

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD**

MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2013
6 PM – MERIDIAN SERVICE CENTER

Members Present: Julie Brixie, James Kielbaso, Jon Mayes, Margo Smith, Mark Stephens, Steve Webster

Members Absent: Frank Hatfield, Robert Rusch

Staff: Chief Engineer Younes Ishraidi; Land Management Coordinator Jane Greenway; Parks and Recreation Department Secretary Robin Faust

Public Present:

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Kielbaso called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

2. Approve Agenda

Coordinator Greenway stated Chief Engineer Younes Ishraidi will be attending the meeting to make a presentation on the Wetland Mitigation Area on Central Meridian Uplands.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Board Members present to move item #7, Presentations forward in the agenda to item #3.

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE MOVED, BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

3. Presentations

- a. Wetland Mitigation Area on Central Meridian Uplands Preserve

Engineer Ishraidi stated during the construction of the inter-urban pathway connection to the new inter-urban pathway will go through a wetland area, along the eastern edge of the land preserve. The township has obtained the necessary Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) permits from the State of Michigan, who put a condition on the MDEQ permit to mitigate at a ratio of 2:1 for a total distribution of .888 acres or .36 acres of mitigated wetland area. When the Environmental Commission reviewed the wetland permit, they suggested the current area of construction on the land preserve is not a good quality wetland to mitigate but there is a good wetland on Central Meridian Uplands. The Township's Wetland

Consultant suggested expanding the Central Meridian Upland Land Preserve's wetland site, especially since the site is under a monitoring plan for the next five (5) years. Because 2012 was a very dry year (little precipitation), the consultant feels this site will return with rain and moisture and have offered suggestions on how to restore the wetland area that was previously created when the sanitary force main was constructed several years ago. The consultant would like to enlarge the current wetland up to .4 acres, connect the two wetland areas on the site and still have wetland mitigation remaining that may be utilized for future mitigation needs.

Discussion: When asked if the current wetland is an asset to the property for wildlife habitat, Coordinator Greenway replied yes. Chief Engineer Ishraidi stated this proposed mitigation will include the amount needed for the inter-urban pathway connector. When asked if the spoils will be added to the current spoils in the area, Chief Engineer Ishraidi replied yes, but that the site will have fewer disturbances than then the trail for the force main was installed because it is a smaller construction area. The Central Meridian Uplands Land Preserve will eventually have a paved trail. The route is indicated on the "Heart of Michigan" trail master plan that proposes to connect Meridian Township to MSU, through East Lansing, and eventually to the river trail in Lansing. When asked if the mitigation on the Ledebuhr site (adjacent to Central Park South) was oversized and if it could accommodate the wetland mitigation instead, Coordinator Greenway replied that was a compensating cut for floodplain, not a wetland mitigation area and this proposal will be wetland to wetland. When asked if formal approval is needed, Chief Engineer Ishraidi replied yes, he needs approval to proceed with filing the necessary paperwork with DEQ. When asked about how the two wetlands will be connected, Chief Engineer Ishraidi replied the proposal will increase the wetland's edge for species in the area. He would like a motion for the .4 acre mitigation on the land preserve and when the plan is developed; he will bring it back to the Advisory Board for its approval before any work begins.

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE MOVED, BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS SECONDED TO APPROVE THE .4 ACRE OF WETLAND MITIGATION AREA ON THE CENTRAL MERIDIAN UPLAND LAND PRESERVE REQUEST FROM THE MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AND STAFF WILL BRING THE PLANS BACK TO THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD FOR THEIR INPUT PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.

Discussion: When asked what the next step is, Chief Engineer Ishraidi replied with this approval, the consultant will proceed with the plan and apply for the DEQ permit.

Voice vote. Motion passed.

4. Public Remarks

None

5. Public Hearing

a. Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Program, Acquisition (pink)

Chair Kielbaso declared the public hearing open at 6:37 pm.

Coordinator Greenway presented the project overview:

The Land Preservation Advisory Board identified the Green Road project for consideration of an acquisition grant. The parcel is located at 6239 Green Road, Haslett. The owner is the Burl George Trust. The parcel is approximately five acres and its current SEV is \$75,000. The Board Members walked the site in 2012 and it scored relatively high. The site will provide great community space, has a wetland, and is utilized by nesting sand hill cranes. The property owner has indicated a willingness to make a partial donation of the property. With a commitment letter from the owner, it will meet 30% of the total project cost of the grant. There have been a few calls asking about the project (in response to the posted public notice), but they were confirming the location and the proposed plan for the site's development. If the grant is received, the structures on the site will need to be removed if they are not to be utilized for a recreational purpose. The present owner has indicated a willingness to assist with the demolition. The appraisal bid was award to Ron Wheeler in DeWitt but has not been received yet. When asked if the property owner has asked to have the parcel named after his father, "Burl George", Coordinator Greenway replied yes. Coordinator Greenway stated that Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative representative Leslie Kuhn indicated she will be emailing a letter of support. When asked if the wetland is also on a portion of the Ingham County Park parcel, Coordinator Greenway replied yes. Coordinator Greenway reported she had asked Nick Sanchez to provide a report of the site features.

Public Comment: None

Commissioners' Comments: None

Chair Kielbaso declared the public hearing closed at 6:44 pm.

6. Approve Minutes for February 13, 2013

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE MOVED, BOARD MEMBER MAYES SECONDED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 13, 2013 MEETING MINUTES. Voice vote. Motion passed.

7. Communications

a. From: Champion Woods Condominium Association, Re: Preserve Accessibility

Coordinator Greenway stated this communication is asking to move the large boulder to make area more accessible into the Southwest Meridian Uplands. This issue is on the property that is adjacent to the land preserve but is owned by Craig Sturk. Greenway spoke with Mr. Sturk and he has agreed to move the boulder to allow for easier pedestrian access.

8. Presentations

a. This item was moved forward in the agenda.

9. New Business

a. Davis/Foster Land Preserve, building demolition

Coordinator Greenway summarized the recommendations in the memorandum to:

- Demolish the brick ranch house and have the demolition backfill the basement with topsoil and seeding. This has a projected cost of \$6,000-\$7,000
- Performing the necessary maintenance to support the retention of the Farm House. The projected cost will need to be researched
- Retain the Pole Barn and make any necessary future maintenance repairs
- Perform the necessary improvements to retain the Red Barn. The projected cost will need to be researched.

BOARD MEMBER SMITH MOVED, BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE SECONDED, TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SPEND UP TO \$7,000 FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE BRICK HOUSE ON THE DAVIS/FOSTER LAND PRESERVE.

Roll Call:

AYES: Board Members Webster, Stephens, Smith, Brixie, Mayes, Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The motion passed.

b. Natural Resources Trust Fund Program, Acquisition Grant Request

The following resolution was offered by Board Member Brixie and supported by Board Member Stephens:

WHEREAS, the Land Preservation Program was established in 2000 to protect, preserve and enhance Meridian Township's open spaces, natural features, natural habitats and water quality for future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Land Preservation Advisory Board is interested in the continued improvement of Meridian Township's Land Preservation Program; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources accepts grant requests from local units of government to assist in the acquisition or development of recreation properties; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has prepared a grant application for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the acquisition of 6269 Green Road which will provide for the protection of land for its environmental importance and scenic beauty; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2011-2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and

Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, this grant request was open to public review on March 13, 2013 and found to be acceptable;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

To support submission of a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for an estimated total project cost of \$160,000 for the acquisition of 6269 Green Road, Haslett, Michigan and commit the local match that will be a combination of a donation from the current property owner of approximately \$50,000 and township funding of \$10,000 from the Land Preservation Program.

ADOPTED:

YEAS: Board Members Webster, Stephens, Smith, Brixie, Mayes, Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The resolution passed.

10. Old Business (green)
 - a. Adopt-A-Preserve Program

Board Member Smith reported she put together letter and flyers and has recruits stewards for the Lake Lansing North parcel. One of the neighbors voiced a concern that when Playmakers has a race in the park, they blow the leaves off the trail. This causes erosion problems but acknowledges the leaves make running unsafe. The suggestion was made to contact Playmakers and have them blow the leaves back after the race.

Board Member Stephens reported he traded Southwest Meridian Uplands with Board Member Rusch for the Meridian Central Wetland.

11. Land Management Coordinator Report (orchid)
 - a. Southwest Meridian Uplands Restoration Project Update – Coordinator Greenway reported 75% of the posts have been installed and that additional posts will be placed when the final boundary survey is completed.
 - b. Mid-Michigan Stewardship meeting update – Coordinator Greenway reported this item was included to keep board members informed of upcoming events and there will be a presentation on the Davis/Foster Preserve Savannah in late July.
 - c. Response to Board member inquiry about tree replacement – Board Member Stephens stated he discussed this inquiry with Dave Caszatt and they have a new suggestion/method to remove the trees. They have met with a landscaper, who is a

neighbor to the site, who is interested in assisting with the project and he addresses this problem in his business. Dave Caszatt and Nick Sanchez will be making a presentation at the April Meeting. It was mentioned that the trees being removed are mostly non-native

- d. Response to Board member about stewardship plans, invasive species management, and trail re-routing - Coordinator Greenway included this correspondence to inform the members' of her response to Board Member Hatfield's questions.

12. Other

None

13. Public Comment

None

14. Closed Session

None

15. Adjournment

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE MOVED, BOARD MEMBER MAYES SECONDED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. Voice vote. Motion passed.

The motion passed at 7:39 pm.