



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

Section Council and Committees Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, April 1, 2026

[Virtual](#) - Microsoft Teams

Attendance: *Chris Strohler, Craig Beavers, Dave Manhardt, Brian Hite, Sam McLean, Meredith Keller, Molly Wood, Richard Roseberry, Tina Roseberry, Sean Ziller, Thiago Correa de Almeida, and Bella Fiume*

1. Welcome

Craig opened the meeting at 11:02 AM.

2. Conference Planning Committee Updates - Molly Wood

Molly provided a general update for the Conference Planning Committee (CPC). The CPC is mostly focused on fundraising right now. A review session will be held for conference proposals on Tuesday, April 7th at South Whitehall. 94 proposals total were submitted for consideration. The Special Events Subcommittee will meet Thursday, April 2nd for their regular monthly meeting.

Craig also shared that logo drafts have been shared by Berks County Planning Commission, and the conference planning is moving along well.

3. Education Committee – Molly Wood

No updates.

4. Events Committee – Samantha McLean

a. Data Center Panel - Monday, April 27th at Noon

Sam shared an update for the upcoming data center panel. The event has been approved for CM credits and will be held on Monday, April 27th from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. Speakers include Rick Roseberry from Colliers Engineering & Design, Jill Seitz from LVPC, and Kirk Stoner from Cumberland County. Tori Morgan will serve as the moderator.

Craig has set up registration through Eventbrite. Sam has set up the event link as a webinar in Teams. With the two registration options in mind, Sam asked which would be best to move forward with. Craig and Sam discussed the options and decided that Sam would manually input the 16 registrations already received into Teams and move forward with the Teams platform for further registrations. This way, the event will only be through one platform and those who registered will receive the direct link through Teams.

Sam asked whether it would be best to set up the webinar with attendee microphones toggled off. Dave later noted that keeping questions to the chat will help to avoid interruptions, especially with a larger attendee pool. Sam agreed that muted microphones would be best for a larger group. Sam and Craig will review the expected attendance the week before and make a final decision.

Meredith asked if the link will be shared beyond the section or if we have an idea of who we can expect to attend.

Craig said mostly local officials and planners have signed up so far. The event link was shared with the section email list, which is about 400 people.

Sam will also prepare an introduction and closing remarks. Either Craig or Sam will do the webinar intro with the CM number, Tori will facilitate introductions for the panelists, and discussion will last 30-35 minutes, leaving the remaining time for Q&A. Sam will prepare potential questions to share with panelists so they have a heads up.

Chris asked if anyone would be filtering questions for Tori if they are submitted in the chat. Sam said that she is thinking facilitation of the Q&A could be done by her or Craig. Chris agreed that some level of control over questions will help avoid interruptions.

Craig will also reach out to the communications committee so the event can be shared with more planners.

b. June Summer Social – TBD

Craig mentioned a summer social conversation could be planned after data center event. There is potential for this event to be held at a location in Southside Bethlehem, with the October conference in mind.

c. September Event – TBD

Craig shared that we may not host a September event due to the conference in October.

d. December Event – Holiday Event

Craig said that the December event can be discussed later in the year. We may try a lunchtime format rather than dinnertime in hopes that more people will be able to attend.

5. PA Chapter Updates

a. Strategic Plan Retreat - Wednesday, June 17 - Penn Stater (In-Person Only)

Craig shared that an email about the APA PA Chapter Strategic Plan Retreat should have been shared by Kim Gusic. Everyone on the council is welcome to attend. It is an in-person only event in State College. The goal will be to update the chapter strategic plan for the next three years, which will be expiring at the end of the year.

Craig will not be able to attend due to a conflict, but Brian will attend in his place.

b. Chapter Committee Updates

Craig provided chapter updates from the recent board meeting. Upcoming conference locations include Pittsburgh in 2027, Valley Forge in 2028, and potentially NE PA in 2029.

The PA Chapter is aiming for the conference announcement to rollout on the website in the Summer.

Craig provided an update from the legislation committee as well. The general assembly has about 16 housing bills introduced. Many call for amendments to the MPC (e.g., allowing accessory dwelling units in residential districts, permitting duplexes in residential districts, residential by right in commercial districts, etc.). Another item was a resolution to call for a study of the MPC. Craig will share a full list of bills following the meeting.

At the national level there are two notable bills, both in the Senate and House, known as the 21st Century Road to Housing Act and the other is called the Housing for the 21st Century Act. Both proposals have similar language and aim to strengthen housing regulations and promote housing development. Craig will share the legislative memo and highlights for each of the bills. Overall, the major highlights would be efforts to eliminate red tape at HUD and give more support to states and local governments for HUD programs.

Craig's final legislative committee update was around a PA APA data center work group. The committee is getting ready to weigh in on future state, house, and senate bills.

Chris asked about House Bill 2151 and whether it was discussed or if Craig or Bella know anything further about its status. Craig and Bella agreed there hasn't been any movement yet.

Sam added an update for the events and outreach committee. The Heritage Planning Webinar Wednesday will be today, April 1st at noon. The website will be continuously updated with Webinar Wednesday and highlighted other upcoming state chapter events. Sam shared the Webinar Wednesday link in the chat.

Thiago provided an update for the communication committee. He affirmed the chapter website updates are underway and should be done in about a month or month and a half.

6. Updates from Partners (SPB, PMPEI, County Planning)

Craig shared updates around PMPEI. PMPEI's former founder copyrighted all previous materials and that copyright is set to revert to his family at the end of 2027. As a result, PMPEI is losing access to those course materials. They've launched an RFP and selected West Chester to redesign a basic planning 101 course. The structure will be a three-hour course, rather than a multi-week program, which would provide a basic overview of the MPC and planning processes. A draft course is in progress and further updates should be provided in June.

On behalf of Tina, Craig mentioned the SPB materials shared via email. Bella added that the 2025 State Land Use and Growth Management Report is officially done and published to the website. She shared a link in the chat.

On behalf of LVPC, Craig shared a few updates. LVPC is in the final drafting stage of their Housing Action Plan. Comments can be shared with Jill Seitz. LVPC is also currently finalizing their trail gap inventory. Craig added LVPC will be announcing a comprehensive plan update with a "strategy lab" component to begin in May. Craig will share the schedule once it is published.

Thiago provided an update for Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC). BCPC is currently working on the LRTP and will have a series of regional meetings for the county comprehensive plan update. These meetings will begin in May.

7. Section Committee Volunteer Recruitment

Craig is interested in working on recruitment once some time frees up after the conference. The section is looking for ways to share responsibilities and get new volunteers. Currently, many responsibilities fall on the same people.

Sam added event coordination is a good way to make use of our committee delegation as well.

Craig shared that he is thankful for everyone's great work so far and wants to make sure work is equally spread out.

8. 2026 Meeting Schedule Reminder

Craig reminded the team of the upcoming section meetings, as listed below.

a. Section Council Officers and Committees

i. **July 1, 2026**

ii. **October 7, 2026**

b. Full Section Membership Luncheons

i. **Thursday, May 14, 2026 - Hamilton Family Restaurant**

ii. **Friday, August 14, 2026 - TBD (Bethlehem Area)**

Craig is accepting ideas for locations. The goal is to finalize this at the next section council officers and committees meeting in July.

iii. Thursday, November 19, 2026 - TBD

9. Open Floor and Updates

10. Next Meeting – Thursday, May 14, 2026 - Hamilton Family Restaurant

11. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned 11:38 AM.