



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter
Lehigh Valley-Berks Section

Monthly Newsletter

 January 2026

New Year, New Planning!

Hello planners!

For those new to our emails, welcome! We are the Lehigh Valley/Berks Section of the American Planning Association, Pennsylvania Chapter. We are our region's professional organization dedicated to promoting planning at all levels, as well as being a resource for our local officials, planning commissioners, professional planners, and planning consultants. We are 100% volunteer led, comprised of planners around the three-county area, and we aim to provide a gathering place of information, networking, and education. We try to offer free resources to any community or planner in our area, such as our email blasts, but we encourage municipalities and planners to consider joining our [low-cost membership](#) if able to access even more resources and trainings.

For those who are regulars, welcome back! You may have noticed that our newsletter is not on the first day of the month anymore. We're moving this

towards the middle of the month to allow us to provide even more news and updates in a single email.

We have a lot of exciting events and initiatives this year, including a Panel on Data Centers, the State Planning Conference in Bethlehem, and much more! We hope you will consider joining us at an upcoming meeting or event to learn how you can get involved.

Craig Beavers, AICP Candidate

Section Chair



 **News and Announcements**

February Meeting

We will be hosting our February Full Section Membership meeting of the APA-PA Lehigh Valley Berks Section on **Friday, February 13th at 12 noon**. This will be in-person at the Shelby for a lunch get-together and meeting.

Please fill out this form if you plan to attend, so we can call ahead and reserve an appropriately sized table.

<https://forms.gle/GNBBWgDT1Pt7pPdQ8>

The deadline to RSVP for the meeting is **Tuesday, February 10th at 5pm**.

[Click Here for a Calendar Link](#)

2026 Upcoming Schedule Events

As we start to roll into 2026, we wanted to share with you our new meeting schedule, as well as a sneak preview of potential events.

To make things more engaging for everyone, we will be switching to a quarterly meeting format over lunch. We've heard from members that sometimes our meetings felt repetitive and not as engaging, so we hope this will provide a more useful and exciting format. We will likely meet over lunch at a local restaurant to make it more social and enjoyable.

Our tentative schedule is as follows:

- **February 13, 2026**
- **May 15, 2026**
- **August 14, 2026**
- **November 13, 2026**

In the off months, our Section Council and Committees will be meeting independently to program events, outreach, and other important section business to keep us focused and active.

Each quarter, we also will be aiming to host at least one CM event, social gathering, or similar event. Currently, we are working on developing a **Panel on Data Centers**, which will feature a moderated discussion with data center developers, engineers, local planners, and utility providers. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months on this exciting event!

Lastly, we will be hosting the **2026 APA Pennsylvania State Conference** here in Bethlehem, **October 18-20th at Wind**

Creek. We will be encouraging all of our local planners, elected officials, and municipal partners to attend and learn about trending planning topics across the commonwealth.

We're looking forward to an exciting year for our Section, and we hope you will join us at our events and meetings!

2026 Conference Planning Committee - Meeting #4

We will hold the fourth meeting of the 2026 Conference Planning Committee for the APA PA Bethlehem Conference virtually on **Thursday, February 12th at 11:00 AM** on Microsoft Teams. An agenda and notes will be sent out prior to the meeting.

We hope to see you there! Feel free to forward to anyone else who may be interested.

[Click Here for a Calendar Link](#)

Section Volunteers Wanted!

We have several volunteer opportunities open for anyone in our section who is interested. These positions have a low-time commitment, allow for AICP credits, and are a fun way to connect with colleagues across the region! If any of these items interest you, please reach out to Craig or Samantha.

- Election Nomination Committee - This committee consists of three people who collect the names of interested candidates for section office, and distribute the candidates list and ballot. Commitment involves 1-3 meetings total, and about 30 minutes of data collection.
- Education and Events Committees - We have two committees for our section that help with our work. One is our Education Committee, working to promote planning to our local colleges and schools. The second is our Events Committee, developing CM events and social gatherings.

We welcome anyone and everyone to help out with these two committees! If you might be interested in volunteering, please fill out the form below:

[Click Here to Volunteer](#)

Webinar Wednesday: Does Levittown Matter?

Does Levittown Matter? Join us for a webinar on our 3 local Levittowns, in PA, NJ and NY, to discuss their impact on American suburban development and their mixed legacy after 75 years. David C. Zipf, AICP, and Steven Nelson, AICP, will host the event, joined by NYU History Professor (and Levittown native) Edward Berenson. Dr. Berenson is the author of *Perfect Communities: Levitt, Levittown, and the Dream of White Suburbia*, published last March by Yale University Press. The session will cover Levittown's history (including several riots), its positive and negative planning legacies, and its role as both a

model for suburbia and a cautionary tale about car dependency, discrimination and racial intolerance. Levittown remains a living and evolving example of the American suburban landscape.

CM credit is pending approval. You must attend the webinar live in order to earn CM credit.

Speaker(s):

Steve Nelson, David Zipf, Edward Berenson

The Pennsylvania Chapter is not responsible for the materials or opinions of the speaker(s) you will hear

Deadline to register is February 3

If you're interested in sponsoring a Webinar Wednesday session or have a session for Webinar Wednesday please contact us.

Send your request to admin@planningpa.org.

Register Now

Upcoming Events

Our Section provides a calendar of CM events, local initiatives, and major planning meetings. Here are a few upcoming events of note:

- [January 16 - Local & Global Perspectives on Extreme Urban Heat](#) (1.5 CM, 1 SR)
- [January 29 - New + Emerging Industrial Land Use Guide Training](#)
- [January 30 - Breaking Bread, Breaking Tradition: A Masterclass in Collaborative Planning](#) (1.5 CM)

- [February 4 - Webinar Wednesday: Does Levittown Matter?](#)
(1 CM)
- February 12 - Conference Planning Committee Meeting
- February 13 - Full Section Membership Meeting

To view more events and CM webinars, click the button below.

[View More Events](#)

Employment Opportunities

Our Section highlights a variety of planning and planning related jobs in our area. Here are a few open positions:

- [Assistant Director - Berks County Planning Commission](#)
- [Senior Transportation Planner - Lehigh Valley Planning Commission](#)
- [Director of Development - South Whitehall Township](#)

To view more job opportunities, click the button below.

[View More Jobs](#)

 **SHARE IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS**

Liked this month's newsletter? Don't forget to spread it out!



**Lehigh Valley/Berks Section,
APA PA**

Allentown, PA

United States of America



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