



**Lehigh Valley/Berks Section of
APA Pennsylvania**

Section Council Monthly Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 2025

[Virtual](#) - Microsoft Teams

Section Council in Attendance: Craig Beavers, Samantha McLean, Steven Schrayner, Molly Wood

Guest/Members in Attendance: Thiago Correa de Almeida, Preston Boyer, Benjamin Dinkel, Joey Dotta, Leah Eppinger, Isabella Fiume, Evan Gardi, Corey Gray, Brian Hite, Meredith Keller, Subham Kharel, Taylor Lawrence, Carl Manges, David Manhardt, Susan Myerov, Lee Rackus, Jillian Seitz, Laura Stedenfeld, Chris Strohler

1. Welcome

Samantha McLean opened the meeting at 12:02PM; Craig Beavers stepped out for a moment. Samantha welcomed several new members and led an introduction of members on the call.

Craig Beavers thanked everyone for coming to the first meeting of the year and provided a brief overview of the APA and the section.

2. Minutes Approval

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

3. Treasurer's Report

Craig Beavers provided the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Rick Roseberry. The current balance is approx. \$4500

4. Planning Partner Reports

a. Berks County Planning Commission

Taylor Lawrence provided an update for the Berks County Planning Commission.

BCPC continues to work on multi-municipal planning efforts across Berks County, and they will soon start work on their own County Comprehensive Plan this year.

BCPC will be relocating to a new office this spring; more information to come.

BCPC shared that the Berks County Smart Growth Alliance will be hosting their next meeting on Wednesday, January 22nd

b. Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Ben Dinkel, Jillian Seitz, and Susan Myerov provided an update for the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

LVPC and the LVTS adopted the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan and Eastern PA Freight Alliance Freight Infrastructure Plan yesterday.

LVPC will be beginning a 30-day public comment period for a TIP amendment regarding Riverside Drive, opening at the end of the month.

LVPC will soon be announcing a kick-off event for the Housing and Attainability Strategy. The event details are being finalized but will likely be held in early February at DeSales University; more information to come.

LVPC is starting work on the Regional Climate Action Plan, funded by EPA. The first WorkshopLV: Environment meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 22nd, and a public survey is out now to gain public input.

c. State Planning Board

Tina Roseberry was unable to attend; there is no State Planning Board report this month.

d. Lehigh Valley Consortium of Professional Organization

Samantha McLean provided an update for the LVPCO.

LVPCO is planning hosting a Post-Holiday Networking Mixer this evening at 5PM at the Barrister Club. More events will be announced later this year.

5. Pennsylvania Chapter Reports

a. Legislative Committee

Charlie Schmehl was unable to attend; there is no Legislative Committee report this month.

b. Professional Development Committee

Samantha McLean provided an update for the Professional Development Committee.

PDC's next Webinar Wednesday will be on February 5th at noon on Climate Change Adaptation Planning in the Great Lakes.

PDC will soon be announcing the Spring 2025 AICP Exam Prep session; more information to come.

c. Other Committee

Leah Eppinger, President of APA Pennsylvania, provided an update for the Executive Committee.

Registration is open for the [National Planning Conference](#), held in Denver March 29-April 1 and online April 23-25.

The Chapter's 2025 Conference will be held in Harrisburg; details about sessions and proposals will be coming soon.

An RFP for the new Chapter Website is coming soon, refreshing the site to match the National APA design.

The Chapter is always looking for volunteers to get involved at the state-level committees, write articles for the newsletter, or share updates. Please feel free to reach out if you are interested.

If anyone has any questions about APA or planning, feel free to reach out to president@planningpa.org

6. Section Updates

a. 2025 Section Budget and Recap

Craig Beavers provided an overview of the proposed 2025 Section Budget.

The proposed revenue consists primarily of carryover funds from 2024 and the typical Chapter reimbursement, for an approximate total of \$5,000. Registration fees for events are proposed for 2025 to fund future events.

The proposed expenses reflect several new initiatives for 2025, including funding for education and event committees, a scholarship for AICP Exam fees, website hosting, and other smaller expenses for an approximate total of \$1,760.

Motion: to adopt the 2025 Section Budget and Recap. Moved by Samantha McLean, Seconded by Molly Wood. Ayes: Craig Beavers, Samantha McLean, Steven Schrayner, and Molly Wood. Nays: none. Passed 4-0.

b. 2025 Section Work Plan

Craig Beavers provided an overview of the proposed 2025 Section Work Plan.

The work plan is intended to provide guidance for the section's activities during the year, and consists of three main items: engaging with local planners and growing Section membership; providing meaningful communication to membership; and supporting AICP candidates, certified planners, and members with professional development.

Motion: to adopt the 2025 Section Work Plan. Moved by Craig Beavers, Seconded by Steven Schrayner. Ayes: Craig Beavers, Samantha McLean, Steven Schrayner, and Molly Wood. Nays: none. Passed 4-0.

c. 2025 Meeting Schedule

Craig Beavers provided an overview of the proposed 2025 meeting schedule.

To provide balance for those who can't always make in-person meetings, we will hold our In-Person Meetings on a quarterly basis; other meetings will be virtual. We will try to have guest speakers at the In-Person Meetings and refreshments to encourage people to attend.

d. Potential Event Discussion – Land Planning 101

Chris Stroehler led the discussion on the proposed event.

Chris noticed a need for residents and the public to have a basic introduction class about land planning and the approval process. He spoke to Isabella at DCED and Sue at LVPC about partnering on some sort of event. He believes there is information out there that can be packaged into a local format. This class would be simpler than the LVGA and PMPEI courses.

Samantha McLean said she would be happy to help and help coordinate logistics with others. Chris agreed to reach out to Samantha offline and work together with Isabella and LVPC.

e. Potential Event Discussion – Agriculture Panel

Chris Strohler led the discussion on the proposed event.

Chris and Dave are continuing to work on the event. They will be coordinating with Eight Oaks on venue logistics, and are still looking additional speakers. If anyone has any leads, please reach out to Chris.

f. Education Committee – Molly Wood

Molly Wood provided updates of the Education Committee.

The Committee has not met since the last meeting, but they are hoping to start planning for 2025 shortly.

g. Events Committee – Samantha McLean

Samantha McLean provided updates of the Events Committee.

Samantha echoed the previous two event ideas as potential events for 2025. Additionally, she spoke of a potential elected officials panel later in the year. Social gatherings are also fun, potential event ideas to get together and network.

Chris Strohler loved the idea of small scale meet-ups or walks/hikes. The section could also hold events based on local planning initiatives.

7. Open Floor and Updates

Craig Beavers reminded everyone to share the upcoming CM events and Job Postings on our section website.

Isabella Fiume shared two surveys from DCED. One is a survey for the Housing Action Plan, and the other is a survey for the Land Use and Growth Management Plan. Everyone is encouraged to complete them.

David Manhardt shared that he will be presenting a session at the National Planning Conference about Leveraging Geospatial Technologies to Support Comprehensive Planning, and he hopes others will attend to support.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 13th at noon – virtual.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 PM.