



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET, SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Lisa L. Heavner - First Selectman

First Selectwoman's Report – January 9, 2017

Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin Visits Simsbury

Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin held a Town Hall at the Simsbury Public Library on January 3rd to discuss the Mayor's vision for the capital city, obstacles he is facing and how Hartford's and Simsbury's successes are tied together. With downtown residential units filling up, UCONN opening a new campus, and commuter rail service set to begin in 2018, Hartford has lots of potential. But Hartford is also facing a massive and urgent budget crisis. The Town Hall gave Simsbury residents the opportunity to hear about Hartford's opportunities and challenges and to ask questions directly to the Mayor. To watch this interesting and lively discussion, please control-click on: <http://simsburytv.org/v/4PlfNoOtoBU>

Town of Simsbury Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Public Input Session – January 10th at 7:00 p.m.

As part of the POCD process, the Planning Commission invites the public to participate in a discussion about *How Simsbury Should Guide Growth or Change* to be held on January 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria at Henry James Memorial School. Various development strategies will be explored including a future by design, special areas (such as Simsbury Center, Tariffville, Weatogue, West Simsbury), economic development, housing, sustainability and resiliency.

Martin Luther King Programs in Simsbury

Come Walk in My Shoes – Film and Community Discussion, Saturday, January 14th at 1:00 p.m. at the Simsbury Public Library. Please join us to commemorate the legacy of Martin Luther King with a community discussion following the documentary, 'Come Walk in My Shoes.' Deacon Art Miller, author, radio host, revivalist and Deacon at St. Mary's Church, will lead an informal community discussion. His perspective is that of an African American who grew up on the South Side of Chicago in the 1940s and 1950s. Registration is suggested at 860-658-7663 or www.simsburylibrary.info. Free and open to all.

2017 MLK in Simsbury Celebration, January 16th at 2:00 p.m. at First Church of Christ. Please join us to celebrate Dr. King's life, particularly his time in Simsbury during the summers of 1944 and 1947. The 2017 Keynote speaker will be Greg Jones, Founder and Chairman of the Legacy Foundation of Hartford. Attendees will be inspired by a performance from Jolie Rocke Brown, a soprano who has performed at Carnegie Weill Recital Hall, and with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, the Connecticut Opera and the Houston Ebony Opera. There will also be a presentation by representatives from the Martin Luther King, Jr. in Connecticut Memorial Project, a student-led local project dedicated to creating a permanent memorial in Simsbury of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Thanks to those who work so hard to make this happen: Representative John Hampton, First Church, the Simsbury Historical Society, the Simsbury Free Library, the Simsbury Public Schools, including the Henry James Memorial School Select Choir, and the Simsbury Intonations. Free and open to all.

Three Simsbury Restaurants Make the List! CT Magazine's 2017 Best Restaurants

Congratulations to three Simsbury restaurants named by *CT Magazine's 2017 Best Restaurants: Experts' Picks*.

- Millwrights for *Best Overall Excellence* and *Best American*
- Present Company for *Best New*
- Metro Bis for *Best American*

Thank you for making Simsbury your home! To take a look at the complete list, please control-click on the following link: http://www.connecticutmag.com/bests-tops/best-restaurants-experts-picks/article_881eae3a-c310-11e6-ad43-f7d1ce980a44.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

Last Day to Pay Taxes without Penalty is February 1, 2017

Thank you for your tax dollar contributions which help pay for all that keeps Simsbury a great place to call home. Your taxes support public safety, roads, the senior center, our public library, Simsbury Farms, our great schools and so much more. The last day to pay taxes without penalty is February 1, 2017. Postmarks of February 1, 2017 are acceptable or payments can also be made online. It's **FREE** with an electronic check. A debit/credit card has a 2.95 % convenience fee. Please visit: <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/tax-office>

For questions, please contact Tax Collector Colleen O'Connor at (860) 658-3238.

Christmas Tree Disposal Schedule

Christmas trees will be picked up by your trash haulers as follows:

- Paine's customers – will be picked up on your trash day the week of January 17, 2017
- All Waste Customers – will be picked up on your trash day the week of January 30, 2017

Simsbury Police Receive 2015 Traffic Safety Program Awards

Congratulations to the Simsbury Police Department for receiving two awards from the State's Law Enforcement Safety Challenge for 2015. The awards were announced on December 13, 2016 and Simsbury received the "*Best Overall Occupant Protection Safety Program*" award for the fourth year in a row. Simsbury's finest also received an Honorable Mention for "*Overall Traffic Safety Enforcement*" for the second year in a row. Thanks to our officers who work hard every day to keep us all safe!

Wreaths Across America

Thank you to the Simsbury Abigail Phelps Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution for sponsoring the Wreaths Across America program in Simsbury. This program was also supported by the American Legion Post 84 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1926. Although the December 18th ceremony was canceled due to weather, volunteers placed over 300 wreaths in cemeteries across Simsbury to remember our fallen. New this year, seven service wreaths were placed at the Veterans Memorial. Thanks to all the generous donors who contributed to this effort, Simsbury veterans and those who volunteered to lay the wreaths.

Help Us Keep Simsbury Safe by Clearing Fire Hydrants of Snow!

Help us keep Simsbury safe by clearing fire hydrants of snow. Local firefighters need quick access to hydrants during emergencies - *every minute counts*. A few minutes of clearing now can save a life during a fire emergency. And it's the law! A new town ordinance requires that fire hydrants be kept clear of any obstructions that would impede the use or maintenance of a hydrant. The ordinance can be found by control-clicking on the following link:

<http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/public-safety-subcommittee/files/fire-hydrant-maintenance>

Senior Center Communicator Newsletter – Check it Out!

The January/February edition of the the Senior Center Communicator Newsletter is hot off the presses. Check out the many wonderful activities and important information for Simsbury senior citizens by control-clicking on the following link: [http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/simsburyct/files/news/january - february 2017.pdf.pdf](http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/simsburyct/files/news/january_-_february_2017.pdf.pdf)

Help with Taxes

Trained and certified volunteers with AARP are available to assist seniors and others with preparing and electronically filing federal and state taxes, free of charge. Please bring your last year's tax return, W-2, form 1099, Social Security forms, and any other income records. Appointments are available on Thursdays, February 2 through April 13 starting at 10 a.m., at the Simsbury Public Library. Call the Senior Center for an appointment: (860) 658-3273.

Chef Attilio Ceneviva Featured on Food Network

Wow! Congratulations to Chef Attilio Ceneviva who was featured on the Food Network's "Cooks vs. Cons" show on December 14th! Great to see a local Simsbury chef receive national recognition.

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>

Snow Plow Ride-Along Program

Ever wonder what it is like to ride-along in a snow plow? If you're over 18 years of age, you can take a ride with one of Simsbury's outstanding plow drivers. Offered through the Department of Public Works, residents have the opportunity to ride-along with one of our snow plows during a winter storm. There is no fee. Residents can fill out an application with times they are available to participate. One or two days before a storm, staff will confirm your availability for the anticipated storm and schedule a time for your ride-along. Don't overdress – it's hot in the cab! There is a sign-up link on the Public Works page of the Town's website, or you can "click" on the link: <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/public-works/files/snow-plow-ride-along-program-information-application>.

Even Though it is Winter, Drought Watch Still 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 or (860) 658-3244 or the Tax Assessor David Gardner at 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 9th. 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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Town-wide Energy Savings Campaign for Businesses

The Town of Simsbury, the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce and Eversource have launched a town-wide energy-saving campaign for businesses. Thanks to the Simsbury Clean Energy Task Force and the Department of Public Works for initiating and coordinating this program. The campaign encourages local businesses to participate in Eversource's Small Business Energy Advantage program where technicians conduct a no-cost energy audit and propose recommendations for energy-efficient improvements. For every project completed by the Eversource-authorized contactors Artis Energy or JK Energy Solutions a \$50 donation will be made to the Simsbury Clean Energy Task Force. For more information, please contact 877-WISE-USE (877-947-3873) or visit EnergizeCT.com/businesses.

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 throughout the year. Currently scheduled programs include:

- *Leveraging the Strength of LinkedIn*, Wednesday, January 11th, 6:00 PM
- *Legal and Risk Management Considerations for a Small Business*, Wednesday, January 18th, 5:30 PM

- *Data Privacy Day Event: Security in an Unsecure World*, Wednesday, January 25th, 6:30-8:00 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

New to Simsbury! Congratulations to Dana Kosior, the new owner of *Farmers Insurance – The Kosior Agency* which will be opening mid-January at 522 Hopmeadow Street. Welcome to Simsbury! Watch for a ribbon cutting in the first week of February!

Benny's located at 562 Hopmeadow Street has completed a new dining room expansion, package store improvements, and parking and landscape improvements. Congratulations! A grand re-opening and ribbon cutting will be held on February 9th with more information to follow! <http://bennysofsimsbury.com/>

A ribbon cutting ceremony sponsored by the Simsbury Chamber was held for *Khagan Mongolian Grill & Sushi* on Wednesday, December 21st at 530 Bushy Hill Rd., Unit 170 (behind Chili's). Congratulations and welcome! Check out their menu and website here: <http://khaganmongolian.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 17th the Silverman Group from New Jersey submitted an application to the Town's Zoning Commission for a Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) under the Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code for the northern portion (40 acres) of the former Hartford property. Their application included plans for a 120 bed assisted living facility, 280 units of luxury rental housing (156 units in stacked flats and 124 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 21st.

On December 5th after two public hearings and considerable deliberations, the Zoning Commission approved the Silverman's application for a MSDP with seven conditions. The Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code was adopted on July 7, 2014, and went into effect on August 1, 2014. It was adopted after a systematic study of the site was undertaken by the Town of Simsbury and The Hartford in 2013 utilizing various consultants (Gateway Planning, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. Catalyst and CB Richard Ellis). The adoption of the Code solidified a two-step process. The first step was the application for and approval of a Master Site Development Plan (MSPD) which was accomplished on December 5th. The second step requires a subsequent application to the Zoning Commission for site plan approval conforming to the MSPD. Upon approval of the final site plan the applicant can begin the building permit process, pending any additional state approvals. It is anticipated that the applicant will apply for site plan approval in late February or early March 2017.

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>

To receive a copy of the First Selectwoman's Report by email, please visit the Town website: www.simsbury-ct.gov and click on the "subscribe" button. Sign up for Town News and Announcements.