



**American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter
Lehigh Valley/Berks Section
BYLAWS
May 2024**

1.0 GENERAL.

1.1 General: Name. The name of the Section shall be the Lehigh Valley/Berks Section of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association.

1.2 General: Section Area. The area served by the Section shall be the three Pennsylvania counties of Berks, Lehigh, and Northampton.

1.3 General: Purposes. The purpose of the Section shall be to:

1. Provide the opportunity for Section members and the public to actively participate in Section and Chapter activities;
2. Further planning by educating members and the public on various planning topics through program meetings and workshops;
3. Provide professional development training and promote membership in the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) of the Association;
4. Promote the involvement of Planning Officials/Planning Commissioners in the Association;
5. Disseminate news of Section interest;
6. Further the purposes of the Association in the Section area.

1.4 General: The American Planning Association. The National and State Organizations of which this Section is part of is the American Planning Association and Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association respectively, which is referred to in these Bylaws as “the Association” or “APA,” and the “Chapter” or “APA-PA.”

1.5 General: Parliamentary Procedure. At the meetings of the Section’s general membership and of the Section Council, parliamentary procedures shall defer to the current edition of “Roberts’ Rules of Order,” when needed.

2.0 MEMBERS

2.1 Members: Eligibility. All members of the Chapter whose address of record is within the Lehigh Valley/Berks Section geographic area shall automatically be Section members. APA members whose address of record is outside the Section area may also become Section members upon payment of any applicable dues and assessments.

2.2 Members: Annual Meeting. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Section membership in each calendar year. The meeting shall be held at a location within the Section area, virtually or in-person. The Section Council shall determine the specific location, date, and time of each Annual Meeting.

2.3 Members: Notice of Annual Meeting. The Section Chair or Section Secretary shall notify the membership of the place, date, and time of the Annual Meeting by mail or email to each member at least one month before the meeting.

2.4 Members: Special Meetings. A special meeting of the members may be called by the Section Chair, by the Council, or by a petition signed by at least five percent of the members of the Section. The place, date, and time shall be set by the Section Chair or by the Section Council, provided that the location shall be within the Section area. Notice of a Special meeting shall be given to members as in Section 2.3 and shall include a statement of the purpose of the Special Meeting.

2.5 Members: Quorum Requirements. At Annual and Special Meetings and in ballots (except ballots for election of officers) a quorum shall be ten percent of the Section membership. At Section Council meetings, a majority of voting Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and quorum may be realized by attendance of members in-person or remotely.

2.6 Members: Termination & Reinstatement. Termination of Chapter membership will automatically terminate Section membership concurrently. Section membership may also be terminated for failure to pay any applicable Section dues or assessments. Section membership may be reinstated only to Chapter members who have been returned to good standing, or have paid any applicable outstanding Section dues or assessments.

3.0 OFFICERS

3.1 Officers: Election and Terms. The officers of the Section shall be a Section Chair, Section Vice Chair, Section Secretary, and Section Treasurer. The terms of office shall be two years.

3.2 Officers: Section Chair. The Section Chair shall:

1. Preside at meetings of the Section Council and of the membership;
2. Provide leadership on the development of Section policies in coordination with the Section Council;
3. Prepare, in consultation with the Section Treasurer, an annual budget for approval by the Section Council;
4. Have power to create, appoint and discharge all Section committee unless otherwise provided in these bylaws;
5. Transmit to the Chapter President a listing of Section Council and other Section committee members (including their addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers) within thirty days of their election/appointment;
6. Notify the Chapter President of all Section meetings;

7. Call and arrange for meetings of the Section and perform other duties required by these Bylaws, or customary to the office and any other additional duties that may be assigned by the Section Council.

3.3 Officers: Section Vice Chair. The Section Vice Chair shall:

1. Preside at meetings of the Section Council and the membership in the absence of the Chair;
2. Assist the Chair with managing the affairs of the Section; and
3. Perform such other duties as required by these bylaws, as assigned by the Section Council, or as are customary to the office.

3.4 Officers: Section Secretary. The Section Secretary shall:

1. Maintain an accurate list of the members of the Section;
2. Notify members and Section Council members of meetings,
3. Prepare and report minutes of Section Annual meetings, Section Council meetings, and of any and all special Section meetings;
4. Notify the Chapter President of the results of all Section voting, specifying the percentage of the membership who cast ballots, the number voting for each candidate or “aye” and “nay” votes on each issue;
5. Submit to the Chapter President a copy of any amendment proposed to these bylaws; and
6. Perform such other duties as required by these bylaws, as assigned by the Section Council, or as are customary to the office.

3.5 Officers: Section Treasurer. The Section Treasurer shall:

1. Receive and disburse Section funds, with the approval of the Section Council for any expenditure greater than one hundred dollars (\$100.00), excluding related program meeting expenses;
2. Assist the Section Chair preparing an annual budget for review by Section Council;
3. Maintain accounts which shall be open to inspection by members of the Section Council and subject to audit;
4. Prepare for each annual meeting of the membership and of the Section Council a financial report to include a current balance sheet and an income statement reflecting current budget, year to date, of Section Operations;
5. Present an annual financial statement in September of each year;
6. Perform such other duties as required by these bylaws, as assigned by the Section Council, or as are customary to the office.

4.0 SECTION COUNCIL

4.1 Council: Composition. The Section Council shall consist of all the following voting members:

1. Four Section officers; and

2. Up to five Section Council members elected by the Section membership. At least two elected Section Council members shall be a Planning Official/Planning Commissioner and at least two of the elected Section Council members shall be Professional Planners, as defined below;
 - a. Professional Planner. A Professional Planner is an individual earning a majority of their income practicing planning or who is retired from such occupation;
 - b. Planning Official/Planning Commissioner. A Planning Official/Planning Commissioner is any appointed or elected official who is involved in planning decisions for the betterment of a state, region, county, city or municipality; who is individual who has an interest in furthering the purposes of Association, but who is not a Professional Planner (for example, planning commissioner, planning official, zoning board member, or similar).
3. Immediate past Section Chair shall serve as a non-voting member to the Section Council.
4. The Section Council may appoint additional members to the Council, including but not limited to student representatives and board advisors, but such appointed members shall not have voting rights on Council business.

4.2 Council: Duties. The Section Council shall:

1. Manage the affairs of the Section;
2. Report to the Section membership upon all business which it has considered or acted upon between Section Meetings;
3. Put into effect actions voted on by the membership;
4. Be responsible for all Section property;
5. Consider, approve, and adopt an annual Section budget;
6. Authorize and approve all contract expenditures, except as otherwise provided herein, as long as such expenditures do not exceed amounts of anticipated funds;
7. Cause, at its option, an audit to be made of the accounts of the Treasurer;
8. Appoint, from among its members, the following representatives to the Chapter Board of Directors:
 - a. A Professional Planner Representative,
 - b. A Professional Planner Alternate,
 - c. A Planning Official/Planning Commissioner Representative and
 - d. A Planning Official/Planning Commissioner Alternate;
9. Perform such other functions as are delegated herein or by the members of the Section, or by the Chapter Board of Directors.

4.3 Council: Meetings. Section Council meetings are meetings called by the Section Chair on a regular basis for the purpose of conducting Section business. The Section Council shall determine the specific location, date, and time of each Section Council meeting. There shall be in each year at least four meetings of the Section Council within the calendar year. A majority of the voting members of the Section Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the Council. Section Council members must attend (either in person or remotely) a minimum of half the meetings

within a calendar year. Council members that do not meet this requirement may be considered nonperforming in accordance with 4.7 below.

4.4 Council: Acting without Meeting. In cases of special urgency an action may be taken by the Council without a meeting if an email survey or a telephone survey is made by the Section Chair. The Section Chair shall endeavor to contact all Council members, regardless of the outcome of the vote. At the next meeting, the votes of the committee shall be recorded in the minutes.

4.5 Executive Committee: Vacancies or Incapacity. The Section Council shall appoint members to fill any vacancies that occur during a term of elected office, but such appointment shall be only for the unexpired portion of the term of the office vacated.

4.6 Executive Committee: Terms of office. The terms of all elected Section Officers and other Council members shall be two years. Members of the Council shall take office on January 1, of every even numbered year.

4.7 Non-Performance of Section Council Members. Any member of the Section Council may be removed from office for non-performance upon a motion adopted by a two-thirds vote of the Section Council. Such a motion must be submitted to the Council that includes the grounds for non-performance; these may include non-attendance at Council meetings, failure to execute adopted programs, incurring legal liability for the Section based on dilatory performance of duties, termination of membership or other criteria that may be added to this subsection. At least two consecutive Section Council meetings shall be required to enact such a motion; the first shall be for the making of the motion and the submission of grounds, and the second shall be for the consideration of a response by the member so charged, with the Section Council then sustaining or denying the motion. The member being considered for removal must be notified in writing between the first and second meetings, with the notice indicating the grounds for removal and the date of the next meeting, when their response will be heard.

5.0 COMMITTEES

5.1 Appointment. The Section Chair may appoint, with the concurrence of the Section Council, such committees as are deemed necessary for carrying out the objectives of the Section. Such committees may include (but not limited to) an Events Committee and Education Committee. The duties of each committee shall be set forth by the Section Council and each committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Council. Membership of such ad hoc and standing committees are open to the public, but only members as defined in Section 2.0 are eligible to vote. In addition, the Section Council may recommend Section members for appointment to Chapter committees.

5.2 Committees Nominating Committees. The Nominating Committee shall consist of three section members, who are not members of the Council. The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Section Chair, with the concurrence of the Council, at least 30 days to the mailing of ballots to the membership.

5.3 Committees: Other Committees. The Section Chair shall appoint such other standing or ad-hoc committees as be determined from time-to-time to be necessary for the operations of the Section.

6.0 FINANCES

6.1 Budget. The Section Treasurer, with the assistance of the Section Chair, shall prepare, and the Section Council shall review, modify by majority vote if desired, and then adopt an annual budget at the first meeting of the fiscal year of each calendar year. Such budget shall set forth objectives for which funds of the Section shall be expended and the amount authorized to be expended for each such objective. The budget may be modified from time to time by a majority vote of the Section Council. The original budget and any subsequent modifications shall, after adoption, be publicly shared with the Section membership.

6.2 Finances: Annual Dues. The Chapter shall establish an annual rebate which shall be remitted to the Section. On the recommendation of the Council, the Sections, by mail or email ballot of the membership, may establish dues or assessments beyond the basic rebate. The Council may also set a dues rate for full-time student members. The dues rate shall be reported by the Section Chair to the Chapter President. The ballot shall set forth reasons why the collection of annual section dues or assessments are necessary and how the funds collected will be used to supplement the applications received from the Chapter.

6.3 Finances: Collection and Delinquencies. Dues of members collected by the National Office, pursuant to APA bylaws shall be passed through the Chapter office to the section. Additional Section dues or assessments shall be billed by the section and paid to the Section Treasurer.

6.4 Finances: Fiscal Year. The Section Fiscal Year shall run from January 1 to December 31.

7.0 ELECTIONS

7.1 Elections: Method of Balloting. Election of Section Officers and Section Council members shall be by mail or email ballot of the membership. A ballot shall be mailed or emailed to all regular members in good standing no later than November 15 of every odd-numbered year. Members may vote for any qualified person, whether or not they were nominated by the Nominating Committee or by petition. Ballots shall be returned to the Section office.

7.2 Elections: Nominations. The Nominating Committee shall initiate a call for the nomination of candidates for the Section Council election to the Section general membership no later than September 1 of each odd-numbered year or whenever a position is available. All candidates shall be members of the Section in good standing. Any member in good standing may forward a nomination to the Nominating Committee no later than October 1. The Nominating Committee shall verify the eligibility and interest of the nominees to hold the relevant seat and will forward the ballot nominations to all

members in good standing. The Nominating Committee shall submit the names of the proposed candidates to the Section Secretary no later than October 15. A list of candidates shall be publicly shared and distributed to the Section membership. Any member of the Section who is eligible to hold office and is not proposed by the Nominating Committee for membership on the Section Council shall be placed on the ballot by the Nominating Committee upon receipt of a petition making such a proposal submitted by November 1 and signed by not less than twenty (20) Section members who are eligible to vote.

7.3 Election: Timetable. A ballot shall be mailed or emailed to all members in good standing by November 15. A period of 30 days from the mailing date shall be allowed before the balloting may be closed.

7.5 Elections: Tally of Ballots. The Officers of the Section shall be elected by the affirmative written ballots of a plurality of the members voting. The results of the election shall be ascertained by the Council. In case of a tie, the Council may either elect one of the tied candidates or appoint both to Council. Terms of office of all officers shall begin January 1. Officers shall hold office until their successors have been elected and installed. Those candidates for the at-large Council positions receiving the most votes shall be elected.

7.6 Elections: Reporting. The Section Council shall report the election results to its members and the Chapter President as soon as possible.

8.0 BYLAWS

8.1 Bylaws: Amendment. Bylaws amendments may be proposed by the Council or by a petition signed by 5 percent of the Section membership. The membership may amend these bylaws by a majority vote, by mail or email ballot. The proposed amendment shall be adopted upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those voting. A period of fifteen (15) days from date of release shall be allowed for return of ballots.

8.2 Bylaws: Chapter Compatibility. Section Bylaws shall not conflict with Chapter Bylaws or the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Association or Chapter. National and State Chapter bylaws shall supersede where conflict is present with the Section bylaws. Copies of Section Bylaws or Bylaw Amendment shall be sent to the Chapter President promptly upon their adoption and published for reference by Section membership.