

American Planning Association: Short Course Webinar

21st Century Planning Commission

The live program will take place at the National Planning Conference on Saturday, April 13, 2013. Conference attendees can join the live sessions that make up this webinar at no additional charge.

On April 13, 2013, planning commissions around the country will join in a training program delivered live from the National Planning Conference. Planners, lawyers, planning commissioners, and advocates will provide insight on the duties of the planning commission as well as the issues facing planning in the second decade of the 21st century.

Pay one registration fee and invite an unlimited number of planning commissioners, officials, and staff to attend this training. In addition to the live program, attendees have access to a special program website with copies of the PowerPoint slides, note sheets, concise reading materials, and discounts on training books.

In addition, registrants have the option of viewing a recording of the program on Friday or Saturday, June 14 or 15, 2013. For colleagues who cannot attend the live event or for those who prefer the recorded format, the optional viewing of the recording is a convenient addition.

Schedule

Overview of the Planning Process (S404)

9:00–10:15 a.m. CT

This is the first session in the short course for planning commissioners. This session will provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities, an introduction to the documents, tools, and procedures that you will use in carrying out your responsibilities as a planning commissioner.

Topics to be covered will include the following: 1. Roles and responsibilities of a planning commissioner • Long-range planning • Development review • Planning commission authority • Staff roles and responsibilities 2. Long-range planning – Imagining the Future • Why do we plan? • What is a comprehensive plan? • How a plan is prepared • Other types of plans • Planning commissioners role in plan-making 3. Development Review • How the process works • Role of the planning commission • Role of staff and other participants • Unraveling the development application 4. Tools and Building Blocks of Planning • Plans • Zoning ordinance • Subdivision regulations • Design standards 5. Engaging the Community • Role of the public in the planning process 6. Putting the Pieces Together

Ben A. Herman, FAICP, Clarion Associates

Anne McBride, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion

Defensible, Ethical Decision Making (S410)

10:30-11:45 a.m. CT

This is the second session of the Planning Commissioner Short Course. Defensible and ethical decisions do not occur simply by how a commission votes on a particular application. Learn how to ensure you have a framework in place to guide your actions and decisions in a manner that leads to fair and reasonable actions. Examine how appropriate rules, regulations and procedures can shape your final decisions. Review the significance of meeting conduct, the creation of the record and the importance of findings of fact.

In this session you will gain knowledge from experienced planning commissioners and planners on key points that will assist commissioners write and/or vote on clear, fair and defensible decisions. This includes criteria that should be included in your zoning regulations and commissioner rules and regulations, consideration of appropriate conditions to impose in the decision and writing tips for the decision itself.

Robert P. Mitchell, FAICP

W. Shedrick Coleman, Chatham County-Savannah MPC

Break

11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m. CT

How to Conduct a Planning Commission Meeting (S421)

1:00–2:15 p.m., CT

Learn the nuts and bolts of the decision-making process. This session will focus on how commissions and boards can better make fair, reasonable, and defensible decisions. It will involve discussion of decision making practices for planning and zoning commissions. It will cover the ways in which large and contentious crowds can be managed in a public hearing environment, the legal principles underlying decision making, how to encourage appropriate testimony, how to deliberate fairly, how to make motions, and tips for running meetings. The speaker will provide perspectives from both a planning and legal perspective. Practical application of legal due process will be emphasized.

C. Gregory Dale, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion

Legal Framework for the Planning Commission (S428)

2:30–3:45 p.m., CT

The planning commission conducts its work within the framework of state law and specific federal statutes. It makes decisions within the context of local plans, codes and guidelines. Learn what the framework is and how it applies to your community and commission. You will also explore pertinent case law that has influenced the way planning is implemented. It is critical for all commissioners to understand their authority and responsibility and to know how the landscape of planning and land-use changes over time.

David Therique

Current Issues in Planning for Commissioners (S437)

4:00–5:15 p.m., CT

This final session in the short course webinar for planning commissions provides a series of short overviews of critical and current issues in planning. This is the ideal session for new planning commissioners as it introduces them to terms and concepts such as sustainability. The session begins with an overview on the economy and how it affects and will continue to affect community planning. Planning commissioners will become familiar with concepts that are in current use in planning, such as sustainability, smart growth, and health impact assessments. They will learn what they are, how they relate to planning, and the role the planning commission may play in furthering these programs.

Robert W. Burchell, Rutgers University