



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET, SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Lisa L. Heavner - First Selectman

## *First Selectman's Report – November 28, 2016*

### **Simsbury Recieves CT Recreation Trails Program Grant of \$305,000**

Simsbury has received a Connecticut Recreation Trails Program Grant of \$305,000 from the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to construct a multi-purpose trail from the Farmington Valley Greenway at Routes 10/202 and 315 to Curtiss/Pattison parks. The Trail will be 10 feet wide and paved. As part of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, the Farmington Valley Greenway is a link in the continuous trail from New Haven, CT to Northampton, MA. In conjunction with trail planning in the Captiol Region, this section of trail would become part of a key link in the East Cost Greenway (ECG). Thanks to Town Engineering and Public Works for their efforts in submitting the grant and to the Board of Selectmen, the Simsbury Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Farmington Valley Trails Council, the East Coast Greenway Alliance and the Connecticut Greenways Council for their support of the application.

### **Simsbury Receives a Greater Hartford Transit District Operating Grant**

The Town of Simsbury has received a Greater Hartford Transit District Operating Grant in the amount of \$6,517 which will be used to assist the Town of Simsbury with operating costs associated with the Dial-A-Ride program. Many thanks to Social Services for coordinating this grant.

### **Congratulations to Library Honoree**

Please join me in congratulating Simsbury Public Library Board Member Gail Ryan who received the 2016 Outstanding Library Trustee Award from the Association of Connecticut Library Boards at their Annual Conference on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Gail was first elected to the Library Board in 1991 and has been an active member ever since. Congratulations, Gail!

### **Makerspace Now Open at the Simsbury Library – Check it Out!**

Simsbury Public Library's *Innovators' Workshop* Makerspace is now open during all Library hours. Equipment available includes a 3D printer and digitizer; sewing machines, both basic and digital embroidery; a Cricut machine; video conversion equipment, as well as Sphero; snap circuits and Lego Mindstorm. Introductory classes on the equipment are being offered and training is also available by appointment. Class schedules and a schedule of staff hours in the space are available at <http://www.simsburylibrary.info/services/innovators-workshop/>. For more information, to schedule training or reserve equipment, you may also call the Library's Reference Desk at [860-658-7663](tel:860-658-7663) ext 2200.

If you have a skill or expertise you'd be willing to share with the community through the Library's *Innovators' Workshop*, please contact Head of Adult Services Susan Ray at [sray@simsburylibrary.info](mailto:sray@simsburylibrary.info) or [860-658-7663](tel:860-658-7663) ext 2108. The Library would love to add you to the list of innovators.

The *Innovators' Workshop* project was made possible with a generous bequest from Jewel Gutman and a gift from the Investor Angels of the Friends of the Simsbury Public Library.

### **Winter is Upon Us – *like it or not!* Now's the Time to Prepare for Weather Emergencies**

In anticipation of the coming season, now is a good time to prepare for weather emergencies. When weather looks doubtful, please remember to stock up on gas, cash, water, medications, food and other essentials. Check out the following site to help get ready for whatever comes our way: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3115&q=482616>,

Please also remember to sign up for emergency alerts on our Town website so we can keep you informed: <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/alerts>

### **Plan Like Your Children Will Live Here - POCD**

The Planning Commission kicked-off its planning process for Simsbury's common vision for the future of our community and policies that will help us get there. The process, over the next year, will culminate in an updated Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

At its most basic level, planning is a process for making informed decisions about the future based on what we like about our town, where we want to go, and how to enhance what we already have. Please join us and be part of the conversation over the next few months!!

Please consider filling out the on-line survey so we know what matters to you:  
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Simsbury\\_POCD](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Simsbury_POCD)

Thank you to Planning Commission members, Chairman Bill Rice, Director of Planning Jamie Rabbitt and Assistant Town Planner Mike Glidden for leading this effort.

### **Drought Watch in Effect Statewide**

A trip around town should be enough to remind us of the effect of the ongoing severe drought on our local wetlands and watercourses. All Connecticut residents and businesses are requested to voluntarily reduce water demand by 15 percent. Check out these tips to conserve water from the Farmington Valley Health District: <http://www.fvhd.org/>

### **Revaluation of Real Estate in Simsbury**

In accordance with State law and in order to make sure residents are taxed on the fair value of their properties, revaluation of all real estate in Simsbury is now underway. Over the next year each property in town will be reassessed in-line with current market values. You may see town employees and contractors from *Municipal Valuation Services* assisting with this process.

The first phase is a pre-review which includes comparisons between what is actually observed at the property and what is shown on the assessor's card. The next phase beginning in March or April will include property questionnaires, updating records for work done under building permits, inspection of recently sold properties and valuation. Revaluation notices culminate the process and are expected to be mailed to taxpayers in December 2017. For questions, please contact the Director of Finance Sean Kimball at [skimball@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:skimball@simsbury-ct.gov) or (860) 658-3244 or the Tax Assessor David Gardner at [dgardner@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:dgardner@simsbury-ct.gov) or (860) 658-3251.

### **Energy Assistance Available**

The Simsbury Social Services Department has been designated as an official intake site for residents wishing to apply for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program. This program is available to assist households paying for primary heating bills incurred after November 9<sup>th</sup>. The program also has a “heat included” component for renters. Income and asset limits apply. For further information or to schedule an appointment, please call the Social Services Department at (860) 658-3283.

### **Live Longer, Stronger**

Join the Simsbury Aging and Disability Commission for a free presentation and discussion on “*The Impact of Medication Management on Chronic Diseases*.” The program will be held at the Simsbury Public Library, 725 Hopmeadow Street from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. on November 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Simsbury Celebrates**

Our largest crowd ever! Estimates are that between 14,000 – 15,000 people attended – Wow! Many volunteer and Town staff hours are put into making this a great success for the community. Sincere and hearty thanks to Carol Brown, Linda Johnson, Janet Calabro and Simsbury Recreation Supervisor Taryn Schrager, who were the main organizers of this great Simsbury event. Thanks also to the many volunteers, sponsors, the Parks and Recreation staff, Simsbury Police, Simsbury Public Works, The Simsbury Fire Department and all the participants and attendees who made “Simsbury Celebrates” such a success this year!

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **New - Business Buzz At the Simsbury Public Library**

The Business Resource Center at the Simsbury Public Library is happy to highlight business news on their [Facebook Page](#) and other social media. If you have news to share, add it in the comment section on their Facebook Page or contact Simsbury Public Library’s Business Resource Center Coordinator, Sarah Loudenslager at [sarahl@simsburylibrary.info](mailto:sarahl@simsburylibrary.info). #splbusinessbuzz

### **SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans Available in Connecticut Following Secretary of Agriculture Disaster Declaration for Drought**

Federal Economic Injury Disaster Loans are available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and private nonprofit organizations located in Connecticut as a result of the drought. Applicants can apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via SBA’s secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela> or at [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov/disaster](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov/disaster).

### **Wednesday Night is Business Night at the Simsbury Library**

The Library is offering programming on a consistent night for business people or those interested in business. Be on the lookout for *Wednesday Night is Business Night!* events this fall. Currently scheduled programs include:

- *NaNoWriMo Program: You Wrote a Book, Now What? Traditional Publishing, Blended Publishing and Self-Publishing*, Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM
- *No More Boring Pitches* with Guest Speaker Kathy McAfee, Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM

- *30 Business Books in 30 Minutes*, Wednesday, December 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM
- *Leveraging the Strength of LinkedIn*, Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM
- *Legal Options in Creating and Operating a New Business*, Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 PM

To register for these free programs or to see all the great educational programs offered to assist small businesses in Simsbury, please visit the Library website and click on the business tab at the top of the screen: <http://www.simsburylibrary.info/>

### **Open for Business**

Table 570 Asian Fusion (formerly Green Tea) located at 570 Hopmeadow Street will reopen on December 1<sup>st</sup>. James and Sandy Chen, along with Executive Chef Dan Fortin and team, are bringing a new level of Asian Fusion Cuisine to the Valley. Can't wait!

Please join us for a ribbon cutting sponsored by the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce for Illumina Skin Care/Massage on December 8<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. at 1 Grist Mill Road. Welcome to Simsbury! <http://www.illuminaskincaremassage.com/>

Please join me in welcoming BE Investment Management to Simsbury! A ribbon cutting was held at the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce on November 16<sup>th</sup>. BE Investment Management is a boutique registered investment advisory firm that caters to the individual and family client. Their goal is to create a comfortable financial atmosphere as they help clients reach their immediate and future investment goals. Congratulations! Visit their website at [www.BEInvestmentmgmt.com](http://www.BEInvestmentmgmt.com)

Benny's located at 562 Hopmeadow Street has completed a new dining room expansion, package store improvements, and parking and landscape improvements. Watch for a grand re-opening and ribbon cutting soon! <http://bennysofsimsbury.com/>

### **Under Construction in Simsbury**

Garden Homes on the south side of town along Hopmeadow Street is now under construction – building foundations have been completed and framing has started. This development was approved for 181 residential rental units, including townhomes and apartment style housing. Commercial and retail units were also approved as part of the Planned Area Development (PAD), but zoning and specific site plan approvals have yet to be sought and therefore only the residential component is under construction at this time. You can visit Garden Homes' website at <http://www.gardenhomes.com/> for more information about the development company.

Highcroft: 272 residential rental units off Powder Forest Drive are also under construction by Landworks Development/Nelson Construction team. The project includes Highcroft Apartment Homes with 224 apartment units and Highcroft Townhomes with 48 units. Move-ins commenced in July 2016 and construction is expected to conclude on the first 128 unit phase in late spring 2017. You can visit their website at: <http://www.lifeinsimsbury.com> for information on their sale and rental offerings or <http://www.highcroftapartments.com/>.

Berkshire Bank: At the Corner of Bushy Hill and Albany Turnpike, Berkshire Bank is waiting on interior fit-out and is not yet open.

## **Permitted**

*Big Y* has indicated that they have delayed a start date in Simsbury for at least a year and possibly into 2018 based on internal financial priorities and commitments elsewhere, but will begin removal of the buildings on their property. Big Y further indicated that they are still interested in Simsbury and confirmed that they have all their town and state permits in place for when they do begin.

*Hoskins Road Workforce Overlay Zone (WHOZ):* The Town planning boards have approved 88 residential units for the property with twenty percent affordable housing. Although the project has been approved there is currently no activity.

*Chestnut Hills:* Located on the corner of Drake Hill and Hopmeadow Street, 46 unit apartments have been approved for the historical building and the surrounding property. This property is currently for sale.

## **On the Horizon**

*The Silverman Group:* On October 17<sup>th</sup> the Silverman Group from New Jersey submitted an application to the Zoning Commission for a Master Plan Site Development plan under the Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code for the northern portion (40 acres) of the former Hartford property. Their Master Plan includes development for a 120 bed assisted living facility, 281 units of luxury rental housing (156 units in stacked flats and 125 units in town homes), a community center and 11,600 square feet of retail/office space in a Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) setting. The Town's Design Review Board approved the Master Site Development Plan on November 21<sup>st</sup>. The Town's Zoning Commission received public comments on the application at their November 21<sup>st</sup> public hearing and then chose to continue the public hearing until December 5, 2016, deferring the decision that evening. The application to the Zoning Commission for approval of a Master Site Development Plan is the first part of a two part process. If the Master Site Development Plan is approved, the applicant is still required to submit an application to the Zoning Commission for site plan approval. If both applications are approved, the applicant can then begin the building permit process, pending any additional state approvals. To watch the Zoning Commission Public Hearing on November 21<sup>st</sup>, please visit Simsbury Community Television at: [http://simsburytv.org/v/A0-\\_Y09hIkc](http://simsburytv.org/v/A0-_Y09hIkc)

*Girard Brothers Corporation:* 32 and 36 Iron Horse Blvd. (Simscoft-Echo Farms). Initial concept plans have been presented to Design Review, Planning and Zoning for a multifamily residential community. The Planning presentation can be viewed on SCTV at the following link: <http://simsburytv.org/v/4rffJvkGMTA>

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