



**Lehigh Valley-Berks Section of the
Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association**

Section Council Monthly Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 2024

[Hybrid – Microsoft Teams](#) and Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, 615 Waterfront Dr, Suite 201, Allentown

Section Council in Attendance: Craig Beavers, Samantha McLean, Charlie Schmehl

Section Members in Attendance: Benjamin Dinkel, Joey Dotta, Evan Gardi, Mackenzie Geisner, Corey Gray, Scott Greenly, Brian Hite, Taylor Lawrence, Christian Martinez, Susan Myerov, Stephen Nowroski, Laura Mursch, Tina Roseberry, Corinne Ruggiero, Steven Schroyer, Jeff Witman

Guests in Attendance: Pattie Guttenplan

1. Welcome

Craig Beavers opened the meeting at 12:05 PM. Craig welcomed several new members and guests, such as Pattie Guttenplan from the Southeast Section, Scott Greenly, and Steven Schroyer.

2. Minutes Approval

Craig Beavers asked if there were any corrections to the July minutes. There were none. The minutes stand approved.

3. Treasurer's Report

Craig Beavers provided the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Rick Roseberry. There were two transactions in the past month: \$131.88 for GoDaddy, one-year domain and hosting subscription, and \$45.49 for Wegmans, refreshments for the meeting.

4. Planning Partner Reports

a. Berks County Planning Commission

Laura Mursch provided an update for the Berks County Planning Commission.

BCPC is kicking off several joint comprehensive planning initiatives across the county, including the Eastern Berks and Northeastern Berks plans, with the anticipation to seek funding for Western Berks and Southwestern Berks plans shortly after.

BCPC is hosting an event on Thursday, October 3rd 8am to noon called Building the Boroughs focused on providing support to borough redevelopment. More information will be provided shortly.

BCPC is hosting the first in-person meeting of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority at the Saucony Creek Brew Pub on October 28th at 3pm.

BCPC will be updating their utility scale solar guidance later this year to provide zoning guidance for municipalities.

b. Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Joey Dotta, Ben Dinkel, and Sue Myerov provided an update for the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

LVPC launched their Housing Attainability and Supply Strategy on July 26th to address housing shortages in the Lehigh Valley. More information regarding municipal and community outreach will be announced soon.

LVPC is preparing a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan as a follow-up to their Priority Climate Action Plan. The CCAP will address all emission sectors in the region and identify goals and actions to reduce emissions.

LVPC is preparing to update their Act 167 Stormwater Management Plans across the region covering fifteen different watersheds. Municipalities are encouraged to designate representatives who will participate on the advisory committee.

LVPC is preparing to start the update to their Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan which focuses on the mobility and accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities. Several public workshops are planned for this fall.

c. State Planning Board

Tina Roseberry provided an update for the State Planning Board.

DCED is reinvigorating their Community Planning office; they hired a new director for planning, as well as 5-6 community planners. More funding is also going into their programs, such as PA Sites Program, Main Street Matters, tourism, public transit, and housing crisis areas.

SPB is continuing work and outreach for the State Land Use Plan, including outreach to county planning officials. Several focus points include revitalization of shopping malls/centers, controversial land uses, and emergency housing

d. Lehigh Valley Consortium of Professional Organization

Samantha McLean reported that there have been no new items from LVCPO since the last meeting. Their next meeting is scheduled in September.

5. Pennsylvania Chapter Reports

a. Executive Committee

Craig Beavers reported that there have been no new items from the Executive Committee since the last meeting. The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet this upcoming Friday.

Topics of discussion will likely include the State Conference in Erie, implementation of the Development Plan, and student engagement efforts.

Pattie Guttenplan teased the development of a Toolkit for Planners by the Chapter. It would be a guide to help organizations, agencies, and private firms understand the planning profession and its value.

Craig also reminded everyone to send any comments or suggestions to him to report to the Board or Executive Committee.

b. Legislative Committee

Charlie Schmehl provided an update from the Legislative Committee.

There will likely not be a floor vote on any of the MPC revisions proposed regarding housing.

A new proposal was introduced to the house, offering a cash incentive to municipalities that provide affordable housing through zoning; this is House Bill 2515.

c. Professional Development Committee

Samantha McLean provided an update from the Professional Development Committee.

Samantha thanked Charlie for being the presenter at the last Webinar Wednesday. She will provide updates for the next webinar as they are finalized.

d. Student Engagement Committee

Laura Mursch provided an update on behalf of David Hunter from the Student Engagement Committee.

Pennsylvania APA Student Engagement Committee will be holding a session at the annual conference, featuring new planners in the state who will share their professional journeys.

It is scheduled for Monday, October 14th at 2pm. In addition to attending the session, attendees will have an opportunity to sign up to be a mentor or a mentee when they register for the annual conference.

6. Section Updates

a. Committees – Education and Events

Craig Beavers provided an overview of this agenda item.

The Section is still looking for members who would like to sit on our two new committees. Information on their tasks can be found below. These are open to members and non-members; anyone who has an interest or talent in either of these areas can join.

Education Committee Member - Focused on providing outreach about planning to educational institutions at various levels. This role helps coordinate potential activities, such as: promoting planning as a career to local university students in related fields; promoting the Chapter scholarship program for students interested in planning; promoting mentorship programs to help students learn about the variety and day to day responsibilities in planning jobs; providing information to high school students or attending career fairs to advocate for planning; promoting internships and entry level positions to college students and recent graduates; coordinating with the Chapter Student Engagement Committee on events and initiatives.

Events and Outreach Committee Member - Focused on developing and recommending educational and social events for planners. This role helps coordinate potential activities, such as: recommending CM events for the Section Council; working out details for events, such as speakers, venues, hospitality, etc.; planning for the annual event/Christmas party; assisting the Conference Planning Committee when hosting the state conference; planning for outreach events to promote planning to the public, such as booths, tables, etc.; providing content for Section social media, website, and newsletters.

Nominating Committee Member - Focused on promoting and managing the election process of officers for the Section.

b. Section Council Vacancies

Craig Beavers provided an overview of this agenda item.

The Section is still looking for members who would like to serve our section. We have several vacancies on both the Section Council and in our Section Committees, and we invite anyone and everyone to consider applying for these positions. Any AICP member who volunteers their time in any official capacity for the Section, as an officer or as a committee member, may be eligible for up to 8 CM credits. It's a great bonus for helping to advance our field, and it also promotes *Principles to Which We Aspire* No. 5. in the *AICP Code of Ethics*

Section Secretary - An officer role in the Section, focused on assisting with keeping a written record of the Section's activities. This role helps to maintain an accurate list of the members of the Section; notify members and Section Council members of meetings; prepare and report minutes of Section Annual meetings, Section Council meetings, and of any and all special Section meetings; 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; submit to the Chapter President a copy of any amendment proposed to these bylaws; and perform such other duties as required by these bylaws, as assigned by the Section Council, or as are customary to the office.

Section Council Member, Citizen Planner (2) - A leadership role in the Section, serving as a voting member for all official business for the Section. This role is specifically for planners who serve as a volunteer, either on a local planning commission or as a citizen advocate, who do not earn the majority of their income through planning. Additionally, this role helps to manage the affairs of the Section; put into effect actions voted on by the membership; consider, approve, and adopt an annual Section budget; and perform such other functions as are delegated herein or by the members of the Section, or by the Chapter Board of Directors.

Section Council Member, Citizen or Professional Planner (1) - A leadership role in the Section, serving as a voting member for all official business for the Section. This role helps to manage the affairs of the Section; put into effect actions voted on by the membership; consider, approve, and adopt an annual Section budget; and perform such other functions as are delegated herein or by the members of the Section, or by the Chapter Board of Directors.

c. Events

Craig Beavers mentioned that the Section is planning an Agriculture CM Event involving local farmers and related professions to talk about farmland preservation, agritourism, and zoning/land use. More information about a potential date to come later.

Craig also mentioned that we will be soon planning our Annual Event. It will be a free, holiday themed event, likely in early December at night. We'll do a brief overview of the past year in our section and the Chapter in general, recognize our new members, and have plenty of networking and socializing over drinks and appetizers.

Last year it was held at the Hops Fogelsville Hotel, which was well received. We will likely seek out Hops again, unless anyone else has other suggestions. A possible date would be Thursday, December 5th at 5:30pm.

7. Round Robin Updates

Joey Dotta spoke about LVPC's job openings, ranging from planning to economics. He encourages anyone to share. He also thanked the section for sharing on Facebook and its website.

Craig Beavers spoke about the section's new website. It was last updated in 2016, so it was long overdue. If anyone has any suggestions, please let Craig know.

Tina Roseberry suggested that the section work with Stevens and Lee again to promote the Lehigh Valley Land Use Seminar. She previously coordinated with them to provide planning credit and thinks it would be a great opportunity for planners to earn law credit.

Corey Gray gave several updates from the City of Bethlehem. The City continues to work on their Alley House project and is launching an RFP for updating their zoning for ADUs. The City is also working on creating a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, coordinating SS4A funding for the Broad Street redevelopment, and preparing for MusikFest. Additionally, the City received UNESCO World Heritage designation for the Moravian Church Settlements, which will bring numerous benefits to the city and region.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 12th at 12noon – Upper Macungie Township

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52 PM.