

# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Watch Economic Development Commission meetings LIVE and rebroadcast on Comcast Channels 96, 1090, Frontier Channel 6071 and LIVE streamed or on-demand at [www.simsburytv.org](http://www.simsburytv.org)

## Economic Development Commission

Wednesday, July 28, 2021

5:30pm

Simsbury Public Library Program Room, 725 Hopmeadow Street

### REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

- 1) Introduction to SPIRIT Council
- 2) 2020-2021 EDC Work Plan Updates
  - a. Marketing Project Update
  - b. Pandemic Follow-Up Outreach
  - c. Co-working Spaces/Supporting Entrepreneurs
  - d. Other
- 3) Stakeholder and Liaison Updates
  - a. Main Street Partnership
  - b. Chamber of Commerce
  - c. Business and Career Center
  - d. Zoning
  - e. Design Review
  - f. Sustainability
  - g. Development Projects
  - h. Other
- 4) Housekeeping: Meeting Format (in-person, hybrid, remote)
- 5) Minutes June 23, 2021

Adjournment

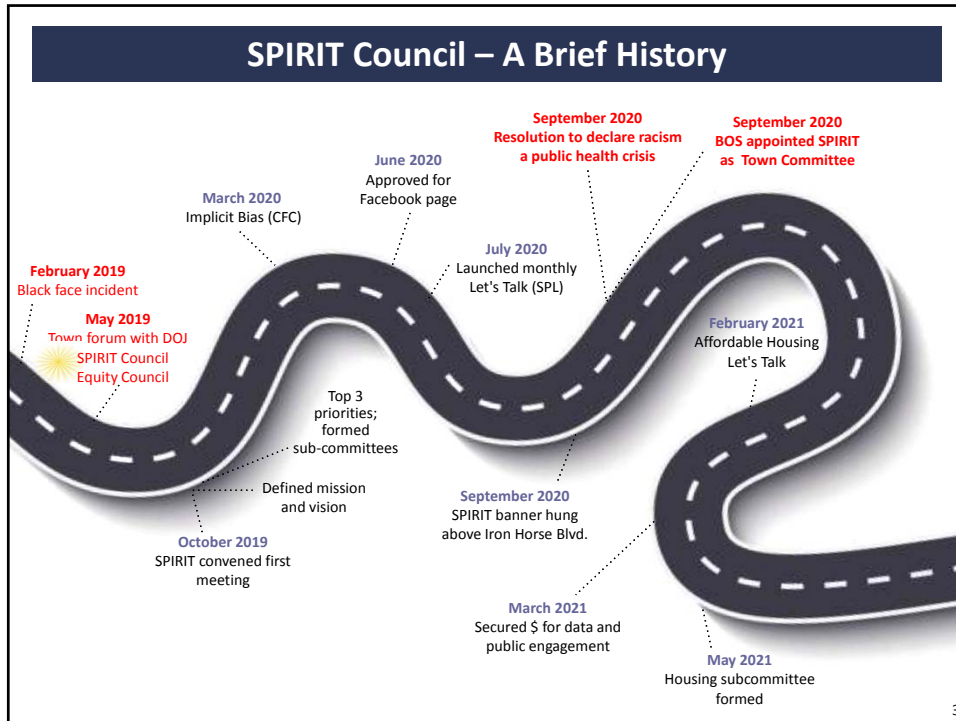
## Simsbury SPIRIT Council

Economic Development Commission  
Presentation  
July 28, 2021

## Simsbury SPIRIT Council

Simsbury  
Problem  
Identification and  
Resolution of  
Issues  
Together





### SPIRIT Council – What We Stand For

**VISION**

Simsbury is a town that welcomes, celebrates, and takes actions to support diversity and inclusion among *current and future community members*.

**MISSION**

Launched in 2019, the *Simsbury SPIRIT Council* represents the community at large and serves as *Diversity Champions* to help Simsbury become more inclusive, fostering awareness, action, and a community where *all voices* are welcome and each and every individual can live, work, learn, and play in a safe environment with meaningful and healthy relationships.

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## SPIRIT Council – Who We Are

**CHAIRS**



Cheryl Cook



Nicole Kodak



Tenesha Grant

**COUNCIL MEMBERS** *Subcommittee chairs* *Equity Council members*



Sara Batchelder



Rick Erush



Chari Chester Anderson



Umikka Chopra



Carol Clark-Flanagan



Meg Evans



Annalise Febus-Earlow



Mary-Margaret Girenti



Lisa Grant



Rebekah Hatch



Lloyd Huie



Chris Kelly



Nkosi Lee



Gene Ott



Diana Yeisley

**TOWN LIAISON**



Kristen Formanek

**DEPARTMENT LIAISONS**



Chief Nicholas Boulter



Sue Homrok-Lemke



Officer Todd Kushman



Lyndsay Neffinger

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## SPIRIT Council – How We're Structured

**Since September 2019 Launch:**

- ✓ 21 months (4 month COVID pause)
- ✓ 13 council meetings
- ✓ 17 subcommittee meetings

**Four Subcommittees:**

- ✓ **Events:** 12 Let's Talk community conversations, SeptemberFeast
- ✓ **Outreach:** 9 presentations
- ✓ **Data:** Secured initial funding, engaged partners to begin process
- ✓ **Housing:** Promote opportunities and connect residents with housing-related resources; provide policy recommendations on topics related to housing

**Five Focus Areas:**

- ✓ Aligned with resolution declaring racism a public health issue
- ✓ Partner with Town departments

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## SPIRIT Council – What We’re Doing



**EVENTS SUBCOMMITTEE**

To create opportunities that promote diversity and inclusion allowing for personal growth through exposure to a variety of ideas, experiences and cultures that make meaningful contributions to our community.


**SPIRIT: Simsbury Let’s Talk Calendar**

Partnership with Simsbury Public Library and Community for Care

2020	2021
<b>AUG</b> The Difference Between Being Not Racist v. Anti-Racist	<b>JAN</b> Human Trafficking in CT
<b>SEPT.</b> Hispanic Heritage	<b>FEB</b> Affordable Housing
<b>OCT</b> Disability Awareness	<b>FEB</b> Dr. Gretchen Sorin “Driving While Black”
<b>NOV</b> Indigenous People	<b>MAR</b> COVID Impacts on Women in Workforce
<b>NOV</b> Manju Soni – “Lessons from Apartheid”	<b>APR</b> Arab-American History
<b>DEC</b> World Aids Day	<b>MAY</b> Stop AAPI Hate
	<b>6/3</b> LGBTQIA+ Pride Month
	<b>6/17</b> Juneteenth

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## SPIRIT Council – What We’re Doing



**OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE**

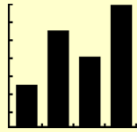
To promote awareness of SPIRIT committee and partner with other organizations locally and regionally to drive progress in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts.

**Plans:**

1. Connect with organizations in Simsbury (COC, Boards & Commissions, BOE, SRTC, SDTC)
2. Facilitate racial history discussion series (SPL and SCTV)
3. Partner with Simsbury groups also working on DEI initiatives
4. Collaborate with regional and state entities (other towns, universities, state nonprofits, etc.)

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## SPiRiT Council – What We’re Doing



### DATA/AUDIT SUBCOMMITTEE

To gather data and to assess progress towards diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) goals developed by the Simsbury SPiRiT Council.

#### Plans:

1. Engage DataHaven and Health Equity Solutions to assist with gathering & analyzing multi-faceted (quantitative and qualitative) context-specific data
2. Recommend follow-up plans or actions, with community involvement
3. Create benchmarks using existing and not-yet-collected data
4. Monitor progress
5. State Senate passed SB 1 declaring racism a public health crisis May 18, 2021 -> State House of Rep as HB 6662

*Note: Senate vote 30-5 and Simsbury’s Sen. Witkos voted in favor*

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## SPiRiT Council – What We’re Doing



### HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

To advise the BOS who is framing Simsbury’s affordable housing needs and specifically asks what problem are we solving for?

#### Plans:

1. Connect with organizations addressing housing issues in Simsbury (Planning, Zoning, EDC, realtors, residents in Simsbury and surrounding towns)
2. What housing is available in Simsbury, what are the housing needs, where are the gaps, do we need a housing needs assessment?
3. Understand why people choose or do not choose to move here
4. Use data to inform decisions (existing and to be developed by SPiRiT Data SC with outside expert partners)

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## Initial Data Considerations – Qualitative Data

### EXAMPLES OF SURVEY QUESTIONS<sup>1</sup>

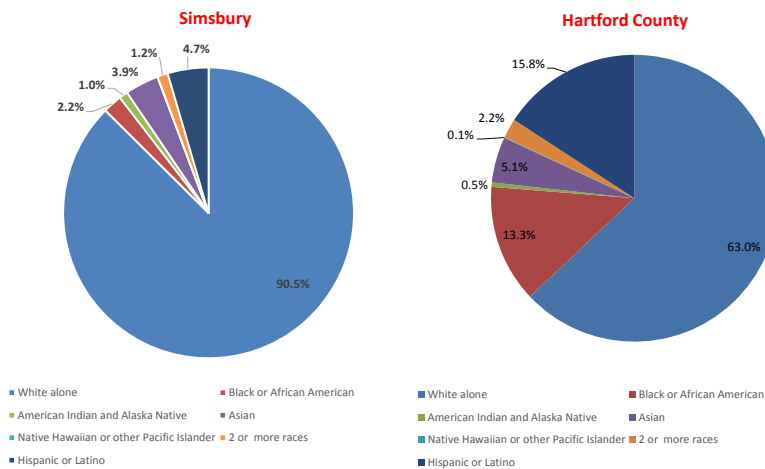
Please rate your community on each of the following:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Don't know
Making all residents feel welcome	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping new residents feel connected and integrated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Valuing residents from diverse backgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating respect for residents of different cultures and belief systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>1</sup>VISIT [here](#) for the full sample from the Community Equity & Inclusion survey, Marion, IA.

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## Simsbury Demographics



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### Simsbury Town Employee Demographics

	Race			Ethnicity		Gender	
	White	Black / African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino	Non-Hispanic or Latino	Male	Female
<b>Management - Officials and Administrators</b>							
Department Heads	10	0	0	0	10	6	4
Division Heads, Superintendents, Supervisors	11	0	0	1	10	6	5
Professional	7	0	0	0	7	4	3
Technician	2	0	0	0	2	2	0
Skilled Craft	5	0	0	0	5	5	0
Administrative Support	2	0	0	0	2	1	1
<b>Non-Management</b>							
Officials and Administrators	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Professional	20	0	0	0	20	7	13
Protective Services	25	0	0	2	18	21	4
Paraprofessional	7	0	0	0	7	0	7
Technician	10	0	0	0	10	10	0
Skilled Craft	15	1	0	0	16	16	0
Administrative Support	43	1	0	1	43	6	38
Service - Maintenance	63	0	1	2	62	35	29

### Simsbury BOE Demographics

	Race				Gender	
	White	Black/African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino	Male	Female
Administrators	21	1			9	13
Certified	365	4	5	7	84	297
Non-Certified	300	8	4	11	65	258

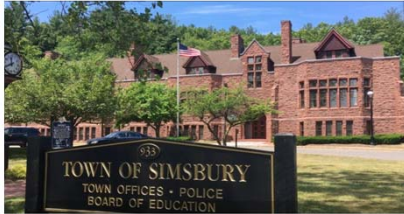


“A town that welcomes, celebrates, and takes action...”

# Hartford Courant

## Simsbury selectmen approve resolution declaring racism a public health crisis

By STEVE SMITH  
HARTFORD COURANT | OCT 07, 2020



SIMSBURY — The Simsbury Board of Selectmen approved the SPIRIT Council as a town committee and passed a resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis, at its meeting on Sept 29.

The SPIRIT Council was formed via the United States Department of Justice's conflict resolution agency, Community Relations Service (CRS), which created a community leader-driven process for identifying and solving problems, called "City-Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together, or "City-SPIRIT." Simsbury adopted its own version, Simsbury Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (SPIRIT).

## Resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
RESOLUTION DECLARING RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions, including (1) individual racism that is interpersonal, and (2) systemic racism that is institutional or structural and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks, and

WHEREAS, race is a social construct with no biological basis, and

WHEREAS, racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, racism is a root cause of poverty and constrains economic mobility; and

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment, and criminal justice, and is itself a social determinant of health; and

WHEREAS, the collective prosperity and wellbeing of the Town of Simsbury depends upon equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin.

education, physical environment, food, and access to health care and these inequities are, themselves, a result of racism, and

WHEREAS, many studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the collective prosperity and wellbeing of the Town of Simsbury depends upon equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF SIMSBURY TO:**

1. Declare racism a public health crisis affecting all of the United States, including Connecticut.
2. Work to become an equity and justice-oriented organization, by continuing to identify specific activities and policies to enhance diversity and to ensure attraction principles across our leadership, staffing and contracting.
3. Promote equity through all policies and enhance educational efforts aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development and public safety.
4. Set clear goals and objectives and improve the quality and analysis of the data the Town
5. Capitalize on opportunities to further advance racial equity in education, in housing, in health, in food security, and in criminal justice.
6. Advocate locally for relevant policies that improve the health of people of color, and support local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism.
7. Work to build alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional, and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.

Use community efforts to simplify issues of racism and engage actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.

of Selectmen  
September 29, 2020

*Eric Wellman*  
Eric Wellman  
First Selectman

*Jackie Bates*  
Jackie Bates  
Selectman






*Chris Peterson*  
Chris Peterson  
Selectman

*Sam Ash*  
Sam Ashburn  
Deputy First Selectman

*Wendy Mackintosh*  
Wendy Mackintosh  
Selectman

*Mike Paine*  
Mike Paine  
Selectman

## SPIRIT Council – Moving from Resolution to Action

	<b>EDUCATION</b> Equity Council, Assistant Superintendent + 3 members on SPIRIT
	<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b> Tenesha Grant/Police Commission
	<b>FOOD SECURITY</b> Cheryl Cook/Community For Care, Kristen Formanek/Social Services
	<b>HEALTH</b> Rick Brush/Farmington Valley Health District
	<b>HOUSING</b> Chari Chester Anderson/SPIRIT Housing Subcommittee

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## SPIRIT collaboration with EDC

The SPIRIT Council continues to form relationships with partners such as the Simsbury Library and SMPAC for events and grant opportunities. The Council has , in partnership with Town Staff and the Town Manager, established connections with surrounding Towns in an effort to share ideas and resources to further the SPIRIT mission.

**Suggestions:**

- Continue to promote minority-owned businesses to offer culturally diverse goods and services
- Update on Simsbury Main Street partnership data?
- How can SPIRIT collaborate with branding initiative?
- Consider EDC liaison to SPIRIT Housing subcommittee?

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## Stay Connected with SPIRIT

The SPIRIT Council continues to form relationships with partners such as the Simsbury Library and SMPAC for events and grant opportunities. The Council has, in partnership with Town Staff and the Town Manager, established connections with surrounding Towns in an effort to share ideas and resources to further the SPIRIT mission.

- **Simsbury SPIRIT Council:** [simsbury-ct.gov/spirit-council](https://simsbury-ct.gov/spirit-council)
- **SPIRIT Facebook site:** [facebook.com/SimsburySPIRITCouncil](https://facebook.com/SimsburySPIRITCouncil)
- **Simsbury Public Schools:** [simsbury.k12.ct.us/](https://simsbury.k12.ct.us/)
- **Resources via Simsbury Public Library:** [simsburylibrary.info/lets-talk/](https://simsburylibrary.info/lets-talk/)



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Minutes - Draft**

Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 5:30pm  
Virtual Meeting Broadcast Live via SCTV

## **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Tom Earl at 5:31pm. Commission members Ron Jodice, Charmaine Seavy, and Peter Van Loon were present. Ex officio member Bill Rice (Planning Commission) was 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 & Career Center Coordinator. Morgan Hilyard, Executive Director for the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce, and Sarah Nielsen, Executive Director for the Simsbury Main Street Partnership, were also present. Members of the SPIRIT Council in attendance included Chari Chester Anderson, Lloyd Huie, Nicole Kodak, Carol Clark-Flanagan, and staff liaison Kristen Formanek.

### **a) Welcome SPIRIT**

Mr. Earl noted that members of the SPIRIT Council joined this evening's meeting.

## **1) Development Update (Planning Director, Mike Glidden)**

Mr. Glidden gave a presentation that provided an overview of projects that are currently underway, those that have been approved, preliminary projects, and other development matters that are on the horizon. This included: 34 Hopmeadow Street (self-storage); 1603 Hopmeadow Street (Tractor Supply); Iron Horse Boulevard (multi-family housing); 20 Tariffville Road (self-storage); Andy's plaza façade renovation and new Mexican restaurant; Soma Grille patio expansion; Jersey Mike's; Town Hall parking lot and accessibility improvements; 250 Hopmeadow (north site of former Hartford property, conversion of previously approved commercial space to residential); 200 Hopmeadow (south site of former Hartford property, conceptual plan for mixed use).

Mr. Glidden also provided an overview of building permits. He said that this has been the best year for permit fees despite the pandemic.

## **2) Introduction to SPIRIT Council**

Mr. Earl welcomed the members of SPIRIT Council in attendance. Chari Chester Anderson introduced herself and provided an overview of SPIRIT. She said that the members were in attendance today to learn more about housing issues, in order to inform the work of the housing sub-committee. Mr. Huie, Ms. Kodak, Ms. Clark-Flanagan, and Ms. Formanek also introduced themselves.

### **3) 2020-2021 EDC Work Plan Updates**

#### **a) Marketing**

Ms. Seavy said that there was a meeting today to review the results of the survey. She said that one major takeaway is that the primary draws to Simsbury are the small town charm, recreational amenities, local hiking, and trails. While the school system is still a primary attractant, Simsbury's general lifestyle rose to the top as its strongest asset. Ms. Nielsen noted the need to do a better job telling our story about the diversity of housing opportunities in town. The results of the survey will be presented at the August 9 Board of Selectmen meeting.

#### **b) Business Outreach**

Ms. Capriola said that there have been no additional business outreach visits since the last meeting.

#### **c) Co-working Spaces/Supporting Entrepreneurs**

Ms. Capriola said that staff and the Chamber of Commerce are refining the proposal and cost estimates for the co-working website.

#### **d) Other**

None

### **4) Stakeholder and Liaison Updates**

#### **a) Main Street Partnership**

Ms. Nielsen reported that she recently worked with Storyteller's Cottage on a picnic scavenger hunt. She said that she helped coordinate a North Village meeting earlier in June, in which the Director of Public Works and Director of Planning updated the business owners on the new sidewalk that will run from Antonio's to the commuter lot. She said that she is supporting Ana's with their move into the old Manny's Pizza space in West Simsbury, and that she is supporting the opening of Jersey Mike's and the new Mexican restaurant going into the Andy's plaza.

#### **b) Chamber of Commerce**

Ms. Hilyard said that the Chamber hosted its second annual joint golf tournament with the Granby Chamber of Commerce. She reported that many new members joined the Chamber last month. She informed the committee that the Chamber's Marketing Director is now a full-time position; this position focuses not only on marketing for the Chamber, but also supports members with their own marketing needs. She said that "Good Morning, Simsbury" will finally be in person tomorrow as opposed to virtual. Ms. Hilyard said that the Government Affairs Committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month, with the committee meeting from 9:00-9:20am and the public being invited to join at 9:20am for the guest speaker. She said that there will be a joint event in July with Popover's and Wine Etc. She also reported that the Chamber is continuing to post job openings for local businesses. Lastly, Ms. Hilyard said that the Visitor's Center has been very busy.

**c) Business & Career Center**

None

**d) Zoning**

None

**e) Design Review**

None

**f) Sustainability**

None

**g) Development Projects**

None

**h) Other**

Ms. Capriola provided an update on the status of the federal recovery funds. She noted that in regards to infrastructure, we can only use the funds on water, sewer, and broadband. She said that there are a lot of restrictions on the use of the funds. We will need to commit the funds by 2024, and the funds need to be spent by 2026. We are awaiting additional guidance on the approved uses for the funds.

**5) Minutes May 26, 2021**

Mr. Jodice made a motion to approve the minutes for the May 26, 2021 meeting as presented.

Ms. Seavy seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Melissa Appleby  
Deputy Town Manager