



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

Full Section Membership Quarterly Meeting

Friday, February 13, 2026

The Shelby, 707 N Krocks Road, Lower Macungie Township

Attendance: *Craig Beavers, Molly Wood, Christopher Strohler, Meredith Keller, Brian Hite, Samantha McLean, Thiago Correa de Almeida, Blaise Richburg, Joseph Colosi, and Bella Fiume*

1. Welcome and Introductions

Craig B. opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Planning Partner Updates

a. Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

No Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) representatives were present to provide an update.

b. Berks County Planning Commission

Thiago provided an update for the Berks County Planning Commission.

The BCPC will be partnering with the Pennsylvania Economy League (PEL) for technical assistance with joint comprehensive planning and will be shifting future joint comprehensive planning responsibilities to PEL.

The BCPC will soon be publishing their annual report, organizing, and holding regional meetings with municipalities, and is in the process of reviewing the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Ordinance recently shared by the City of Reading.

c. State Planning Board

No State Planning Board (SPB) representative was available to provide an update. The next SPB meeting will be held on Monday, March 16th from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

d. PMPEI

Craig B. shared that PMPEI will be redesigning their courseload with the help of West Chester University. The previous owner of the course materials has copyrighted their usage after 2027, so PMPEI is working to refresh the courses, starting with a Planning 101 class. More information will come this year.

3. Pennsylvania Chapter Updates

a. Board of Directors – Craig Beavers

Craig shared that the APA will be hosting a Chapter Retreat on June 17th. Section members are welcome to attend to represent the Lehigh Valley/Berks. Brian confirmed his plans to attend and represent the section.

b. Legislative Committee – Craig Beavers

Craig reminded the section that the Pennsylvania Housing Action Plan was released earlier in the week under the leadership of Governor Josh Shapiro.

Craig also provided those in attendance with a handout which summarizes the major PA Senate and House bills proposed over the past couple of weeks.

c. Professional Development Committee – Samantha McLean

Sam shared information on the chapter's upcoming Webinar Wednesday (March 4th from 12:00 – 1:00 PM). The webinar is titled "Preparing a Litigation-Proof Land Use Application" and will potentially offer a law credit for those in attendance.

d. Planning Officials Committee – Brian Hite

Brian will be reaching out to the region's planning commissioners once LVPC has updated their municipal planning representative list.

e. Student Engagement Committee – David Manhardt and Molly Wood

Molly is working on student engagement opportunities in anticipation of the October APA PA Conference. Student involvement in the planning conference will help put Lehigh University or other colleges on the map.

Chris mentioned that APA PA SE hosts an annual student mixer before the conference to raise student awareness and interest. APA PA LVB could host something similar, should timing and funds allow for it. It will be important to organize the event around university/college holiday breaks.

4. 2026 Conference Updates - Forging the Next 250 Through Preservation, Innovation, and Collaboration

A Conference Planning Committee (CPC) meeting was held the day prior (Thursday, 2/12), with most present in attendance.

Molly opened the floor for any questions so far in the conference planning process. There were no questions and the CPC and its subcommittees seem to be ahead of schedule at this time.

a. Call for Presenters – [Open Until Friday, March 13th](#)

Craig reminded the section that the call for presenters is now open and will remain open for one more month.

b. [Sponsors, Exhibitors, and Advertisers](#)

Craig informed everyone that the form for conference sponsorships is open. If anyone has any firms or organizations that would be interested, please reach out to David Manhardt.

5. LVB Section Updates

a. Volunteers Wanted!

The section is looking for volunteers, especially community members with experience in events, to assist with community outreach.

b. Education and Students Committee – Molly Wood

Molly's update is the same as provided earlier for the Student Engagement Committee.

c. Events and Outreach Committee – Samantha McLean

Sam provided an update on the data center discussion panel event. A virtual panel may be the best way to accommodate varying schedules, avoid event venue costs, and other variables. The goal is to schedule the webinar in April, sometime before or after student spring breaks.

Craig spoke to Jill, who would be interested in doing a land use panel, similar to LVPC's recent event.

Chris suggested contacting someone from the Cumberland County Planning Commission, who published early white papers and information on data centers. Chris will confirm the name of this individual.

Craig suggested Rick Roseberry as a potential panelist, noting his background in engineering and planning. Sam will confirm Rick's availability.

Sam will aim to have panelist commitment confirmed by the end of February. Once panelists are confirmed, Sam will get an idea of general availability and confirm a date for the event.

Meredith asked for Sam to share a full list of names as a reminder.

6. Full Section Membership Meeting Schedule

Craig shared the following dates for this year's full section membership quarterly meetings. Meetings will alternate between Thursdays and Fridays to accommodate the schedules of those who do not work Fridays.

- i. Thursday, May 14, 2026**
- ii. Friday, August 14, 2026**
- iii. Thursday, November 19, 2026**

7. Adjournment