



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

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Economic Development Commission

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

5:30pm

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

- 1) Development Update Presentation
- 2) Business Recovery
 - a. Oral Report from Main Street Partnership
 - b. Oral Report from Chamber of Commerce
 - c. Oral Report from Business Resource Librarian
 - d. Other
- 3) 2020-2021 EDC Work Plan Updates
 - a. Business Incentive Policy
 - b. Marketing
 - c. Co-working Spaces/Supporting Entrepreneurs
 - d. Business Outreach
- 4) Liaison Updates
 - a. Zoning
 - b. Design Review
 - c. Sustainability
 - d. Development Projects
 - e. Other
- 5) Minutes November 18, 2020

Adjournment

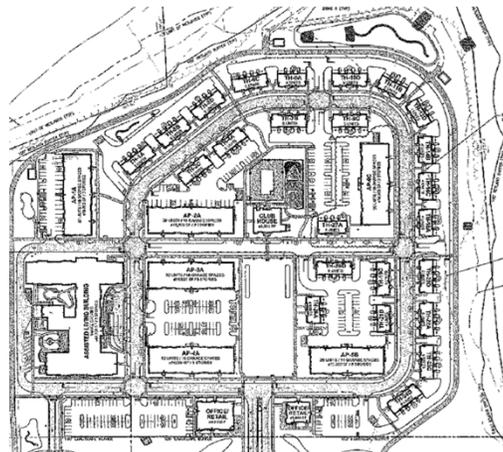


**Development Update
Economic Development Commission
January 2021**

Michael Glidden CFM CZEO
Director of Planning and Community Development

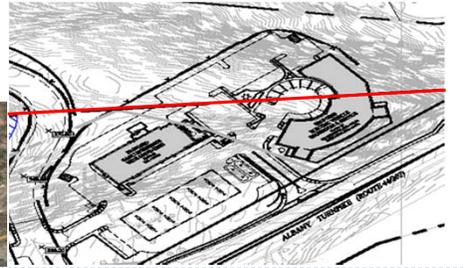
Ridge at Talcott Mountain

- 216 out of the 299 residential units have been issued permits.
- Certificate of occupancies have been issued for 144.
- There has been discussions with potential tenants for the commercial space
- Staff has been contacted by representatives of SL Simsbury concerning a potential development of the Southern campus however no definitive plans have been submitted at this time



15 Albany Turnpike

- An electric car dealership was approved by the Zoning Commission located on the 18 acres west of Hoffman dealership.
- Only a portion of the dealership will be located in Simsbury, the rest of the development is in Canton and subject to review by that community.



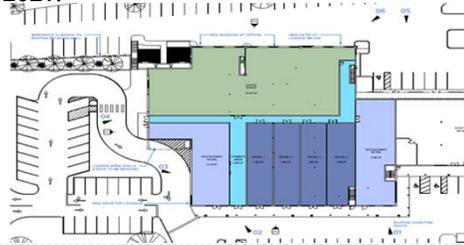
Big Y

- Certificate of occupancy has been issued for the new store located in north village
- Construction of the store has sparked interest in other development opportunities in the north village



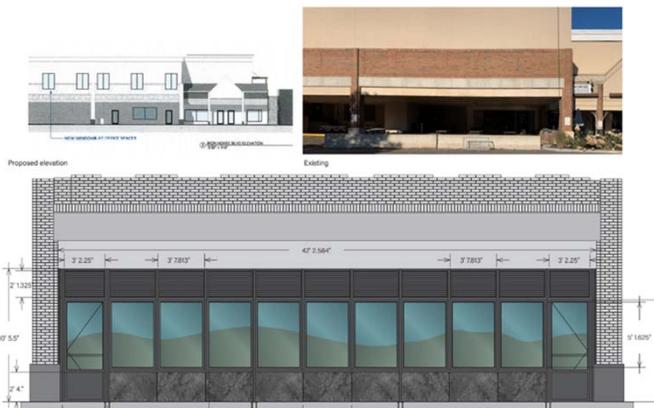
Andys Plaza

- The Zoning Commission approved a renovation of the existing plaza. The project consists of facade upgrades, a small addition, and interior layout changes.
- Work is expected to start in spring 2021.



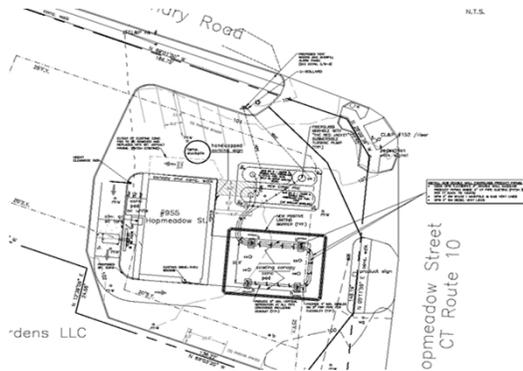
Andys Plaza Cont.

- In addition to the planned facade update and interior changes, Iron Horse Pub will be expanding their outdoor patio area.



Gibbs Mobil

- The Building Department received and approved an application for the renovation of the existing gasoline station.

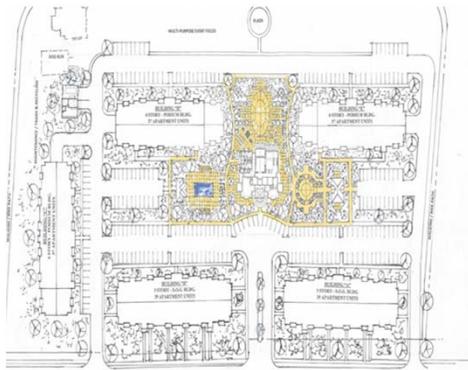


Other New Businesses

- **The Coffee Spot**
 - New coffee restaurant at storytellers cottage
- **The Rioux**
 - New Cajun restaurant
- **Northwest Community Bank**
 - Former Santander Bank location



Simscoft Echo Farms Redevelopment



- The Design Review Board was shared preliminary plans for the redevelopment of the Simscoft Echo Farms property off Iron Horse Boulevard.
- The plan calls for a multi-family development
- No approvals have been issued to date, the applicant is working on addressing comments made by members of DRB.



How has COVID affected Building permit fees?

| TOT 20-21 | TOT 19-20 | TOT 18-19 |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 60,424.39 | 54,897.28 | 30,793.39 |
| 123,278.22 | 56,525.16 | 94,501.49 |
| 116,198.30 | 46,818.44 | 75,748.99 |
| 299,900.91 | 158,240.88 | 201,043.87 |
| 441,774.20 | 52,034.64 | 30,525.87 |
| 77,376.45 | 96,771.94 | 121,790.42 |
| | 44,714.21 | 30,838.28 |
| 519,150.65 | 193,520.79 | 183,154.57 |
| | 92,436.89 | 18,647.29 |
| | 54,180.41 | 16,282.37 |
| | 39,419.86 | 29,907.91 |
| 0.00 | 186,039.16 | 64,837.57 |
| | 40,390.92 | 654,907.57 |
| | 54,610.36 | 55,368.11 |
| | 120,925.58 | 119,646.65 |
| 0.00 | 216,926.86 | 829,922.33 |
| 819,051.56 | 753,727.69 | 1,278,958.34 |

- The attached chart shows permit review for the year to date totals compared to previous years.
- Our to date totals have already exceed 19-20.
- Investment and construction continue in Simsbury despite COVID.



Questions Thank you





Town of Simsbury

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TOWN OF SIMSBURY

Fee Waiver and Tax Abatement Program Guidelines

Adopted by the Board of Selectmen on [month] [day], [year]

1. Purpose

The goal of economic development is to improve the life of community residents by retaining and expanding existing businesses and attracting new businesses. Simsbury's Fee Waiver and Tax Abatement Program support the town's economic development.

The specific goals of the Simsbury Fee Waiver and Tax Abatement Program include one or more of the following: generating additional tax revenue, lasting employment opportunities, providing quality goods and services, improving the aesthetics of the community, preserving an historic site, providing desirable recreational and entertainment opportunities.

This policy is intended to provide guidelines; it does not prohibit the Board of Selectmen from taking any action it deems appropriate as allowable by statute.

2. Effective Date

This policy shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until revised or rescinded.

3. Types of Businesses Targeted by This Policy

- Corporate headquarters and satellite offices
- Research and high technology facilities
- Advanced technology manufacturing facilities (only applies to job creation and real estate growth, does not apply to personal property growth)
- Existing Simsbury business expansion
- Mixed-use development of a building or site
- Affordable housing units or housing units developed for underserved populations.
- New or existing recreational or entertainment businesses
- Historical preservation
- Re-development of properties in certain neighborhoods (e.g. Tariffville, downtown, North village)
- Green/sustainable improvements
- Appropriate entrepreneurial businesses

4. Types of Assistance Available

- A. **Tax Abatement** – the assessment of real property may be reduced for a period of time
- The town may reduce the assessment of real property as allowed by Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 203, Sec. 12-65b, as amended from time to time. Any written agreement entered into under this statute shall normally not be for a period longer than ten years, with a maximum average abated not to exceed a range of 40-60%. **The Town**

reserves the right to cap the total abatement amount granted. However, these guidelines do not prohibit the Board of Selectmen from taking any action it deems appropriate as allowable by statute.

- B. **Waiving or Reducing of any Town Permit Fees** – reduction amount is variable depending on impact of proposed project. The town may waive up to 50% of any town permit fees upon determination that such a fee waiver would encourage the development or expansion of quality businesses, especially those in the targeted industries. The Town reserves the right to cap the total amount of fees waived. Sewer fees and fire code fees are not applicable for this potential reduction in fees.

5. Application Requirements and Procedures

- **Step 1**

Applicant submits a Business Development Assistance Application (supplied by the town) to the Planning Department. The Planning Director will review the application to evaluate its consistency with the most current Plan of Conservation and Development. The Assessor and Finance Director will then complete an analysis regarding the anticipated value of the improvements, and will prepare various abatement scenarios for review.

These departmental analyses are forwarded to the Town Manager for review. The Town Manager will submit scenarios based upon the guidelines established in this Policy to the Business Development Committee (BDC).

The BDC consists of five members and one alternate member appointed by the Board of Selectmen to two year terms. Membership composition is as follows: one member of the Board of Selectmen; one alternate member of the Board of Selectmen; one member of the Board of Finance; one member of the Zoning Commission; one member of the Economic Development Commission; and one member at large, who is an elector of the community with expertise related to economic and business development. The Town Manager serves as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Committee with full participation rights. The Town Manager serves as the administrative chair and makes recommendations for Committee appointments to the Board of Selectmen.

- **Step 2**

The Business Development Committee and Town Manager will review and confer on the application and provided scenarios. The Town Manager, with assistance from staff, will resolve any issues with the applicant.

- **Step 3**

The Business Development Committee and the Town Manager make a final recommendation to the Board of Selectman.

- **Step 4**

Upon approval by the Board of Selectman, the Town Manager will work with the applicant and the town attorney to draft a legal contract that assures that all the provisions of the Tax Abatement Program will be met. The contract will include a provision for verifying that minimum investments or job creation have been met.

- **Step 5**

In order for the incentive to become legal the Board of Selectman must approve the final Business Development Incentive(s) in contract form by majority vote. The Board of Selectman shall then authorize the Town Manager to sign the proposed final contract as approved in form.

Note: the Fee Waiver and Tax Abatement Program is completely separate from the statutorily required local land use approval process. Response timeframes associated with each step in the process are dependent upon staff workload capacity, as well as the availability of the members of the Business Development Committee and the Board of Selectmen in order to meet in a timely manner within the requirements set forth in the Freedom of Information Act.

6. Transparency

A portion of the town website shall be dedicated to tax abatement information which would include awards and abatement documents

7. Accountability

Tax abatements will not be granted if the contractually required minimum real estate and/or personal property investment has not occurred. If the tax abatement is linked to job creation and/or retention, the abatement will not be granted until the minimum required new jobs has been verified; annual reporting thereafter will be required to verify that the agreed upon minimum number of new jobs have been retained at their Simsbury location.

DRAFT

Economic Development Strategies – To Attract and Retain Businesses

The Town of Simsbury is committed to the strategies and aspirations listed below.

- 1. Diversification and broadening of tax base to minimize tax increases**
 - Increase Grand List value in order to minimize tax increases
- 2. Streamline planning and zoning practices**
 - Continue updating land use regulations
 - Implement suggestions received from local businesses to simplify and make transparent all permitting and zoning requirements
 - Consolidate land use bodies and allow administrative approvals by staff
- 3. Maintain Simsbury's quality of life offerings**
 - Maintain excellent school system, attractive parks and trails, library, social services, senior center, well maintained infrastructure
- 4. Business retention – stay in touch with businesses**
 - Continue EDC outreach such as surveys, meetings and visits to ensure the concerns and needs of our businesses are addressed by town government
 - Partner and collaborate with Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Partnership, and Business and Career Center
 - Maintain and update marketing materials to promote Simsbury as a place to live, work and play
 - Promote state programs (Small Business Incentive Program, Grow Connecticut Rebate Program, etc.) available to business community
- 5. Make infrastructure improvements**
 - Make investments in critical infrastructure: transportation, technological (fiber optics, band width), and building infrastructure. Maintain proper stewardship of town resources
- 6. Support Entrepreneurs and current town businesses**
 - Fund and support the Library's Business Resource and Career Center and our partner organizations such as the Chamber and Main Street
 - EDC led effort to facilitate co-working spaces for entrepreneurs
 - Maintain EDC outreach practices
 - Assign ombudsmen from EDC to work directly with businesses interested in moving to Simsbury or eager to stay in town
- 7. Provide diverse housing options**
 - Continue to support the development of varied housing options that address the range of needs in our community, including affordable housing **units and housing units for underserved populations**



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting
Minutes - DRAFT

Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 5:30pm
Virtual Meeting Broadcast Live via SCTV

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Crowther at 5:32pm. Commission members Tom Earl, Brooke Freeman, Charmaine Seavy, Peter Van Loon, Ron Jodice, and Lori Wagner were present. Ex officio member Bill Rice (Planning Commission), and Board of Selectmen liaison Jackie Battos were also present. Staff members in attendance included Maria Capriola, Town Manager, Melissa Appleby, Deputy Town Manager, Mike Glidden, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Andrew ‘Sherm’ Sherman, Business and Career Center Coordinator.

a) Introduction of Lori Wagner, New EDC Member

Mr. Crowther welcomed the new member to the EDC, Lori Wagner. Ms. Wagner introduced herself and provided an overview of her background and experience.

2) Business Recovery

a) Oral Report from Main Street Partnership

Mr. Crowther gave a report in Ms. Nielsen’s absence. He said that Ms. Nielsen relayed that the marketing contract has been submitted to the Town Manager and that it is currently under review.

b) Oral Report from Chamber of Commerce

None

c) Oral Report from Business Resource Librarian

Mr. Sherman said that he continues to send out resources for businesses, and that the Library is still operating with its limited hours until further notice. Ms. Capriola said that Town Hall is operating on limited hours, as well.

d) Other

None

3) 2020-2021 EDC Work Plan

The committee discussed the draft work plan, and the member assignments to each work stream. In particular, the group discussed the “Support Entrepreneurs - Support infrastructure for entrepreneurs” item. Mr. Crowther requested an update from Mr. Van Loon and Mr. Jodice. Discussion ensued regarding the feedback received during recent business outreach visits as it pertains to the need for more reliable internet and utility

services. Mr. Crowther asked what, if anything, the Town can do to support this. For example, he asked whether the Town can play a role in expanding bandwidth. Ms. Capriola explained that municipalities in Connecticut are not permitted to run their own internet utility, but that we can certainly advocate for improved service.

4) 2019-2020 Work Plan Updates

a) Business Incentive Policy

Ms. Capriola said that the final draft is under review by the Town Attorney; staff aims to have this on the Board of Selectmen agenda in December.

b) Co-working Spaces

The work group is still working on reaching out to landlords.

c) Business Outreach

Mr. Crowther said that recent visits were held with Mitchell Auto and McLean; he shared the feedback received at those visits. He said that the next visits to be scheduled are with MicroSemi and Hoffman Auto.

Mr. Crowther said that he and Morgan Hilyard discussed the best way to engage the second tier businesses, and they decided that the Chamber's Government Affairs Committee would be an appropriate venue for this to take place. One Government Affairs meeting per quarter could take the form of a small business roundtable, with the businesses to be organized by discipline, geographic location, or another identifying category. Mr. Crowther and Mr. Earl will brainstorm ways to engage businesses and encourage them to attend.

d) Marketing

Ms. Capriola said that the Town Manager's Office is reviewing the draft contract and that she is hoping to execute it by the end of the month. Ms. Freeman said that the scope of work looks good, and includes everything we were looking for. She said that the timeline is 60-90 days once the project commences.

e) Other

The group discussed the new "shadowing" program. Mr. Earl has been assigned to the first development project.

5) Minutes – October 28, 2020

Mr. Crowther noted that under section 2(d), the CT Sustainability Team program includes a \$7,500 contribution, with the matching funds to be raised via crowdfunding, not from the Town itself. With that correction, the minutes were approved by consensus.

Mr. Jodice alerted the group to the discussions taking place with the Planning and Zoning Commissions regarding the affordable housing plan. Mr. Glidden and Mr. Rice explained that according to state statute, the Town is required to develop an affordable housing plan; the meetings that have taken place so far have focused on soliciting public input. Discussion ensued regarding the statutory requirements, the Town's current level of affordable housing, and the EDC's potential role in this process. Mr. Rice said that the EDC can assist by researching

sample approaches to affordable housing. He specifically referenced Toronto's model; Mr. Earl said he would look into this.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Loon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:25pm. Ms. Seavy seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Appleby
Deputy Town Manager