



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 4, 2023 7 pm

Town Hall Meeting Room, 5151 Marsh Rd, Okemos

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC REMARKS
3. CHANGES TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - Meeting Schedule for 2023

 - Other
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - Climate Sustainability Plan Edits and Next Steps (editable versions can be found here: <https://sites.google.com/view/climate-sustainability-plan/home>)

 - Other
7. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - (a staff update can be found here: <https://bit.ly/update-leroy>)
8. PUBLIC REMARKS
9. ADJOURNMENT

Environmental Commission Minutes (draft)

December 7, 2022

Corrections to Minutes: Two changes were suggested and corrected minutes are attached.

Master Plan Update: Senior Planner Shorkey invited comments to the 2023 Master Plan Update. Section II Goals and Objectives section is perhaps the most relevant. (preserving open space and natural areas). Shorkey shared the feedback form: <https://bit.ly/3Gco127> Frazier asked about the timeline. A draft of the plan will be developed and distributed in the spring of 2023 for additional comments. See the current plan here: <https://www.meridian.mi.us/about-us/departments/community-planning-development/master-plan>

McConnell suggested there might be more done related to encourage enhanced stormwater management including increased biodiversity and infiltration in detention ponds. McConnell also mentioned enhanced tree protection. Shorkey helped write a tree preservation ordinance for another community. The Planning Dept. is also updating Meridian's landscaping ordinance. Frazier recalled that Canton Twp.'s tree ordinance was challenged and lost in court. McConnell also mentioned that other goals in the Master Plan (including #7) and the recent [Township Goals Statement](#) includes a number of additional goals relevant to energy sections. Sarver suggested discussing this at the next Energy Team meeting.

C. Wisinski mentioned construction of its first EV Charging facility in 2023 according to the recent 2023 Goals Statement. Opsommer provided an update related to evaluating and planning electrical service upgrades. Depending upon how quickly this occurs, construction may proceed in 2023 or 2024.

Road Construction Update: Opsommer provided an update on the major road construction, including the compensating cut behind the Central Fire Station necessary for wetland mitigation. Grand River will reopen more fully next week. Okemos Bridge will likely reopen in mid January. All three pedestrian refuge islands (similar to that installed by Grand Traverse Pie in E.L.) will be installed in 2023. McConnell asked about the pedestrian crossing under the railroad bridge. There will also be a path under the bridge between Ferguson Park and Wonch Park providing a human and wildlife corridor.

Climate Sustainability Plan: McConnell asked if a memo and draft of portions of the CSP might be offered for feedback by the Transportation Commission and Board of Trustees. Shorkey mentioned that he could put the CSP on a future Transportation Commission agenda for feedback. There was also mention of upcoming revisions to the parking ordinance (such as shared parking and EV charging) being considered by the Planning Dept. and Commission. Harvey mentioned a webpage where Commissioners can make changes and offer suggestions to the current CSP: <https://sites.google.com/view/climate-sustainability-plan/home>

Updates, Reports and Announcements:

- **Green Team:** Frazier mentioned the Green Team's efforts to create monthly events at the marketplace in 2023 and a Coat Drive scheduled for Dec 17.
- **Energy Team:** Sarver reported that there were 6 Solarize Meetings attended by 112 residents resulting in 19 solar systems installed (representing 153 KW of solar power). There are 3-5 Solarize meetings planned in 2023. A Low Carbon Infrastructure Proposal is underway. Public Sector Consultants is working with East Lansing, Lansing, and Meridian for a community solar project. Sarver mentioned the example that panels could be built at the Water Treatment Plant (or other public facility) and then be leased. A reimbursement or credit (Market Bucks, Water bill reduction, etc.) would be developed to encourage participation. The EC supports moving forward on the concept. Harvey and Sarver will draft a Letter of Support. The commitment involves no cash flow though there may be meetings and data exchange.

- **Food to Compost Continuum:** Colby reports that the Good Food Charter is being developed on local and state levels. There are plans to expand the Gleaning Initiative in May at the Market. There are discussions with grocery stores about gleaning (capturing food before it's landfilled). McConnell reports the MSU is reducing waste in food service with compostable containers and washable dishes. He also mentioned a regional organic waste audit in collaboration with Public Sector Consultants.
- **Board of Commissioners:** C. Wisinski reported on Board Goals including a new recycling drop-off center, 100% renewable progress, EV charging, and continued wetland education. Other goals include Phase III MSU to Lake Lansing Pathway. There are also parks improvements, Lake Lansing Clean Up, Green Grants, and a regional stormwater study. There are also social justice goals including community events including LGTBQ and Cultural celebrations. There is also a focus on affordable housing improvements. McConnell asked if there has been (or might be) discussion about a Land Acknowledgement (similar to what MSU and others have done) recognizing ancestral rights? Jackson asked what the Township might do to affect policies related to affordable housing. Shorkey mentioned research in to affordable housing. A white paper will be distributed to the Planning Commission on this subject. McConnell asked about Grand Reserve Housing Development. Shorkey responded that the houses will be rentals, responding to a need from "renters by choice" – young professionals who prefer a house but not purchasing. The Grand Reserve also 64% if permanently preserved and includes protected wetlands.
- **Brownfield Redevelopment:** Jackson reported that Haslett Village and American House will be considered separately as developments.
- **Crossing Grand River on the Lake Lansing to MSU Pathway:** Opsommer reported that there will be possibilities for crossing Grand River at the pedestrian refuge island near Campus Hill Apartments and at the Park Lake Rd. intersection. Phase I construction will be completed between July and September. Phase II will be happening in 2023. Phase III engineering will begin in 2023.
- **Okemos H.S. Earth Club:** Andrechek mentions a recent a vegan taste testing which may result in expanded options for lunch. A podcast is being edited and will soon be shared. This podcast features Amira V., Addy G., and Steve Noble (EGLE Electronic Waste Coordinator) and is about E Waste.
- **L. Wisinski Update:** May 3, 2023 will be Luca's last day with the Environmental Commission. He will be starting a job in Alaska on a fishing charter boat and then attending Michigan Tech hopefully in the fall.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:34 pm.

Full recording available at <https://meridianmi.new.swagit.com/videos/190796>

2023 Environmental Commission Meetings

Jan 4

Feb 1

Mar 1

Apr 5

May 3

Jun 7

Jul 5

Aug 2

Sep 6

Oct 4

Nov 1

Dec 6

Amelia Saffron

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ameliagsaffron@gmail.com

Dear Environmental Committee,

I am very interested in joining the Meridian Township Environmental Committee as a student representative to address our area's environmental problems. Specifically, I would like to help Meridian Township's environmental community outreach. I am planning on majoring in Plant Biology and Computer science. I have an interest in the use of plants to improve outdoor aesthetics and improve local appreciation and involvement in nature by expanding Capital Area District Library's seed saving and exchange program. Involving younger students at the elementary and middle school levels in this program would help foster interest in our local environment from a young age, which in turn would ensure a new generation of students devoted to the natural world.

I have some experience in theoretical policy by competing in the Euro Challenge, as part of Okemos High School (OHS) Debate Club, representing Lithuania. I specifically contributed to the educational policy of the country's impact on its economics caused by the competition for higher educated individuals elsewhere. I think the new educational curriculum, especially regarding environmental justice, environmental economics, and environmental policy would be especially useful for high school students who see themselves as environmental stewards.

I believe I am well suited to the position based on my experiences, academic background, and interests. As a high school junior, I have three years of experience volunteering for miRcore, which is a nonprofit research organization with the goal of treating individuals based on their unique genetic profiles. Through this organization, I have been working with other high school students around the U.S. on researching

microRNA interactions, public education, and fundraising for microgrants to university researchers. I am currently the president of the Genes in Diseases and Symptoms Club at OHS, which competes nationally and submits research abstracts and presentations on diseases. Autoimmune diseases are the focus of this year's club, while last year's topic was mental health. Between my school's GIDAS club and miRcore, its parent organization, I have experience in fundraising and team-leadership. I also helped teach a Biology workshop online regarding the central dogma and virology to middle schoolers from all over the US. For one year, I was also a member of the OHS Debate Club, which competes nationally. I am a member of the Computer Science Club that competed in the *Algirithm* contest, and will also compete in the American Computer Science League this winter. My programming skills include Java and R languages. I am also familiar with Linux, Excel, and Google Sheets. My hobbies include walking our dog and bike riding on the Meridian Township trails, hiking in National, State, and Metroparks, finding inspiration in botanical gardens, and growing a number of house plants.

Thank you for considering me for a position on this committee. I look forward to speaking with you in greater detail about my experiences and ideas for this position and how I can contribute to the future success of community projects in the township.

Sincerely,

Amelia Saffron

Amelia Saffron

Okemos MI, 48864

Cell: (517)599-9332

ameliagsaffron@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Okemos High School Junior

Graduating: May 2024

GPA: 3.994- transcript upon request

Michigan State University Dual Enrollment

GPA: 4.0- transcript upon request

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Landscape 06/2022-08/2022
 - Planned and planted flower beds
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ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- AP Chemistry, AP language, AP Literature, AP Micro/Macro Economics, BC Calculus, AP World History, Computer Science
 - Currently taking AP Environmental Science, AP Biology, AP US History, and Physics
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EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Debate Team: Okemos High School
 - Compete locally and nationally on policy debate topics 09/11/2020-04/28/2021
 - Presented as part of the team for the Euro Challenge 04/07/2021
- GIDAS (Genes in Disease and Symptoms) club: Okemos HS 09/02/2020- present
 - Current President of GIDAS club and member for three years
 - Present weekly computational biology and biotechnology on gene expression
 - Fundraise for microgrants on autoimmune diseases
 - Prepare club members for a competition and to publish an abstract
 - Prior to this year, I also participated in the club for the years on COVID-19 and Mental Health topics
- Computer Programming club: Okemos HS 09/10/2021- present
 - Learn about programming in the python language, attend national and local level competitions throughout the year, and invite guest speakers to talk about their latest research
- Mathematics, Science & Technology program: Michigan State University 07/08-12/2019
 - Biotechnology camp
 - Chemistry camp
- Intensive Studies in Pre-Med Education camp: Michigan State University 06/23-28/2019

- Policy Debate Camp
 - Criminal Justice Reform Policy: Michigan State University 06/29-07/14/2020
 - Water Resources: Michigan State University 06/28/2021- 07/13/2021

 - miRcore summer Camp: University of Michigan
 - Computational Biology Camp 06/15-19/2020
 - Biotechnology Camp- microarrays, PCR, and gel electrophoresis 06/22-26/2020
 - R-Programming & Machine Learning Camp 07/12-23/2021
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VOLUNTEER WORK/ Training

- MiRcore (nonprofit) Volunteer Program 08/28/2020- present
 - MiRcore volunteer program: weekly computational biology research on Autoimmune Education committee - develop materials to initiate other GIDAS clubs, MVP research help, and create presentations on bioethics
 - Led a group of Ann Arbor middle schoolers in the Genes, Computational Biology and Cancer Workshop
 - Trainee under Dr. Yan “Susie” Liu: Michigan State University
 - Prepare supermix samples for PCR
 - Micropipet DNA samples into gel electrophoresis wells
 - Prepare yeast fortified nutrient agar for algae growth
 - Weigh potatoes and prepare potato slurry for analysis

 - Tutoring Okemos High School students in PreCalculus and Chemistry 10/22- present

 - Okemos High School Fall Food drive 10/8/22
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AWARDS

- Birmingham Groves Debate Tournament 11/13/2020-11/14/2020
 - 2nd speaker award on Criminal Justice policy

 - Le Grand Concours Certificat de Mérite and d’Honneur Award 03/01/2020

 - The Ninth Annual High School GIDAS Research Conference 06/11/2022
 - 3rd place: “BDNF to affect the Glutamatergic Pathway”
 - Honorable Mentions: “Differentially Expressed Genes Identify Co-morbidities Associated with Bipolar Disorder
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SKILLS

- Computer programming: python, Basic java, R programming
 - Second language: French
 - Computational Biology: NCBI, GEO2R, STRING.db, Pharmgkb, KEGG pathways
 - Genetics: PCR, gel electrophoresis
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HOBBIES

- Hiking and biking Meridian township parks and national parks
 - Germinating and growing plants
 - Cooking and baking
 - Reading
 - Learning HTML and web design
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Green Events at the Marketplace 2023*

Marketplace on the Green, 1995 Central Park Dr., Okemos (unless otherwise noted*)

<p>Mar 18 11am - 2pm</p>	<p>Green Meridian (MCC, Wetlands, Rainwater Collection, Native Plants, Gleaning Program, Community Gardens, Solarize Meridian, Stormwater Tips)*</p>
<p>Apr 22 9am-1pm * @Chippewa Middle School</p>	<p>Spring Recycling Events (Paint, Shredding, Household Goods, Metal, Bikes, Egg Cartons, Peanuts, Polystyrene)* RecycleRama at Ingham Co. Health Dept on May 6th!</p>
<p>May 20 9am-1pm</p>	<p>Medicine Take Back</p>
<p>Jun 17 9am-1pm</p>	<p>Summer Green Fair</p>
<p>Jul 15 9am-1pm</p>	<p>Summer Green Fair</p>
<p>Aug 19 9am-1pm</p>	<p>Composting/Greenscaping (Possible Compost Bin Sale)</p>
<p>Sep 23 9am-1pm * location to be determined</p>	<p>Electronics Recycling (& Small Appliance Take Back for Consumers Customers)</p>
<p>Oct 7 9am-1pm</p>	<p>Green Home & Landscape Tour Coat Drive</p>

*Notes

- 📍 All events at Meridian Marketplace on the Green/Meridian Mall unless noted
- 📍 Check www.meridian.mi.us/greenmeridian for changes and a **recycling guide**
- 📍 **Also visit:**
 - www.meridian.mi.us/mcc (Meridian Conservation Corps)
 - www.meridian.mi.us/hnc (Harris Nature Center)
 - www.meridian.mi.us/parks