



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
October 7, 2020 7 pm

ZOOM MEETING: ID: **867 3903 8953** (*corrected*) Password: **5151**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
4. PUBLIC REMARKS
5. NEW BUSINESS
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Environmental Review / Green Infrastructure Audit Dialogue
 - B. Other
7. CHAIR'S REPORT
8. STAFF REPORT
9. WORKGROUP REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS
 - A. Environmental Justice Study Group
 - B. Sustainable Development Study Group
 - C. Tree Team
10. Commission, Committee, and Trustee Reports
 - A. Board of Trustees
 - B. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
 - C. Energy Team
 - D. Green Team
 - E. Land Preservation Advisory Board
 - F. MI Township Association (MTA) or MI Municipal League (MML)
 - G. Planning Commission
 - H. Transportation Commission
11. PUBLIC REMARKS
12. ADJOURNMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, September 2, 2020 7:00 PM

PRESENT: Tom Frazier, Ned Jackson, Jim Kielbaso, Susan Masten, Bill McConnell, John Sarver (Chair), Rose Vadnais (Vice Chair), Courtney Wisinski (Trustee Liaison), Luca Wisinski (Student Member)

STAFF: LeRoy Harvey, Stephen Gebes, Samantha Diehl, Phil Deschaine (Treasurer)

GUESTS: Michelle Beloskur, Ingham Conservation District;
Cliff Walls, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

Approval of Agenda: Approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Kielbaso should be listed as voting in favor of the Rules of Procedure. Minutes approved unanimously.

Public Remarks: Call in #: 517.349.1232

New Business: None

Old Business:

Tree Project: Harvey provided an update of the last couple Tree Team meetings, additional suggestions from Deschaine to scale back on the Market distribution and explore planting on Central Park Drive. Ingham Road Commission policy requires a 14' setback from the curb. McConnell voiced support for the current proposal. Deschaine voiced a desire for larger trees along Central Park if permissions and locations can be identified (presumably with CBL/Mall, etc.). Beloskur clarified that the latest plan includes larger trees as well as a budget for trees at Chippewa and/or Central Park Drive.

McConnell offered a motion to “**Adopt the latest plan that was circulated to include larger trees along Central Park as possible with help from Parks staff.**” Motion was approved unanimously. Latest plan and budget is uploaded in “Extra Documents - 2020” on the E.C. page at www.meridian.mi.us

Green Infrastructure Audit: Harvey mentioned receiving help from staff (Kieselbach and Ishraidi) and Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (Walls) in the latest review. Walls provided a summary of a worksheet he shared with the E.C. He screened out items that are not within Township jurisdiction (such as Drain Commission projects). He also focused on “low-hanging” fruit which could be as simple as encouraging green infrastructure, providing definitions, and removing obstacles. For example, making it easier to integrate well-designed green stormwater infrastructure. Walls focused on opportunities to remove red tape, not add it. The extent of changes will depend upon the will of the Township.

McConnell mentions that we should review the two dozen recommendations before we send them along to the Planning Department. Walls also mentioned an Ordinance Subcommittee with the Greater Lansing Regional Committee (for Stormwater Management) could potentially come up with boiler plate language. Deschaine described that the current Board will be very receptive to positive changes to our Code of Ordinances. Walls also mentions that there is interest from Lansing and examples of language from East Lansing's code. Beloskur also mentions an ordinance template that relates to adopting native species that she will share with the group. LeRoy will distribute a draft prior to the next meeting.

Rules and Procedures: The Township attorney advises that student members be registered voters in order for them vote on the Commission. The latest revision includes this change and defines a quorum as a majority of EC members. In discussion E.C. membership, Harvey mentioned that Courtney Boersema has officially resigned (due to MSU on-line class changes and a heavy class load). Krishnamurthi has also expressed an interest in staying involved, possibly carrying out her term. Harvey was encouraged to approach Haslett teachers to recruit potential students. Masten will mention to her students at MSU. Luca encourages reaching out to Haslett and Okemos.

Staff Report:

Recycling Event needs help with volunteers. Visit www.meridian.mi.us/recycle to sign up and get more information about the event. Harvey mentions a need for volunteers and encourages all to sign up and help. He mentions strong support from sponsors including the State of Michigan.

Harvey also pointed out a list of citizen groups (Green Team, Green Dialogue, Energy Team, Tree Team, etc.) and encourages people to join in if they are interested.

Masten mentioned that a Google Search took her to an old flyer (2018).

Workgroup Reports

Environmental Justice: Vadnais reports that she has had conversations with Mariah Schaeffer with the Refugee Development Center (She mentions a need for lead/water/paint testing information in multiple languages, safe walking routes/destinations, Covid education for multifamily residents, community education (about the resettlement process), the importance of community gardens to bring people together. She is also willing to come talk to us. Vadnais also talked with Thasin Sardar at the Islamic Community Center who mentions a need for information about energy audits for renters, incentives for alternative energy, and solar education. He offered to share information about their accomplishments in the Green Gazette. Vadnais also talked with the Michigan Environmental Council. She's yet to connect with Sandra Turner-Handy, the Community Engagement Director in Detroit, who's offered to share action items. McConnell also mentioned possibility of outreach to community gardens.

Commission, Committee, and Trustee Reports

Township Board: Coal Tar/PAH ordinance was passed unanimously. C. Wisinski extends appreciation from the Board for bringing environmental goals, issues and policy revisions to them. Wisinski echoed an appreciation for the impact and use of larger trees in our tree initiative. There's a meeting a week from Friday to meet with department directors. The Board has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. She appreciates Vadnais' contacts and the

work of the EC study group which may help inform and complement future Township efforts.

Brownfield Development: Jackson shared a recent project under consideration at the corner of Marsh and Haslett Rd. called Pine Village (Western portion of the commercial area in pink). There was a dry cleaner there in prior years. There are plans for a senior housing/mixed use development. Jackson would like to see the entire site redeveloped. The Township Manager helping move the project forward with lower interest rates.



Energy Team: The 40 KW solar project is moving forward at the Market and the South Fire Station. Additional solar ideas (solar flower, solar charging stations, etc.) are also being discussed among Township Staff (Parks and others.). The Virtual Solar Home Tour is planned for Oct 3. There are other Solar Stories that are continuing on Thurs. nights.

Green Team: In addition to the large recycling event, Harvey invited people to participate in the Wednesday morning “Green Dialogues” at 9am.

Land Preservation Advisory Board: LPAB recently met at the North Meridian Rd. Park Pavillion. They visited the Krauss They will meet again next Wednesday at the Service Center off Okemos Rd and tour the Central Meridian Uplands. This may also be the location of a potential wetland mitigation along Grand River near Hamilton.

Michigan Township Association: Frazier reports that the main effort is working on the State budget. Frazier also provided an update on the Green Communities Network which will gear up in 2021. There are some updates which will include environmental justice/equity. Sarver encourages the Township to go for Gold level certification.

Planning Commission: McConnell mentioned approval of the Silver Leaf development. The Planning Commission is also revising the multi-use planned unit development ordinance.

Transportation Commission: The Commission recently held a joint meeting with the Corridor Improvement Authority. This led to recommendations to MDOT mainly related to non-motorized improvements including mid block crossings, bike lanes, speed limits, streetlighting, traffic signals, etc. Sarver asked about the crossing at Okemos Rd. which is still under consideration.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:37 PM

GSI Code Audit: Lowest Hanging Fruit

Do visual buffer and screening provisions enable a variation in plantings or substitution of fencing if co-designed for stormwater?

Grade: F

Codes often require buffers between properties or uses be composed of a “dense evergreen hedge” or similar. Codes can be modified to provide an option for integrating vegetated stormwater-control measures where needed using a combination of fencing and plants for screen and buffer areas.

Code Reference and Language: 62-64 requires a landscape buffer 20ft wide when a subdivision entrance is along a major road. Buffer shall include trees, shrubs, berms or walls.

86-756

When a parking lot serving less than 50 spots adjoins a residential district, it requires vegetated buffer and a vertical screen. Same for a lot adjoining a public street. Per definitions “When a Screen is called for, this shall be a dense evergreen planting area or solid fence as determined and approved by planning commission.”

Ideas/Notes: Include language allowing for variation if co-designed for stormwater, and/or indicate a preference for these buffers to be naturalized.

Exempt landscape requirements if the design serves the interest of stormwater control (or just provides native plantings rather than an engineered design). "The planting plan may be varied to accommodate the design of vegetated stormwater control measures, so long as the total number of trees required is met. The use of deciduous trees (which may function as stormwater trees) is encouraged."

Is turfgrass required in new subdivisions or construction? Could deep-rooted plants be substituted?

Grade: D

Subdivision regulations often require lots to be “sodded.” Standards should state that native or deep-rooted plantings may be used, even if temporarily, on new residential lots.

Code Reference and Language: No occupancy will be granted until “the lot has been seeded, covered with sod, or covered with the appropriate ground cover”

Ideas/Notes: Standards could state that native or deep-rooted plantings may be used.

Can landscaped islands for stormwater treatment be created within culs-de-sac or medians?

Grade: D

If standard specifications do not allow for different engineering designs (i.e., “all medians shall be composed of...”), some variance procedure or alternative standard may be needed.

Code Reference and Language: Existing language is prescriptive (“shall be planted with...”). Requires specific spacing and placement, which may not accommodate engineered designs.

Ideas/Notes: Include language that designs can be altered to accommodate vegetated stormwater controls/naturalized landscapes.

Are native plantings specifically allowed in front yards or lawn areas?

Grade: C

Consider establishing a written review or approval procedure, simple standards requiring demarcation of edging or bordering with native and deep-rooted plants and a procedure for mowing if noxious weeds or lack of maintenance occurs.

Code Reference and Language: No mention outside of the sod/seed requirements for new subdivisions to be granted occupancy. Twp is currently addressing the tall grass ordinance to clarify.

Ideas/Notes: Include language that indicates Twp preference for native plantings, set clear guidance.

Are there minimum landscaping requirements for parking lots? Perimeters, islands or both (e.g., percentage of parking landscaped, number of trees per parking spaces, canopy coverage)?

Grade: C

Parking lot landscaping — both perimeter and island — can mitigate urban heat island effects and can be co-designed as green infrastructure for stormwater treatment.

Code Reference and Language: 86-759 Parking Deferrals - mentions that planning commission can defer parking requirements for, among other reasons, reducing stormwater runoff. Mentions open-cell pavers. States deferred parking cannot be used to satisfy landscaping, buffer, previous surface, or stormwater retention requirements.

86-758 Baseline landscaping requirements.

"interior landscaping shall be installed and designed to control traffic, provide shade, screen views, separate parking..." No mention of reducing runoff/managing stormwater.

Ideas/Notes: Could require or encourage islands and other interior landscaping to accept runoff (curb cuts). Encourage use of bioretention areas with curb cuts as parking lot landscaping.

"The integration of depressed bioretention areas used for landscaping and stormwater management is strongly encouraged. Where areas are designed specifically for stormwater management, the planting and dimensional requirements may be varied as necessary to ensure the area functions effectively for stormwater treatment, so long as the equivalent amount of landscaping, planting, or screening is provided.

State preference by adding "reducing runoff" as a goal for landscaping (86-758)

Are naturalized landscaping standards and requirements promoted for use in stormwater treatment practices?

Grade: D

Communities may have standards that encourage or require naturalized landscaping or native plantings in and around stormwater ponds and swales.

Code Reference and Language: Only mention of native plantings is for Wireless Communication Facilities, and that is likely just referring to replacing the existing field vegetation rather than a planting designed for water quality. 86-438

No mention of naturalized landscaping for stormwater treatment, but those regulatory requirements are under Drain Office jurisdiction. Still, no mention of native plantings for stormwater (or in general) in code or master plan.

Ideas/Notes: Add a simple language addition like "rain gardens/naturalized landscapes/engineered stormwater controls may be incorporated into lawn areas where planned and designed to receive and treat drainage/runoff"

Do vegetated stormwater management areas such as bioretention areas, rain gardens, stormwater trees or other plantings count toward required landscape minimums?

Grade: D

Requiring ornamental landscaping in addition to bioretention areas or other green infrastructure is a significant barrier; often, there will not be enough area on the site to accommodate both.

Code Reference and Language: Per Planning: Depends on the project but they are not typically counted.

Ideas/Notes: Either encourage or require landscaping to receive/treat runoff or allow variation in landscape requirements if they do.

Is there a process or standard to waive numerical, spacing and species requirements for stormwater-control measures in required landscape areas?

Grade: F

Specific dimensional standards, such as a requirement to space trees 25 feet apart, may conflict with the design of vegetated stormwater controls. Waivers can allow variation where needed to accommodate green infrastructure.

Code Reference and Language: 86-758:

"A minimum of two canopy trees shall be provided for every 10 parking spaces, meeting the following standards:

1. Canopy trees shall be a minimum of two inches in caliper at time of planting.
2. Conifer trees shall be a minimum of eight feet in height at time of planting.
- d. A minimum of 50% of each landscaped area, at time of planting, shall be planted with grass, ground cover, shrubs, or other living vegetation."

Ideas/Notes: Exempt landscape requirements if the design serves the interest of stormwater control.

"The planting plan may be varied to accommodate the design of vegetated stormwater control measures, so long as the total number of trees required is met. The use of deciduous trees (which may function as stormwater trees) is encouraged."

Is the use of deep-rooted or native plants, plants with habitat value, or edibles allowed or encouraged in the landscaping standards?

Grade: D

Explicitly listing or illustrating the use of native plantings, deep-rooted plants or other alternatives to turfgrass and shrubs tells site planners up front that the community encourages these types of plantings.

Code Reference and Language: Mixed use planned unit development 86-440 simply says native plantings are encouraged.

86-758 Parking Lot landscaping

Parking lot landscaping rules do not mention green infrastructure, native plants, deep rooted plants, etc. There is language requiring grass, ground cover, shrubs, etc, but no specific mention of preferred species or types of plants.

General landscaping requirements are similarly lacking reference to GSI. 62-64

Prescriptive language in Cul De Sac island planting requirements. Language includes "shall be." Also requires a landscape buffer when subdivision entrance borders a major street.

Ideas/Notes: Add language indicating the Twp's preference for native or deep rooted plants OR require it outright. "The incorporation of stormwater trees, native plants, and other vegetative stormwater control measures into landscaping plans is encouraged."

Could exempt landscape requirements if the design serves the interest of stormwater control. "The planting plan may be varied to accommodate the design of vegetated stormwater control measures, so long as the total number of trees required is met. The use of deciduous trees (which may function as stormwater trees) is encouraged."

Is the width or total surface area of driveways limited (e.g., as percent of lot area)? Can permeable driveways exceed that limitation?

Grade: D

Many communities limit driveway widths to 20 feet for residential and 24 feet or 30 feet for non-residential uses or limited as a percent of total lot area. In dense settings, permeable driveways may be allowed to exceed limits.

Code Reference and Language: 86-754 No strict dimensional maximums, it's a coverage limitation of 35% (which is still good).

Code requires concrete or asphaltic surfacing. While there is porous concrete and asphalt, current language doesn't read like porous alternatives are possible.

Ideas/Notes: It's possible to lessen the allowable pavement unless a portion is permeable or allow for expanded parking if that expanded area is permeable.

East Lansing example: "In all residential districts, the amount of paving in a front yard and in a side yard along a street on a corner lot shall not exceed an amount equal to 25 percent of the front yard area as defined in section 50-9 of this chapter or up to 35 percent where 10 percent of the paving is pervious paving material.

Make it clear that porous/pervious surfacing is allowed with approval of township engineer.

Are vegetated open channels allowed in lieu of curb and gutter, and for what uses (e.g., residential, commercial)?

Grade: F

Options for swale drainage, or partial curb-and-drain profiles with inlets for bioretention can allow for enhanced water quality and infiltration.

Code Reference and Language:

Streets 62-62 Curb and gutter. Curb and gutter six inches high, straight faced shall be required on all streets and roads in the subdivision and shall be constructed in accordance with the standards and specifications of the Ingham County Road Commission.

86-756 Curb and Gutter shall be required in order to control stormwater flow from the parking area and in order to protect landscaped areas such as a landscaped island and other plantings. May be waived at the discretion of Planning Director if...*lists scenarios where it can be waived*.

Ideas/Notes: Unsure of jurisdiction on roads here if it must meet RC standards, but Twp language regarding curb is absolute.

For landscaping and parking requirements... "Where perimeter areas are designed specifically for stormwater management, the requirements above may be varied as necessary to ensure that the area functions effectively for stormwater treatment, with approval of the [planning commission, engineer].

Are watershed water quality and green infrastructure implementation stated goals in the master plan?

Grade: D

Example: "It is the goal of the Municipality to implement policies, investments, standards and actions, including the use of green infrastructure, that will protect and enhance water quality within the Municipality and its watersheds."

Code Reference and Language: No mention of green infrastructure directly, though GSI is a tool to meet some of the Twp's stated goals in the Preserve Open Space and Natural Areas section: conserve water retention areas, linking open/natural spaces...promote sustainable growth practices....mention of water quality protection...

It does, however, reference the TCRPC Water Policy document which does expand on GSI and watershed protection.

Ideas/Notes: During the next update, reflect the Twp's interest in GSI specifically.

Does the master plan describe green infrastructure and water quality outside the 'drainage' or 'infrastructure' chapter?

Grade: D

Many older comprehensive plans do not discuss stormwater other than as a utility issue (i.e., drainage, flood control). Park and recreation, natural resource, landscaping, design and sustainability goals all can reference the potential for multiple benefits from incorporating green infrastructure techniques in private and municipal projects.

Code Reference and Language: No mention of GSI, though there is a mention of the Township's desire to preserve water retention areas, though it is referring to natural areas rather than engineered controls.

TCRPC water policies guide includes this info and is an attachment of the master plan, but this is not a specific commitment to follow recommendations.

Ideas/Notes: Park and recreation, natural resource, landscaping, design and sustainability goals all can reference the potential for multiple benefits from incorporating green infrastructure techniques in private and municipal projects.

Do master plan objectives and recommended actions include green infrastructure pilot projects, new standards, design manual or other measures?

Grade: D

Specific language such as “complete a permeable paving demonstration project in a municipal parking lot” or “update the downtown design guidelines to include green infrastructure features” helps in grant applications.

Code Reference and Language: No, though it does refer to the TCRPC water policy guide.

Have primary types of green infrastructure practices (e.g., bioretention/rain gardens, permeable surfacing, rainwater harvesting, vegetated swales, green roofs) been defined in the stormwater ordinance or zoning regulations?

Grade: F

Adding definitions of different green infrastructure practices is especially important to providing guidance and encouragement to applicants and effective standards for its use in the community.

Code Reference and Language: No. However, ICDC handles the post-construction/regulatory side of stormwater for developers and they have their own design criteria.

Ideas/Notes: The township can still define these practices, indicate their preference for them, and allow variation in setbacks and landscape design if developers install them.

Are the frontage requirements standard, minimal or above usual practice?

Grade: D

Reduced setbacks (frontage, front, side and rear) can allow for reduced roadway and driveway length, and smaller areas of turfgrass.

Code Reference and Language: Minimum. Listed on dimensional requirements form, section E number 4. <https://ecode360.com/attachment/ME3541/ME3541086a%20Sch%20of%20Regs%20for%20Res%20Dist.pdf>

Ideas/Notes: The preferred method would be a standard or a maximum setback, as that could allow reduced pavement and turfgrass.

Are the front yard setbacks standard, minimal or above usual practice for the zoning district?

Grade: D

Reduced setbacks (frontage, front, side and rear) can allow for reduced roadway and driveway length, and smaller areas of turfgrass.

Code Reference and Language: Minimum

Ideas/Notes: The preferred method would be a standard or a maximum setback, as that could allow reduced pavement and turfgrass.

Are the side yard setbacks standard, minimal or above usual practice for zoning district?

Grade: D

Reduced setbacks (frontage, front, side and rear) can allow for reduced roadway and driveway length, and smaller areas of turfgrass.

Code Reference and Language: Minimum

Ideas/Notes: The preferred method would be a standard or a maximum setback, as that could allow reduced pavement and turfgrass.

Are the rear yard setbacks standard, minimal or above usual practice for the zoning district?

Grade: D

Reduced setbacks (frontage, front, side and rear) can allow for reduced roadway and driveway length, and smaller areas of turfgrass.

Code Reference and Language: Minimum

Ideas/Notes: The preferred method would be a standard or a maximum setback, as that could allow reduced pavement and turfgrass.

Can stormwater-control measures be sited within required yard or setback areas? If so, are there any limitations on siting ponds within yards or setbacks?

Grade: D

Allowing ponds, bioretention areas or other surface stormwater controls within setbacks typically increases the density that can be achieved on the site.

Code Reference and Language: Per Planning: Can be located in the setback for the yard. Cannot be located in the setback from a wetland without a variance.

Only half of the area of a detention or retention pond counts as “pervious surface” for the pervious surface percentage requirement.

Stormwater controls are not listed as a permitted yard encroachment.

Ideas/Notes: Increasing % that is considered pervious could reduce the amount of total turf grass needed. Include “siting of green infrastructure measures” as an allowable encroachment.

Is a description or definition of “low impact development” or “green infrastructure” included in the zoning code or stormwater ordinance?

Grade: F

An inclusive definition of green infrastructure can be: "Vegetated stormwater management measures. Swales, bioretention areas, rain gardens, amended soil areas, pocket or modular wetlands, stormwater trees, vegetated or green roofs, and similar practices specifically designed to provide water quantity and water quality treatment of stormwater runoff, and to promote evapotranspiration and infiltration of stormwater."

Code Reference and Language: No.

Ideas/Notes: Bioretention, rain gardens, bioswales, etc are not defined (or mentioned). There are stated goals/preferences for reducing impervious/protecting water/reducing runoff/maximizing green space. However, clearly defining and encouraging GSI by name will promote it.

Master Planning document also lacks specific mention of GSI, though many of the stated Township goals are GSI outcomes.

Do purpose statements in zoning specifically include encouraging green infrastructure or naturalized drainage?

Grade: F

Example: "It is the purpose of these standards to promote the use of green infrastructure or vegetated stormwater management measures, where suitable, to manage stormwater runoff volumes and quality."

Code Reference and Language: No. 86-5 Purpose (Zoning) includes:
"Encourage the preservation and use of lands, open space, and natural resources in accordance with their character and suitability for particular purposes and limit the improper use of land and natural resources."

No direct mention, though GSI certainly fits into goals.

Ideas/Notes: Add goal/purpose about how impact design/GSI/nature inspired/naturalized...stormwater management.

Are rainwater-harvesting and stormwater-control elements acknowledged in design standards?

Grade: C

Include illustrations or definitions of green roofs, planter boxes and cisterns; this ensures reviewers and designers will know that these elements are allowed or encouraged.

Code Reference and Language: No mention of "rain barrel" "rain harvesting/collection" "cistern" in municipal code.

Ideas/Notes: Include these and other green infrastructure words in the definition section.

Are pitched roofs required? If so, is a waiver or provision for green roofs or rainwater harvesting made?

Grade: D

If design standards require pitched roofs of a certain slope (i.e., 3:1) or for buildings to match adjacent roof pitches, some allowance for changing pitch should be made for rainwater harvesting or green roof installation.

Code Reference and Language: 86-368 (B)(1) b. and c.

Limitations exist. Required overhang and pitch, as well as material.

Ideas/Notes: Code Reference and Language have a roof material exception for solar, could do similar for green roofs (potentially with added review rather than permit by right).

Do standards allow for the waiver of design or architectural provisions to accommodate stormwater-control measures (planters, cisterns, green roofs, etc.)?

Grade: C

Where a community provides for waivers of architectural standards, "siting of green infrastructure measures" should be a specific reason for the grant of a waiver.

Code Reference and Language: 86-440 MUPUD 3 A/B:

Design flexibility is offered in exchange for possible amenities include porous pavement, the reduction of impervious surfaces, more greenspace, etc.

Ideas/Notes: GSI/LID should be encouraged by name. There are many amenities listed with a wide variety of goals. An overall purpose statement, or one within each district regulation section, communicating the Twp's preference for GSI, would be clearer. Offer flexibility in design, upon approval, if it is for stormwater controls. "siting of green infrastructure measures" should be a listed as a reason for a waiver.

Is a review or procedure in place for downspout disconnection and rain barrel installation?

Grade: C

Having a written procedure (even if not formally adopted) for common requests greatly facilitates both the use of these techniques and managing neighbor inquiries and public concerns. It is equally important to ensure that all staff know to transfer questions to a knowledgeable person or department.

Code Reference and Language: None for rain barrel. Downspout disconnection has procedure but in the context of the sanitary sewer.

Ideas/Notes: Designate staff as point of contact to answer resident questions on rain barrels. Many in the region believe rain collection is illegal. Formally offering guidelines or encouragement may reduce these concerns.

Could also include clear language in Yard regulations that rain barrels are an allowable feature. If residents could search "rain barrel" in the code or Township website and see them as explicitly allowed, it'd help resolve public misconception.