



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET, SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Lisa L. Heavner - First Selectman

## *First Selectwoman's Report – January 23, 2017*

### **Office Hours with the First Selectwoman January 30<sup>th</sup> 5 - 6:30 p.m.**

All are invited to attend office hours with the First Selectwoman on January 30<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. in the First Selectwoman's office in Town Hall, 933 Hopmeadow Street. With budget season fast approaching, now is the time to share what matters most to you. Please join me for an informal conversation on the upcoming budget or any other issue you wish to discuss.

### **Lunch and Learn: ClearCaptions Captioned Telephones for People with Hearing Loss**

The Simsbury Public Library and the Senior Center are offering a Lunch and Learn event in the Program Room in the Library from 12 - 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup> for residents interested in learning about captioned telephones. The captioned telephone is a regular phone that is used normally with the addition of an immediate display of the text of the conversation. This phone is available at no cost to individuals who have hearing loss. Wayne Simmons, a Title 4 Americans with Disabilities Act Specialist, will present and demonstrate the captioned telephones and educate attendees on how they can obtain their own phone. Lunch will be provided by ClearCaptions, a federally certified provider of captioned telephones. To sign up for this informative program, please contact the Senior Center at (860) 658-3273 or follow the link: <http://www.libraryinsight.com/eventdetails.asp?jx=scp&lmx=897391&v=3>

### **Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Public Listening Session – February 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

As part of the POCD process, the Planning Commission invites the public to participate in a discussion on *Services or Facilities that Simsbury Should Have – Infrastructure Strategies*. The Commission is seeking public input on community facilities and recreation, vehicular transportation, other transportation (walking, biking, and transit) and infrastructure (water, sewer, natural gas, electricity, internet and wireless). Your input is welcome and we encourage all to attend on February 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the Henry James Memorial cafeteria. Many thanks to Chairman William Rice, the Planning Commission and the Town's Planning Department for their efforts and work on this project.

### **Simsbury Police Academy**

The Simsbury Police Department is hosting its 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Citizens' Police Academy. Classes will be held on Thursday evenings from 7 - 9 p.m. beginning in February and ending in April. Simsbury residents and business owners age 21 or older are invited to apply.

A few of the subjects covered during the 10 week academy are: Patrol Procedures, Arrest Procedures, Accident Investigations, Use of Force, Firearms, Emergency Services Teams and Crime Scene Investigations.

For more information or to sign up to participate, please visit: <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/police-emergency/news/2017-citizens-police-academy>

### **Conservation Partnership Area Expanded**

Thank you to the Conservation Commission for their successful advocacy on behalf of the residents of Simsbury. Last September, the Conservation Commission submitted comments to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge suggesting that the existing Farmington River and Salmon Brook Conservation Partnership Area (CPA) be expanded to include the remainder of Simsbury's portion of the Farmington River basin and Simsbury's portion of the West Branch Salmon Brook basin. The Commission is pleased to report that those suggestions were taken.

The Silvio Conte Wildlife Refuge comprises 7.2 million acres in the Connecticut River watershed, including all of Simsbury. The water provides important habitat for hundreds of breeding and migrating birds, numerous migratory fish and several federally listed threatened and endangered plant and wildlife species. In areas designated as CPAs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service actively facilitate and support conservation, environmental education and recreation actions in partnership with others across all ownerships.

### **Snow Removal Operations in Simsbury**

Every wonder about snow plowing in Simsbury? Thanks to Simsbury Public Works and SCTV you can now learn everything you ever wanted to know about snow plow operations in town. Check out this great video starring our very own local celebrities, Tom Roy and Kevin Clemmons: <http://simsburytv.org/v/NlqKthZAEVY>

Also, 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: <http://www.simsbury-ct.gov/public-works/files/snow-plow-ride-along-program-information-application>.

For questions, please contact Public Works at (860) 658-3222.

### **Martin Luther King Programs in Simsbury**

Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to bring two Martin Luther King Events to Simsbury: the Simsbury Public Library - *Come Walk in My Shoes – Film and Community Discussion* and the annual *MLK in Simsbury Celebration, January 16<sup>th</sup>* at First Church of Christ. If you weren't able to attend the ceremony, but would like to see the *2017 MLK in Simsbury Celebration*, visit SCTV: <http://simsburytv.org/v/nKMVG7sOf8Q>

### **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

### **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>

### **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. Appointments are available on Thursdays, February 2 through April 13 starting at 10 a.m., at the Simsbury Public Library. For an appointment, please contact the Senior Center at: (860) 658-3273.

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

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>

If the power goes out at your house, please notify Eversource directly. Don't assume they know the power is out unless you tell them! Outages can be reported by calling (860) 286-2000 or online at: <https://www.eversource.com/nstar/reportanoutage>

### **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](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, 2016. 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 contractors 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 <http://www.energizect.com/your-business>

### **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:

- *Data Privacy Day Event: Security in an Unsecure World*, Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 - 8:00 PM
- *Leveraging the Strength of LinkedIn*, Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
- *Managing Workplace Stress*, Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 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/>

### **Simsbury Chamber of Commerce 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Leaders Breakfast on March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

The Simsbury Chamber of Commerce is holding their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Leaders Breakfast on March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 7:30 - 9:45 a.m. at the Simsbury Inn located at 397 Hopmeadow Street. New Britain Mayor Erin Stewart is one of two featured speakers – the other speaker will be announced soon. For more information about the event or to register, please visit: <http://simsburycoc.org/m/events/view/9th-Annual-Business-Leaders-Breakfast>

### **Open for Business**

A ribbon cutting ceremony sponsored by Main Street Partnership for *KR Styles* will be held on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at 14 Station Street and an open house for the public follows from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Congratulations on the new location and thanks for staying in Simsbury! Check out their website here: <http://www.krstyles.com/>

New to Simsbury! A ribbon cutting for *Shred Fitness* sponsored by the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at 17C Herman Drive. Shred Fitness offers semi-private training, endurance and core crush classes. Check out their website: <http://shredfitnessct.com/>

*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 sponsored by Main Street Partnership will be held on February 9<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. <http://bennysofsimsbury.com/>

New to Simsbury! Congratulations to Dana Kosior, the new owner of *Farmers Insurance – The Kosior Agency*. Please join us for a ribbon cutting sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce on February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. at 522 Hopmeadow Street (Simsmore Square). Welcome to Simsbury!

### **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 (WHZOZ)*: 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 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 21<sup>st</sup>.

On December 5<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup>. 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>

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