



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Office of Planning and Community Development

## STAFF REPORT

ZC 23-38, 200 Hopmeadow St. (Hartford South)

December 18, 2023

**Application ZC #23-38 of SL Simsbury LLC, Owner, Holden Sabato, Applicant, for a Type 4 Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) pursuant to Section 5.0.B.4 of the Hartford-Simsbury FBC for the construction of a 580-unit residential development at 200 Hopmeadow Street (Former Hartford property) (Assessor's Map F17, Block 154, Lot 009-2) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone HS-FBC.**

### I. Background

Adopted in 2014, the Hartford-Simsbury Form-Based Code was “intended to implement a long-term, sustainable redevelopment strategy” for the former site of the Hartford Insurance Company. Bisected by Minister Brook, the former Hartford site fronts Hopmeadow St. and backs to the Farmington River. The northern parcel (38.99 acres) was approved for +-300 residential units (including a portion dedicated to the assisted living continuum) and about 22,000 sq.ft. of commercial space in two buildings. The residential component of the north property is 100% built out and occupied.

The southern parcel (124.64 acres), subject to this application, is vacant, the Hartford office building demolished, with the parking area and asphalt infrastructure remaining.



SL Simsbury LLC acquired the property from The Hartford in 2015, working first on entitlements for the north parcel beginning in 2016. The property contains some wetland soils as well as flood zone, as the property abuts the Farmington River.

The Hartford-Simsbury Form-Based Code (“HSFBC”) was developed for and only applies to the former Hartford Site; it is not employed anywhere else within the Town of Simsbury. Form based codes differ from traditional zoning regulations by focusing on physical form (mass, architectural, orientation to the street) as opposed to use restrictions.

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8:30 – 1:00 Friday

## II. Request

The Applicant is requesting a Master Site Development Plan (“MSDP”) for the 124.64-acre southern parcel. A MSDP is intended to illustrate the general development pattern of the proposal consistent with the HSFBC and establish detailed standards for any new development or redevelopment. The Applicant proposes a 580-unit residential development consisting of:

- 128 3-story multi-family units
- 360 4-story multi-family units
- 24 duplex units
- 68 single-family units
- 73 acres of open space
- Community Clubhouse, pool, and active recreation area

All of the residential units are planned as for rent units.

### Site Illustrative



The proposal includes the provision of 58 affordable units (10%), in a manner consistent with the state enabled framework contained in Section 8-30g.



### **III. Framing the HSFBC Master Plan Process**

Development under the HSFBC follows essentially a two-step process: Master Site Plan first, then Site Plan process second. The Master Plan process requires detailed submission documents illustrating component zones (more about these later), streets, blocks, building locations, conformance to development standards, architectural specifications, open space (both active and passive), and signage, among other items. If an application proposes modifications to the standards found the HSFBC, those alternative modifications must also be proposed and explained.

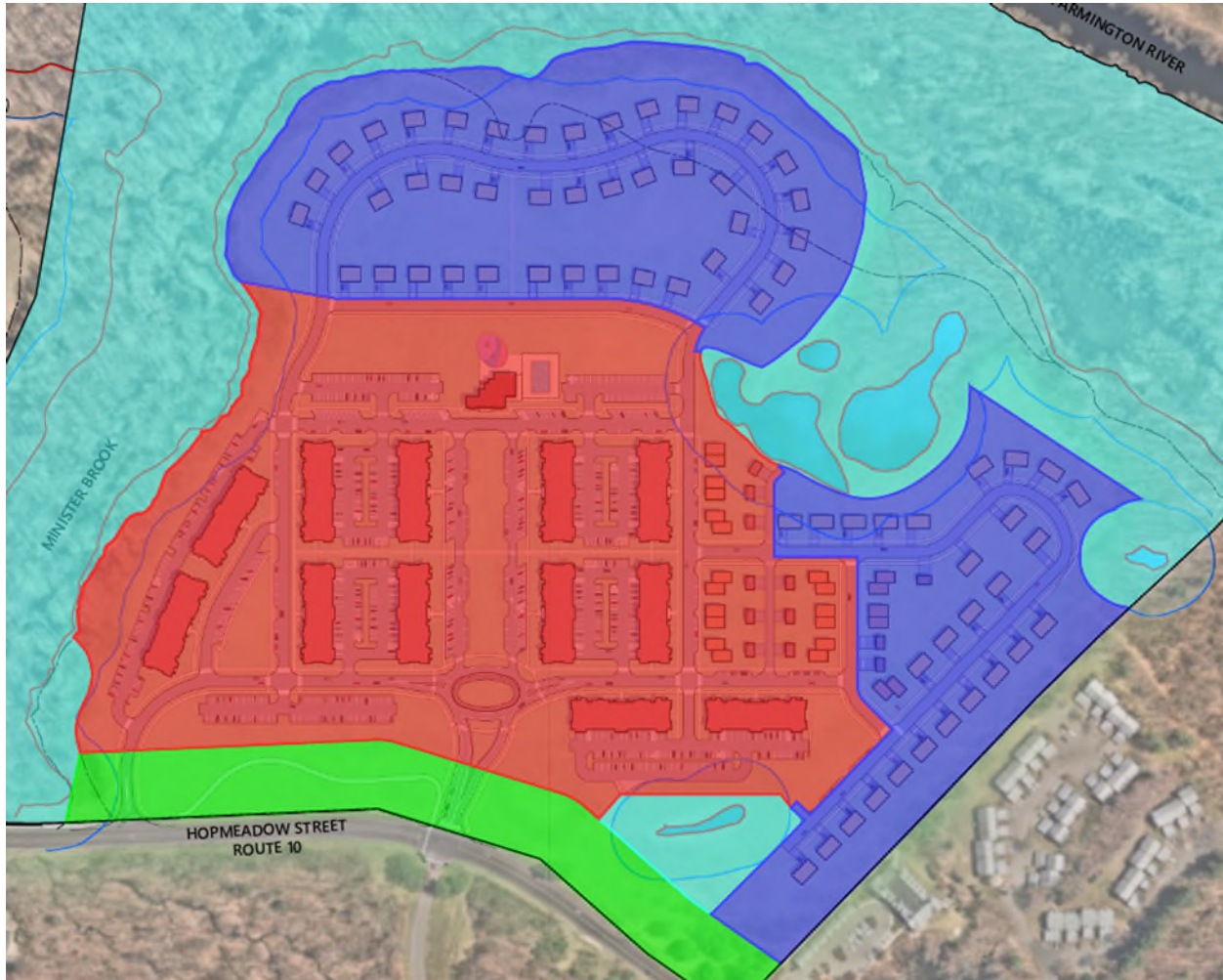
The HSFBC sets forth specific standards for the south parcel, referred to as the “south site” in the code and allows six different types of development (called “component zones”), and in most cases a combination of component zones. This framework of component zones is intended to implement the redevelopment strategy for the Hartford site:

- A. Implement the Town's vision for a vibrant and sustainable approach to the development of the North Hartford Site and to encourage the reuse of the South Hartford Site and Building for office, technology, healthcare and support services, while preserving where feasible the environmentally sensitive design of the overall site, with a mix of complementary uses including housing, retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses, supporting long term attractiveness for both employment uses and neighborhood uses;**
- B. Establish a high level of development standards to create development of exemplary and enduring quality that fits into the Town's vision;**
- C. Encourage the development of vertical and horizontal mixed-use areas that are safe, comfortable and attractive to pedestrians while protecting significant environmentally sensitive areas;**
- D. Provide flexibility on the site and with design of new development to anticipate changes in the marketplace while establishing human-scaled buildings;**
- E. Leverage the frontage and access to the Farmington River and views from the site and treat them as “features” and not constraints;**
- F. Create of a variety of connected community gathering places and passive open spaces with trails to make walking and biking easy from one place to another and connect to off-site trails;**
- G. Include a range of residential options that reflect changing lifestyles considering both market demand and Town preferences;**
- H. Provide appropriate transitions to protect adjacent neighborhoods and to promote sustained value; and**
- I. Encourage efficient uses of land.**
- J. Utilize existing transportation and parking assets efficiently in order to optimize both auto traffic on surrounding streets and on-site parking demand through design strategies and policy incentives that support use of transit, biking, and walking.**

The six component zones are designed to implement the mixed-use approach found above from Section 1.0 of the HSFBC. Fundamentally, the redevelopment strategy intended to develop the Hartford site with a mix of residential and non-residential uses (office, retail, civic, etc.). Briefly, any of these component zones can be utilized:

- Neighborhood Commercial-Capped at 50% of the site, intended to provide retail and services uses in a walkable context.

- Mixed-Use Transition-A mix of office, urban residential (multi-family, townhomes), and flex uses which transitions from neighborhood commercial or the Special District.
- Special District-The area of the existing office building (note: demolition began in March of 2016).<sup>1</sup>
- Neighborhood Transition-Transitions within a walkable neighborhood context from Neighborhood Commercial to a neighborhood.
- Neighborhood-Capped at no more than 50% of the south site, provides for a range of single-family uses within a traditional-style residential setting.
- Cluster Neighborhood-A conservation subdivision with small clustered lots combined with open space or agricultural uses.



The Applicant’s proposal, under an Alternative Compliance scenario, provides for two component zones as shown above: Neighborhood (Purple) and Neighborhood Transition (Red). The HSFBC allows modification of the standards in the code. In this case, the code anticipates that any Neighborhood Transition area reflect a true transition from a commercial component through the transition area, to a Neighborhood component. Staff will provide further discussion on this Alternate Compliance proposal later in the report.

<sup>1</sup> Staff surmises that when the HSFBC was adopted—July 2014—the demolition of the building was not necessarily anticipated in the code.

#### IV. Master Plan Review and other Boards/Commissions

The Master Plan Process does not require the Application to go to the Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission for a formal review prior to Zoning review. A wetland permit, if applicable, is required before Site Plan approval. However, the application was reviewed preliminarily during the summer of 2023 by the Zoning Commission, the Design Review Board, and the Inland Wetland and Watercourse Agency/Conservation Commission (“IWWA/CC”).

The Master Plan process does require a review and recommendation by the Design Review Board. This item will be on the DRB agenda for December 18, 2023.

There are wetlands and flood zone on the property. The Applicant has indicated that the design of the project prioritized staying within the already disturbed area occupied by the Hartford Insurance Building and parking lot infrastructure. The IWWA/CC did a preliminary review in June:

- **Inland Wetlands Agency/Conservation Commission.** During the informal presentation of this project to the IWC/CC in June 2023, the Commission recommended that the 100-foot wetlands buffer be honored and that all new development pull back behind this boundary. It is noted by Staff that a great majority of the proposal remains within the development footprint of the Hartford Insurance (building parking, streets etc.). As such, new impacts within the 100-foot buffer are rare. Where practicable, Staff recommends, especially where development would expand beyond the original site impacts, keeping the buffer area free of development.
  - The Commission also recommended a strong commitment to native plants as part of the site landscaping plan and the removal of invasive species on site.

#### V. Plan of Conservation and Development Conformance

A significant development project in this location conceptually, and generally, conforms to both the 2017 and 2024 Plan of Conservation and Development (“POCD”) from a land use perspective. The 2017 POCD states under the goal of ensuring appropriate development along Hopmeadow St., “Promote appropriate use of the former Hartford Insurance using the *form-based code* or other approach” page 75. The 2024 plan, effective January 1, 2024, carries forward this language and adds much of the Hopmeadow Corridor, including this section, as a *Possible Housing Opportunity Area*. Ultimately, it is the Zoning Commission’s charge to determine exactly what constitutes an appropriate use of the property. In any event, it is clear that the POCD anticipates the redevelopment of the Hartford Insurance site.

With regards to other relevant POCD policies, the project also conforms generally to affordable housing policies, open space preservation, bike & pedestrian planning, and environmental protection.

The POCD also includes a policy related to the viewshed protection of the Talcott Mountain ridgeline. The Applicant has submitted a viewshed analysis and it is under review at the time of publication.

## **VI. Referral Agency Comment Summary**

The follow represents a summary of the review comments received up to the date of publication of the Staff report. The original comment letters and/or emails in full are attached to this report.

Water Pollution Control Authority. WPCA has approved the sanitary sewer allocation for the project, as proposed. This effectively certifies that capacity is available at WPCA to serve the property.

Town Engineering Department. Engineering recommends modifications and additional discussion related to width, location, and future linkages for the multi-purpose trail system. The Engineering Department will provide a more detailed review during the site plan process.

Parks & Recreation. The Parks Department shared that the development size and population generation will likely have an impact on both personnel and ball field capacity.

Simsbury Police Department. The Police Department identified no traffic or access concerns. The Department noted that the increase in population will have an impact related to services and departmental resources (additional calls for service, etc.).

Simsbury School District. The School District estimates that an additional 100-130 new students will be generated by the project which presents some capacity concerns for the district, especially at Latimer Lane Elementary, where students generated by this application would move the school closer to capacity, earlier than anticipated. The District also identified that the potential demand for specialized student services will increase with the addition of this new housing stock.

Simsbury Fire District. The Fire Marshal provided technical recommendations related to minimum street widths, turning radii, and proper standards for cul-de-sacs/turn-arounds.

Building Department. The Building Official provided technical comments related to basement construction, electrical service related to resiliency planning and overall demand, and parking for the attached garage alley units. These comments are most relevant during the Site Plan process.

Planning Department. In addition to technical questions and recommendations, the Planning Department referral included a number of Master Plan related design questions and suggestions:

- **Size, Scale & Fiscal impact.** The total size and scale of the project is significant for the Town of Simsbury and raises potential capacity issues for many of our public service partners such as police, fire, ems, public schools, and parks & recreation. It is acknowledged that Hartford South was anticipated to accommodate a large development project and will generate significant revenue for the Town; however, the capacity of our community facilities must be evaluated to ensure acceptable levels of service can be achieved and/or continued. Planning Staff requested that the Applicant prepare and



submit a Fiscal Impact Study. The Applicant is preparing the requested study and it will be forwarded to the Commission when available.

- **Mixed-Use Components.** The intent of the Hartford Form Based Code contemplates a mixed-use approach with some non-residential components. That is the reason for a Neighborhood Transition Zone—it is designed to transition between a Neighborhood Commercial Zone and Neighborhood Zones. As proposed, there are just two zones (yes, one denser than the other); If there are certain market-based realities at play, this is a concept that should be discussed further as a part of this process. We acknowledge that the commercial office and retail markets are evolving, but so are work-from-home and hybrid trends. Comments below under *General Site Layout* suggest some non-residential component alternatives for consideration.
- **Viewshed.** The protection of the public viewshed to the ridgeline and Heublein Tower to the east of the project is paramount and a priority public policy goal. The submitted viewshed analysis is under review. One option to ensuring the viewshed is protected if the viewshed analysis is not dispositive, is by reducing the four-story units to three. This change would have other site effects related to parking amounts and open space.
- **General Site Layout.** If the viewshed study demonstrates that the ridgeline and tower are protected, Staff recommends separating Apartments #11 and #12 and placing them each at the end of the internal loop street which currently terminate into a parking lot. Placing the buildings at the termination point allows an internal architectural vista instead of a parking lot. In addition, Staff wonders if there is any opportunity to include some amount of ground floor retail/commercial/personal service in #11 & #12? Or, in the alternative, replace buildings #11 and #12 with low rise commercial building(s) and add a commercial building in the area of the lone parking lot at the north end of the property within an added Neighborhood Commercial component Zone. We acknowledge markets are unpredictable. As part of the two Silverman properties, as proposed, there would be almost 900 units and perhaps as many as 2,000 or more people. There are no walkable, nearby commercial services available. This requires all of these residents to get in their vehicles and drive to obtain neighborhood convenience goods such as coffee, or deli sandwiches, or other services. Replacing the two multi-family structures with commercial may also reduce the overall need for parking, which has additional benefits.
- **General Site Layout.** Staff recommends that Apartments #1 and #2 be replaced with duplex units to provide for a more diverse mix of unit types. The duplex units are offered in limited number at only 24. In addition, duplexes on both sides of the high-rise core helps balance the site and provides transition in both directions (one side to a residential development, the other to an environmental area). This design change would also eliminate an awkward parking/road configuration adjacent to those units.

In the alternative or in addition, perhaps consider reducing the number of single-family homes on the south side of the property and replace them with additional duplex homes. This would marginally reduce school children generation.

- **Affordable Units.** The proposal includes a pledge to provide 10% of the total units as affordable, consistent with state guidance (half at 60% median income, half at 80%). Staff recommends that the units be provided pro rata across all unit types (affordable

homes in single-family units, duplex units, multi-family units) and be constructed/provided in a fashion concurrent with market rate units.

- **Multi-Use Trail.** The project proposes to reduce the width of the multi-purpose trail from 12' to 8' along for a distance of approximately 780' due to wetlands adjacency. What are the impacts on the wetlands if the width remains at 12' over this section? Is there a possibility of a full 12' section comprising a different material such as board walk? Please consider alternatives to the proposal which maintains 12'. Staff is also concerned with how close the multi-purpose path gets to Hopmeadow St. What safety measures will be employed in this event? Ultimately, we do understand there is a sought compromise to reducing wetland impacts and providing separating distance from the street.
  - Staff also recommends continuing the multi-use path along Hopmeadow all the way to the south property line. Or, in the alternative, connecting the path back to the project sidewalk network in the area of the southern single-family residential area. This would provide a comprehensive full loop of the property.
  - Administratively, the narrative on page 8 speaks to a reduction from 12' to 8'. However, the Master Site Development Plan depicts a reduction from 12' to 9'. Please clarify.
- **Traffic Generation.** Please submit a copy of the original full OSTA north/south site traffic study which is referenced in the submission documents. In the alternative, please provide a comparative understanding of the traffic generation and impact differences between the full Hartford Insurance office use and this residential project.
- **Civic or Public Uses.** The total population will place additional demand on public and other governmental services. Moreover, Civic uses can be a desirable component of large, mixed-use projects. Is there an opportunity for a public park, or athletic fields, or a site for a future, yet to be determined, public use?

## VII. Alternative Compliance Items

The HSFBC permits projects to modify development standards for the Hartford South site and allows certain modifications for the purpose of design flexibility. The Applicant has submitted a schedule of ten items from the code where they propose alternative standards (or, in a few cases, *set* the standard) to the standard requirement:

### 1. Section 7.0.A.i.b

**FBC-** Neighborhood Transition: “This zone shall provide for the use and scale transitions within a walkable neighborhood context from any Neighborhood Commercial and the adjoining neighborhood or Cluster Neighborhood zone. Such transitions may be in the form of small stacked flats, courtyard apartments, townhomes, or live work units.”

**Revised** –Neighborhood Transition: “This zone shall provide for the use and scale transitions within a walkable neighborhood context to any adjoining Neighborhood Commercial, Neighborhood, or Neighborhood



Cluster Zone. Such transitions may be in the form of stacked flats, courtyard apartments, townhomes, or live work units.”

*Staff Note: The change to the component zone description is necessary as the project only proposes residential uses.*

2. Section 7.B.v.b.v

**FBC-** “The required area of windows and doors on each street façade fronting a Type A frontage, street, park, square, green, plaza, or other civic space as a percentage of that façade shall be established by the applicant at the time of MSDP based on specific component zone.”

**Revised – Neighborhood Zone** – “Residential buildings along the public pedestrian street and/or open spaces shall have a ground floor blank wall limitation of lineal 20-feet between window/door openings.”

**Neighborhood Transition Zone** – “Residential buildings along the public pedestrian street and/or open spaces shall have a minimum of 20% of the primary façade area designated for doors and windows. All other elevations shall have a blank wall limitation of lineal 20-feet between window/door openings.”

*Staff Note: The HSFBC asks the Applicant to propose façade standards.*

3. Section 7.B.v.b.iv

**FBC-** “The ground floor elevation of all residential buildings (attached, detached, and stacked) located less than 10’ from the property line shall be raised a minimum of 18” above the finished level of the public sidewalk/trail in front of the residential structures.”

**Revised** – “The ground floor elevation of all residential buildings (attached, detached, and stacked) located less than 10’ from the property line shall be raised above the finished level of the public sidewalk/trail in front of the residential structures.”

*Staff Note: The Applicant states that getting to an 18” minimum interferes with ADA accessibility.*

4. Section 7.B.v.a.ii

**FBC** – “Type “A” Frontage Streets shall have buildings fronting along at least 65% of the lot or block’s frontage.”

**Revised** – “Type “A” Frontage Streets shall have buildings fronting along environmental, natural features, open space, or existing utility easements.”

5. Section 7.B.vii.b

**FBC-** “A surface parking lot may not be adjacent to a street intersection or square, or occupy a lot that terminate a street vista.”

**Revised-** “A surface parking lot may be adjacent to a street intersection or square, or occupy a lot that terminate a street vista. Parking at these locations shall be screened from Type "A" or Type "B" Streets.”

*Staff Note: The project proposes at least two parking areas terminating or adjacent to an intersection.*

6. Section 7.B.vii.e

**FBC-** “In addition, the garage shall be set back at least three (3) feet from the front façade of the home.”

**Revised** –“Garages do not need to be set back from the front façade of the single-family homes.”

*Staff Note: Please see the project architectural renderings.*

7. Section 7.D.1.e

**FBC-** “Neighborhood (can be no more than 50% of the Hartford South Site).”

**Revised** – “Neighborhood (may be no more than 50% of the net acreage of the Hartford South Site). Net acreage of the site excludes jurisdictional wetlands, regulatory floodplains, and slopes over 20%.”

*Staff Note: The purpose of the 50% limitation is to ensure a mix of uses on site. Using “net acreage” seems fair, in and of itself so long as the Commission is satisfied with the overall development components proffered.*

8. Section 7.D.2.b

**FBC** -“Required multi-use trail (min. 12’ wide) along the Hwy 10 frontage.”

**Revised** -“Required multi-use trail (min. 12' wide with the flexibility to narrow to 8' at areas where the path is adjacent to wetlands and/or steep slopes) along the Hwy 10 frontage.”

*Staff Note: The Applicant proposes this reduction due to environmental constraints.*

9. Section 7.D.2.c

**FBC** - “Required minimum setback (100 feet min.) from all designated wetlands.”

**Revised** - “Wetlands and buffer area disturbance will generally be limited to areas previously disturbed by the previous use. New disturbances will be limited to the maximum extent practicable. Work within the 100’ wetlands upland review will require approval from the Simsbury Inland Wetland and Watercourse Agency during the Site Plan approval process.”

*Staff Note: There are areas within 100’ for designated wetlands previously disturbed by the Hartford Insurance Development (primarily parking lots and internal roads). The project will require a wetland permit prior to Site Plan.*

10. Section 7.0.D.3. Development Standards Table

- 1a. Neighborhood Transition Building height –  
**FBC-** 50’  
**Revised** - 55’
- 1b. Max. Block Perimeter --  
**FBC** - 2,000’ (unless limited by unique site conditions such as topography and vegetation)  
**Revised** - 2,000’ (unless the block is split by open space and/or amenity space with sidewalk connectivity)
- 3b. Residential Streets:  
**FBC** - 2-lane undivided  
**Revised** -2-lane undivided and divided
- 3e. Type A & B streets –  
**FBC** – Head in perpendicular on-street parking (along all internal streets except alleys): Not Permitted  
**Revised** - Head in perpendicular on-street parking (along all internal streets except alleys): Permitted
- 4b. Neighborhood - Required- Tree wells or Planters  
**FBC** – Required - Planters  
**Revised** -Required – Planters or Trees

*Staff Note: Standards required to implement the Applicants proposal.*

**VIII. Review Timeline**

Under Connecticut State Law, land use applications require review and action based on time limitations. As a reminder:

Public Hearing Open	Must be opened within 65 days	Day 65 is December 20, 2023
Public Hearing Close	Must be completed within 35 days	Day 35 is January 24, 2023
Action	Must be decided with 65 days	TBD

The Applicant may provide extensions up to 65 days total.

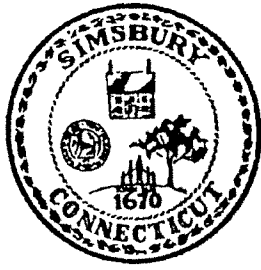
**IX. Staff Review and Recommendation**

Due to the issues, questions, and comments identified in this Staff Report, as well as the expectation of additional subject matter information, a formal Staff recommendation is premature. The Applicant has provided a written response document, dated December 11, 2023, which is also included in the Agenda packet details. It is under review; Staff will provide an update on the response at the meeting on December 18, 2023.

The Hartford-Simsbury Form-Based Code anticipated a prominent development project in this location as a part of the redevelopment of the former Hartford Insurance site. The POCD expects development in this location as well. However, determining the appropriate level of development, size, scale, and component parts is a complicated endeavor, requiring a robust discussion of the options. Staff recommends the public hearing be continued to the regular meeting on January 3, 2023 to be held at the Town of Simsbury Library.

*Staff report by George K. McGregor, AICP, Director*





# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

*Office of Planning and Community Development*

November 6, 2023

**Via Email**

Holden Sabato  
SL Simsbury, LLC  
195 Morristown Rd.  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Re: ZC 23-38 200 Hopmeadow St . (Hartford South) Planning Referral

Dear Mr. Sabato:

Planning Staff has reviewed the initial submission for the above referenced project and offer the following comments, questions, and recommendations:

- 1. Size and Scale.** The total size and scale of the project is significant for the Town of Simsbury and raises potential capacity issues for many of our public service partners such as police, fire, ems, public schools, and parks & recreation. It is acknowledged that Hartford South was anticipated to accommodate a large development project; however, the capacity of our community facilities must be evaluated to ensure acceptable levels of service can be achieved and/or continued. This department reserves the right to provide additional comments once the community service providers have had the opportunity to submit referral comments.
- 2. Viewshed.** The protection of the public viewshed to the ridgeline and Heublein Tower to the east of the project is paramount and a priority public policy goal. Staff requests a viewshed study.
- 3. General Site Layout.** In the event that the viewshed study proves that the ridgeline and tower are protected, Staff recommends consideration to separate Apartments #11 and #12 and placing them each at the end of the internal loop street which currently terminate into a parking lot. Placing the buildings at the termination point allows an internal architectural vista instead of a parking lot. In addition, Staff wonders if there is any opportunity to include some amount of ground floor retail/commercial/personal service in #11 & #12? Markets are unpredictable. As part of the two Silverman properties, as proposed, there would be almost 900 units and perhaps as many as 2,000 or more people. There are no walkable, nearby commercial services available. This requires all of these residents to get in their vehicles and drive to obtain neighborhood convenience goods such as coffee, or deli sandwiches, or other services.

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4. **General Site Layout.** Staff recommends that Apartments #1 and #2 be replaced with duplex units to provide for a more diverse mix of unit types. The duplex units are offered in limited number at only 24. In addition, duplex units on both sides of the high-rise core helps balance the site and provides transition in both directions (one side to a residential development, the other to an environmental area). This design change would also eliminate an awkward parking/road configuration adjacent to those units.
5. **Affordable Units.** The proposal includes a pledge to provide 10% of the total units as affordable, consistent with state guidance (half at 60% median income, half at 80%). Staff recommends that the units be provided pro rata across all unit types and be constructed/provided in a fashion concurrent with market rate units.
6. **Multi-use trail.** The project proposes to reduce the width of the multi-purpose trail along for a distance of approximately 780' due to self-described wetlands adjacency. What are the impacts on the wetlands if the width remains at 12' over this section? Is there a possibility of a full 12' section comprising a different material such as board walk? Please consider alternatives to the proposal which maintains 12'. Staff is also concerned with how close the multi-purpose path gets to Hopmeadow St. What safety measures will be employed in this event?

Staff also recommends continuing the multi-use path along Hopmeadow all the way to the south property line. Or, in the alternative, connecting the path back to the project sidewalk network in the area of the southern single-family residential area. This would provide a comprehensive full loop of the property.

Administratively, the narrative on page 8 speaks to a reduction from 12' to 8'. However, the Master Site Development Plan depicts a reduction from 12' to 9'. Please clarify.

7. **Traffic Generation.** Please submit a copy of the original full OSTA north/south site traffic study which is referenced in the submission documents. This will be a helpful refresher to get a comparative understanding of the traffic generation and impact differences between the full Hartford Insurance office use and this residential project. Is the proposal recommending no new traffic mitigation?
8. **Inland Wetlands Agency/Conservation Commission.** As a reminder, during the informal presentation of this project to the IWC/CC in June 2023, the Commission recommended that the 100-foot wetlands buffer be honored and that all new development pull back behind this boundary. It is noted by Staff that a great majority of the proposal remains within the development footprint of the Hartford Insurance (building parking, streets etc.). As such, new impacts within the 100-foot buffer are rare. Where practicable, Staff recommends, especially where development would expand beyond the original site impacts, keeping the buffer area free of development.

The Commission also recommends a strong commitment to native plants as part of the site landscaping plan and the removal of invasive species on site. Please address that concept in the landscaping section.

9. **Component Zone Explanation.** Please enhance the description of the need for alternative compliance related to component zones. The intent of the Hartford Form Based Code

contemplates a more mixed-use approach with some non-residential components. That is the reason for a Neighborhood Transition Zone—it is designed to transition between a Neighborhood Commercial Zone and Neighborhood Zones. As proposed, there are just two zones (yes, one denser than the other); what is the purpose of the transition zone with no commercial component? If there are certain market-based realities as play, this is a concept that should be discussed further as a part of this process.

10. **Plan of Conservation and Development.** Please address how the project master plan is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development.
11. **Alternative Section 7.B.vii.b.** Generally, for the “Alternative” language, please provide a strike through or bold font, as appropriate to highlight the new language changes. See comment 3. Streets terminating into a parking lot is not a favored design element in the code. Staff recommends an alternative design element, such terminating at a vista such as a building or architectural feature.
12. **Alternative Section 7.B.vii.e.** The proposal asks for an alternative to the requirement to set the garage back from the single-family house. This section intends to prevent “snout houses” where the garage becomes inappropriately the dominant architectural feature. Staff recommends protections against this possibility.
13. **Alternative Section 7.D.2.b.** See comment 6 regarding width reduction clarification.
14. **Alternative Section 7.D.2.c.** See comment 8 regarding 100-foot wetlands buffer.
15. **Scale.** The Master Site Development plan appears to be submitted at a scale of 1”=120’? Please provide the plan in a more standard scale.
16. **Site Visit.** Staff requests a site visit with members of Town Staff and the Applicant team, based on availability, before December 1, 2023.

Planning Staff is happy to meet to discuss any and all items presented in the letter.

With Regards,



George K. McGregor, AICP



# Town of Simsbury


933 HOPMEADOW STREET ~ SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Department of Public Works - Engineering Division

## DESIGN REVIEW MEMORANDUM

November 29, 2023

**To:** George K. McGregor, AICP, Director of Community Planning and Development

**From:** Adam D. Kessler, P.E., Deputy Town Engineer 

**Subject:** **Engineering Comments – Master Site Development Plan  
The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South  
#200 Hopmeadow St.**

The Engineering Department has reviewed the documents submitted as part of a Master Site Development Plan for 200 Hopmeadow Street, also known as The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, received by this department on October 17, 2023:

1. Master Site Development Plan titled “The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, 200 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT”, prepared for The Silverman Group, prepared by VHB, Crosskey Architects, and Killian&Donohue, LLC. Dated October 4, 2023.

The applicant has submitted a report and plans to outline the master plan for redevelopment of the former location of The Hartford based requirements of the Hartford Form Based Code.

The following comments are based on a review of the submitted materials.

1. **Stormwater and E&S Controls.** It is understood the site plan design and permitting process will occur in 2024. As such, the design shall conform to the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual, published September 30, 2023, and Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion & Sediment Control, published September 30, 2023.
2. **Bicycle Circulation Standards.** Current guidance for new multi-use paths with two-way traffic require a minimum width of 10 feet with a preferred width of 12 feet. If a path or sidewalk coincides with a road curb, the width of the path should be increased for safety and comfort of cyclists and pedestrians.

Paths along the frontage shall be bituminous pavement.

Connections to the North and the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail that crosses Latimer Lane are important. Additional study and design should include safety improvements for the Hopmeadow Street crossing at Latimer Lane.

Applicant should consider a sidewalk or multi-use path connection along the frontage to the south property line.



# Simsbury Fire District

871 Hopmeadow Street • Simsbury, Connecticut • 06070

Patrick Tourville  
Fire Marshal

Phone 658-1973  
ptourville@simsburyfd.org

November 10, 2023

George K. McGregor, AICP  
Planning & Community Development Director  
Town of Simsbury  
933 Hopmeadow Street  
Simsbury, CT 06070

The following items concerning the 200 Hopmeadow Street Silverman Group Development proposal have been identified.

Documents reference the development design will provide road widths that do not meet the minimum requirements of the Connecticut Fire Codes. All road widths for fire department access shall:

- Have a minimum of 20 feet in width.
- Have a vertical clearance of at least 13 feet, six inches.
- Have a turning radius adequate to permit fire apparatus to negotiate any turns.
- Have no dead-ends greater than 150 feet without adequate turn-arounds.

With the close spacing of the single family residences in the development it is recommended to provide residential fire sprinklers (NFPA 13 D systems) in all single family residences.

Yours in Safety,



Patrick Tourville, CFI-I  
Fire Marshal  
Simsbury Fire District

**Archived:** Monday, December 11, 2023 5:11:27 PM

**From:** [Tyburski Tom](#)

**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2023 2:04:56 PM

**To:** [McGregor George](#)

**Subject:** RE: 200 Hopmeadow St Hartford South Application Referral Comments-Town of Simsbury

**Importance:** Normal

**Sensitivity:** None

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Good afternoon George, thank you for the opportunity to review the 200 Hopmeadow Street application. Here are my questions and comments:

1. Regarding the multi-use path constructed as part of the project. Will the property maintenance/management company be responsible for the post construction and long term maintenance of this trail?
2. Regarding the number of proposed units to be constructed. The additional residents, both children and adults, will very likely necessitate the need for additional athletic fields in Simsbury. Additionally, after all proposed units are constructed and occupied, the population growth resulting from the development may require the Town of Simsbury to add an additional Parks Maintenance position to aid in the care of parks and recreation facilities in town that would likely see increased usage due to the population growth.
3. I see that the proposed landscaping plan includes native trees, shrubs and plantings. Will the post construction property management be held to these same standards with their replacement plantings (annuals) and tree replacements?
4. Is there any opportunity to create a public Farmington River access point for fishing or non-motorized boating as part of this project?

Let me know if you have any questions regarding the above.

Have a nice afternoon,

*Tom*

Thomas Tyburski  
Director  
Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation  
[www.SimsburyRec.com](http://www.SimsburyRec.com)  
860-408-4682

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**From:** McGregor George <gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov>

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 22, 2023 1:06 PM

**To:** Kessler Adam <akessler@simsbury-ct.gov>; Tyburski Tom <ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov>; Boulter Nicholas (SPD) <nboulter@pd.simsbury-ct.gov>; Davis Chris <cdavis@pd.simsbury-ct.gov>; Patrick T. Tourville, CFI I <ptourville@simsburyfd.org>; Sullivan Neil <nsullivan@simsburyschools.net>; Erdmann Lee <lerdmann@simsbury-ct.gov>; Piazza Anthony <apiazza@simsbury-ct.gov>; jbrown@fvhd.org; jbaldis@simsburyfd.org; Ingrid Jacobs <IJacobs@aquarionwater.com>; Tom Roy <troy@simsbury-ct.gov>

**Cc:** Brittany MacGilpin <brittanymacgilpin@gmail.com>

**Subject:** 200 Hopmeadow St Hartford South Application Referral Comments-Town of Simsbury

**Importance:** High

Just a reminder to all, if you have formal, written referral comments, requests, concerns, questions regarding this application I sent out on November 1, please get them to me no later than next **Friday December 1.**

I have to provide the applicant enough time prior to the public hearing (December 18, 2023) to respond.

Thanks in advance and to the folks who have already provide comments.

Lee and Amy I have included you in case you wanted to provide any comments related to General Government impacts.

**Please do not reply ALL—there are external referral agencies included in this distribution.**

George K. McGregor, AICP  
Planning & Community Development Director  
Town of Simsbury  
933 Hopmeadow Street  
Simsbury, CT 06070  
P(860) 658 3252  
[gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov)



**Archived:** Monday, December 11, 2023 5:11:34 PM

**From:** [Davis Chris](#)

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:53:14 PM

**To:** [McGregor George](#)

**Subject:** RE: 200 Hopmeadow St Hartford South

**Importance:** Normal

**Sensitivity:** None

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We don't have any substantive concerns other than the increased population from the complex requiring a bigger strain on our services; ie police and medical. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you

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*Christopher A. Davis*  
*Deputy Chief of Police*  
*Simsbury Police Department*  
*(860) 658-3104*

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**From:** McGregor George <[gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, November 30, 2023 11:19 AM

**To:** Davis Chris <[CDavis@pd.simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:CDavis@pd.simsbury-ct.gov)>; Boulter, Nicholas <[NBoulter@pd.simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:NBoulter@pd.simsbury-ct.gov)>

**Subject:** 200 Hopmeadow St Hartford South

Were you guys going to provide anything in writing regarding this application?

George K. McGregor, AICP  
Planning & Community Development Director  
Town of Simsbury  
933 Hopmeadow Street  
Simsbury, CT 06070  
P(860) 658 3252  
[gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov)





**Archived:** Monday, December 11, 2023 5:11:37 PM

**From:** [Neil Sullivan](#)

**Mail received time:** Mon, 27 Nov 2023 15:26:37

**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2023 10:26:38 AM

**To:** [McGregor George](#)

**Cc:** [Curtis Matt](#)

**Subject:** RE: 200 Hopmeadow St Hartford South Application Referral Comments-Town of Simsbury

**Importance:** Normal

**Sensitivity:** None

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Hi, George –

From a school district perspective, I do have some concerns about the magnitude of this project. Right now, the current Ridge at Talcott Mountain complex (300 units) is home to 51 students in the Simsbury Public Schools. As you probably know, we actually zoned the complex for Central School at the elementary level in order to avoid overcrowding at Latimer.

This proposed complex not only calls for 580 units, but many of them are actually single family rental homes that will surely fill with some families. I would anticipate that this complex will bring in anywhere from 100-130 school-aged children. At the middle and high school levels, it would not be that big a deal, but this will certainly have an impact on our new Latimer Lane elementary school, bringing it more quickly to capacity than we had planned for.

Beyond the sheer numbers, it's also impossible to predict the cost of specialized services if/when any students with IEP's that call for intensive programming or outplacement establish residency in this complex. It's certainly a large increase in housing stock available to families who might be seeking to establish residency for educational purposes.

Thanks for allowing me to weigh in during this process.

Neil

Neil Sullivan

Assistant Superintendent for Administration

Simsbury Public Schools

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**From:** McGregor George <[gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 22, 2023 1:06 PM

**To:** Kessler Adam <[akessler@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:akessler@simsbury-ct.gov)>; Tyburski Tom <[ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:ttyburski@simsbury-ct.gov)>; Boulter Nicholas (SPD) <[nboulter@pd.simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:nboulter@pd.simsbury-ct.gov)>; Davis Chris <[cdavis@pd.simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:cdavis@pd.simsbury-ct.gov)>; Patrick T. Tourville, CFI I <[ptourville@simsburyfd.org](mailto:ptourville@simsburyfd.org)>; Sullivan Neil <[nsullivan@simsburyschools.net](mailto:nsullivan@simsburyschools.net)>; Erdmann Lee <[lerdmann@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:lerdmann@simsbury-ct.gov)>; Piazza Anthony <[apiazza@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:apiazza@simsbury-ct.gov)>; [jbrown@fvhd.org](mailto:jbrown@fvhd.org); [jbaldis@simsburyfd.org](mailto:jbaldis@simsburyfd.org); Ingrid Jacobs <[IJacobs@aquarionwater.com](mailto:IJacobs@aquarionwater.com)>; Tom Roy <[troy@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:troy@simsbury-ct.gov)>

**Cc:** Brittany MacGilpin <[brittanymacgilpin@gmail.com](mailto:brittanymacgilpin@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** 200 Hopmeadow St Hartford South Application Referral Comments-Town of Simsbury

**Importance:** High

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Lee and Amy I have included you in case you wanted to provide any comments related to General Government impacts.

**Please do not reply ALL—there are external referral agencies included in this distribution.**

George K. McGregor, AICP  
Planning & Community Development Director  
Town of Simsbury  
933 Hopmeadow Street  
Simsbury, CT 06070  
P(860) 658 3252  
[gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:gmcgregor@simsbury-ct.gov)





# Town of Simsbury

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL  
36 Drake Hill Road Simsbury, Connecticut 06070

**To:** George McGregor, Director of Planning and Community Development  
**From:** Anthony Piazza, WPCA Superintendent  
**Subject:** Site Plan Comments – The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South – 200 Hopmeadow Street  
**Date:** November 30, 2023

We have completed a review of the Site plan documents received on October 17, 2023 that included the following:

Plans entitled “Master Site Development Plan, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, 200 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT.”

## Review Comments

1. The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) approved the sanitary sewer flow allocation for the site at the WPCA meeting on June 8, 2023.
2. There is currently a 50-foot sanitary sewer easement that exists on the property. All existing requirements of the easement documents shall be maintained unless a new agreement is made with the WPCA and the Town of Simsbury.
3. The developer is advised that a facility connection charge (FCC) will be due prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. This FCC will be calculated upon review of final building plans and layout.

The applicant is reminded to submit all constructions plans to the WPCA as quickly as possible. The review comments represent a preliminary review of the project documents as noted above. Subsequent review(s) of plans and documents revised per these comments should be anticipated by the applicant.

cc: Simsbury WPCA  
Tom Roy, P.E. Director of Public Works  
Henry Miga, Building Official

**Archived:** Monday, December 11, 2023 5:11:52 PM

**From:** [Miga Henry](#)

**Sent:** Thursday, November 9, 2023 3:31:01 PM

**To:** [McGregor George](#)

**Subject:** The Ridge South

**Importance:** Normal

**Sensitivity:** None

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George,

Regarding the proposed plan for the former site of the Hartford, I would offer the following comments.

My assumption is that all of the structures will be constructed as slab on grade with no basements. If basements were to be proposed for the single and two family models, then the footing drains and basement drainage should be addressed in any site drainage considerations. Our experience from the last phase of construction was that frost protection excavation and all finished floor elevations were extremely close allowing for almost no construction tolerance.

The proposed homes that border the flood elevation would seem not to allow for patios, decks or any intrusion into that flood area designation potentially creating an enforcement issue for normal use of a residence.

Given the State of Connecticut movement and requirement for resiliency and for electrification for vehicle charging, heat pump/ AC trends and the density of this development, a review of power demand and the ability of Eversource to meet that demand may be prudent. Included on the site plan would be pull boxes and transformer locations.

Any parking space for the multifamily buildings that provide vehicle charging must provide at least one Accessible space that has a charging station.

In the areas of the single family homes that are proposed to have attached garages, a parallel or double wide drive would be suggested to provide spaces without stacking of vehicles. This is a practical as well as a safety issue allowing for more off street parking. This would increase the hard surface coverage.

I will forward any other comments as the plan develops.

Henry

*Stewards of the Environment™*

November 16, 2023

Katie Eannotti  
VHB  
100 Great Meadow Road, Suite 200  
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Re: Request for Water Service – 200 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, Connecticut  
Proposed Residential Development

Dear Ms. Eannotti,

This letter confirms that Aquarion Water Company of Connecticut (Aquarion) has sufficient water supply to meet the following estimated residential water demand for the proposed development at the above referenced property.

- Average Day Demand: 157,200 gallons per day
- Maximum Day Demand: 314,400 gallons per day
- Irrigation System Demand: 7,860 gallons per day
- Hydrant Demand: 1,250 gallons per minute at 20 psi
- Fire Sprinkler Demand: 350 gallons per minute at 65 psi


Please note that Aquarion has instituted conservation measures in Simsbury that limits the operation of irrigation systems to two (2) times per week. Please visit our website for additional information ([www.aquarionwater.com](http://www.aquarionwater.com)).

The attached fire flow test report indicates an available fire flow of approximately 4,452 gallons per minute at 20 psi. Please note that fire flow tests are indicative of the available flow at a specific time. Available flow and pressures will vary throughout the day and year based on system demands, which may result in lower available flow and pressure. It is your engineer's responsibility to design accordingly to achieve the required flow and pressure while considering all the building demands and system demands.

This service commitment is valid for 12 months from the date of issuance. If your proposed project is not ready for water service (intended usage) within 12 months of this letter, then Aquarion's ability to serve your project will have to be re-evaluated.

While this letter serves as a service commitment, it is not an approval how or when to connect (tap) to our water main. You must complete the Main Extension Process, including obtaining additional approvals that are required, payment of required fees, etc. Additionally, you must complete the New Service Process for final building connections and meter installation. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at 203.362.3067. If you have questions regarding the main extension process and next steps required to connect (tap) to our system, please contact Carlos Vizcarrondo at [cvizcarrondo@aquarionwater.com](mailto:cvizcarrondo@aquarionwater.com).

Very truly yours,  
Aquarion Water Company



Hannah P. Swearsy  
Planning Engineer

cc: New Services, Carlos Vizcarrondo, File  
Attachment: Fire flow test at hydrant 1600 dated 6/26/2023  
Will Serve Letter Application dated 9/19/2023



Aquarion Water Company Fire Flow Test

Test Location: Simsbury, CT

Test Date: 06/26/2023

Test Time: 09:00 PM

Flow Hydrant: 1600                      Location:      Hopmeadow @ Old Canal

Flow Hydrant Parameters:

Main Size:                                      10" PVC  
Pipe/Nozzle Diameter:                      4.5" inches  
Pito Pressure:                                      28.5 psi  
PSI Before:                                      106 psi

Residual Hydrant: 1610                      Location:      Hopmeadow Rd @ Private driveway

Residual Hydrant Parameters:

PSI Before:                                      108 psi  
Residual During Flow:                      88 psi  
PSI After:                                      108 psi  
PSI Drop:                                      20 psi

Test Results:

GPM Available:                                      2,000

GPM @20 psi:                                      4,452

Test Performed By: MFARRELL

NOTE: Static Pressure readings are actual, and test results are not corrected for elevation differential.

Test Method: Calibrated Orifice

**Disclaimer: This data represents system conditions on the date and time that the test was performed. System conditions may vary significantly throughout the year. The design of new water service installations and the identification and gathering of all necessary data is the sole responsibility of the Developer or his representative. In all instances, the water service designer should apply engineering judgment to ensure proper design. Aquarion Water Company does not guarantee the accuracy of this data.**

