey, Jamie Hiller, Kirk Lapham, Kelsey Dillon, Jane Greenway

OVERVIEW: Interest in wetland banking was inspired by recent “Green Theme” presentations, most recently by Mike Pennington from EGLE. A benefit may be to “pool” smaller mitigation projects to restore larger, more ecologically significant wetlands (possibly on Land Pres. properties). In addition, the Environmental Commission has been updating the [Township Wetland Ordinance](#)

Wetland banks are considered (Compensatory Mitigation) and typically used as a last resort which comes after avoiding damage (protecting wetland) and minimizing damage to a wetland. Typically there is a 1.5/1 ratio of new vs. destroyed wetland.

DISCUSSION OF WETLAND MITIGATION: There was discussion about the scope of banking – from larger commercial projects to smaller township projects. It is thought that we might start first with Township projects. There is interest in determining how much mitigation has been done through Township projects. This might reveal the scope of a banking project and whether there is enough demand to justify a project.

There has been a “banking” project completed in the last few years on the Central Meridian Land Preserve (informally known as “Rysberg Land Preserve”) which may serve as a model.

Wetland Use Permits (WUPs) typically require bonding to ensure that mitigation is successful. There are also stipulations about monitoring, survival rates of plants.

Other concerns, challenges, questions, etc.:

GENERAL ISSUES

- Can we identify enough area on land preservation properties?
- How much developable wetlands do we have in the township?
- How much wetland area is privately owned? Can this be estimated based on wetland maps.
- Banks could apply to Township-only projects or for larger commercial projects. We can decide the level of wetland banking to pursue.

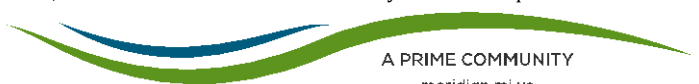
ECONOMIC

- What are the costs? (surveying, purchasing land, restoration, etc. and cash flow.) There could be a lot of upfront costs. Where would the \$ come from? Can you build it as you go?
- What would be the value of the wetland bank? They can sell for \$80,000-100,000/acre

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board by contacting: Director LuAnn Maisner, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI 48864

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- Could we use \$ generated to preserve existing wetlands or land preserves?
- Pathway project that includes wetland mitigation through a wetland bank, might require a transfer of fund between the pathway fund to the land preservation fund. Land preservation funds might also be used. Also parks funds and public works \$ could also be used.
- How would payments or credits be structured for the Township vs. private projects.
- How do we preserve funds for other ecological restoration initiative (invasive species, brush clearing, tree planting, etc.)?
- A potential project might be the Tihart Rd. farm – where a wetland might be easily created vs a prairie – and provide more benefit to the Township.

ECOLOGICAL

- How might site drainage/flooding be impacted if we eliminated wetlands on a site? How do we retain or even expand flood storage (green infrastructure)? This is typically part of other permitting (Drain Commissioner's Office).
- How do we encourage more green infrastructure in every new development?
- What type of wetland might be created as a bank? (There are levels of quality) Where would banks be located? (old farm fields, which we're originally wetlands, might be more desirable).
- [Tree banks](#) or swaps could be seen as a model.
- Our environmental consultant (Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr, and Huber) might be approached for their perspectives on these projects.
- There are technologies that can help identify old drain tiles in farm fields (once drained, which might be good candidates for wetland restoration).
- Completing a wetland bank would create an immediate ecological benefit and achieve an economy of scale (less expensive to design, construct, and maintain a larger vs. many smaller projects).

NEXT STEPS

- Check with Engineering/Planning staff on how many wetland mitigation projects have been done, approximate costs, and area mitigated. Also suggested is an [analysis of developable wetlands \(as well as wetlands in land preserves\)](#).
- If we choose to pursue this further, we may wish to make additional amendments to our Township Wetland Ordinance.
- Request was made to investigate the option of a tree banking program

Additional information:

- Green Theme: Wetland Banking Presentation: <http://www.meridian.mi.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=17411>
- Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitigation_banking

ADJOURNMENT: 8PM

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