

PART 3: THE HISTORY OF MERIDIAN

On February 16th, 1842 the Township of Meridian, which had been organized by an active legislature, was approved. That spring saw the first Township meeting in the home of George Matthews. From 1947 to 1957 the Zoning Board ran the Township. The Township didn't see much change until the late 1950s.

In 1957 a Planning Commission was voted in and replaced the Zoning Board. Two years later, the first official funds of \$5,000 for the planning of the Township were budgeted for the Planning Commission. They would go on to create a master plan to guide future development in the area. The plan included a civic center and a central park. With a master plan came a zoning ordinance. This was the first time the Township regulated developers and individual property owners; zoning ordinances led them to consider community development for the Township as a whole.

In October of 1959, the Township gained the name "Charter" in its title due to the potential of facing serious sewage control problems and the inability of the present form of government. By becoming a Charter Township, the growing community would have a government with additional powers, including increased flexibility within the organizational structure, greater tax authority, and protection of the Township's boundaries against annexation.

In 1974, a contest for a Township seal was conducted by the Township Board. The first place winners, Steve Beltier and Julie Lindins, had their seals refined by a professional graphic artist. The line on the logo is a symbol of the meridian for which the Township is named. It is said that the cabin represents the home of the Marshall's, one of the earliest families to move to the area. In 1976, the seal was completed and sold as a decoration on white marble paper weights.

The first Township Hall, built in 1868, stood for 90 years. It was torn down in 1958. The current building stands at 5151 Marsh Road in Okemos, Michigan.

Thanks to the following people who helped with historical information and dates:

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PARTS 1 and 2 are available at:

<http://bit.ly/MeridianTownshipHistory>

