



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET, SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Lisa L. Heavner - First Selectwoman

First Selectwoman's Report – June 26, 2017

Town of Simsbury assigned a 'AAA' rating by S&P Global Ratings

*Some things are worth repeating.....*On June 1, 2017, the Town of Simsbury was assigned a 'AAA' by Standard and Poor's (S&P) Global Ratings – *the highest rating a municipality can receive*. S&P cited very strong management with strong fiscal policies and practices, strong budgetary performance, and the town's commitment to conservative budgetary assumptions. The 'AAA' rating will save taxpayer dollars with lower borrowing costs.

Budget Update

Budget Referendum Results

On **June 13, 2017** voters approved all local Budget Referendum questions. To see results of the June Budget Referendum, click [here](#)

The Board of Finance set the Town mill rate at 38.76. The Fire District set their mill rate at 1.23, resulting in a **total town and fire mill rate of 39.99**.

Important Notice to Simsbury Taxpayers

Because the State budget has not yet been adopted, the estimated amount of revenue from the State of Connecticut indicated on your tax bill is subject to change.

Your tax bill also reflects current State law, which does not allow municipalities to assess a mill rate above 32 mills on motor vehicles effective July 1st. This mill rate tax cap on motor vehicles may be increased or eliminated altogether by the State legislature.

Once the state budget is adopted, the Town of Simsbury may need to adjust your tax levy to address any changes in municipal aid.

We know the State's failure to adopt a budget prior to the start of the Town of Simsbury's fiscal year is a major inconvenience for local taxpayers and we are doing everything in our power to mitigate the impact of the State's delay on our taxpayers.

Trail Cleanup at Rotary Park

Sponsored by the Simsbury Library and the Farmington Valley Trails, please join us on July 7 at 10 AM to help keep our trails clean. Participants will meet at Rotary Park and then walk and pick up trash along a section of the trail in Simsbury. A celebratory frozen treat will follow. Sign up on-line [here](#).



Repair Café: Toss it? No Way!



Remember the days when we darned our own socks or repaired broken household items? Have a small item that needs a quick repair? Before throwing it away, bring it to the Simsbury Public Library's first Repair Café on Saturday July 29 from 9:30-1:30 PM. Click [here](#) for more information.

Check Out the Latest Edition of the Senior Communicator

Hot off the presses! The July/August edition of the "Senior Communicator" is out with great classes, meals, activities and events for senior citizens in Simsbury. Check out all that is happening, [here](#).

Renter's Rebate Program

Simsbury's Social Services is now accepting applications for the Renter's Rebate Program that runs through October 1, 2017. Applicants must be at least 65 years of age, or be totally disabled – with proof of disability. Maximum gross income for a couple is \$42,900; and for a single individual is \$35,000. For more information and/or to schedule an appointment, please call (860) 658-3283.

Have Old Medication?

Simsbury residents may dispose of any kind of medication safely and anonymously for free in a drop box located at the Simsbury Police Department, 933 Hopmeadow Street, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The purpose of this program is to protect the environment from improper disposal of medications, to prevent someone from accidentally taking medications and to prevent the illicit use of these drugs.



Emerald Ash Borer – Help Keep Our Ash Trees Healthy!

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is in Connecticut and Simsbury. EAB has been responsible for the death or decline of ash trees throughout the eastern United States and Canada. The EAB is a wood-boring beetle that feeds on all species of ash trees. To find out more about the emerald ash borer and how you can help slow this infestation down, please visit [here](#).

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 this summer, will include updating records for work done under building permits, property questionnaires, 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.

Board of Selectmen Adopts a “Carry In, Carry Out” Policy for Simsbury Parks

On May 8, 2017 the Board of Selectmen adopted a “Carry In, Carry Out” policy for Simsbury Parks at the recommendation of the Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission. The policy recommends the removal of trash cans from parks and fields and asks patrons to carry out anything they carry to the site. Youth sports groups and other organizations will still have the option of securing receptacles for trash disposal and contracting with a private hauler. In addition to saving tax dollars, “Carry In, Carry Out” policies have been effective in:



- Promoting environmentally friendly behaviors like recycling and biodegradable products
- Increasing safety by reducing bees, wasps, pests and animals (bears)
- Enabling staff resources to be redirected to other park improvements
- Leaving parks cleaner by eliminating excess trash, smells and messes
- Improving the health of wildlife by reducing their dependency on trash as a food source
- Fostering a partnership with our visitors by encouraging all to help maintain our parks
- Supporting Simsbury’s commitment to conservation and sustainability
- Reducing illegal dumping

Thank you for working with us!

Friends of Simsbury Public Library (FSPL) Annual Used Book Sale

Book collections for the FSPL Annual Book Sale began on Tuesday, May 30 and will continue through August 26. Books will be collected at the Library. Please bring your books and/or materials to the designated area on the lower level – just follow the clearly marked signs. A cart is available if you need one. Collection dates and times are Tuesday and Friday mornings from 10:00 a.m. – Noon; and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Thanks to all the volunteers who work hard on this effort and to those who donate!



<http://www.simsburylibrary.info/used-books-wanted/>

Simsbury Community Calendar

Looking for something fun to do in Simsbury? Check out our *new* Simsbury Community Calendar on the Town website. If you have an event happening in Simsbury, you can post it to the community calendar managed by the Simsbury Main Street Partnership. *Check it out:* www.simsburyevents.com



Talcott Mountain Music Festival at Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center

Celebrate all summer long at the Hartford Symphony Orchestra's annual Talcott Mountain Music Festival! Pack your picnic, attend with family and friends, relax under the stars, and enjoy the Hartford Symphony Orchestra under Music Director Carolyn Kuan and distinguished guest conductors.

- Celebrate America! Friday, June 30
- Sgt. Pepper's 50th! Featuring Classical Mystery Tour. Friday, July 7
- The Music of David Bowie. Friday, July 14
- Williams and Warner Bros. Friday, July 21
- Broadway A to Z. Friday, July 28

For more information, please visit:

<https://hartfordsymphony.org/concerts-tickets/series/talcott-mountain-music-festival/>

Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center

Check out all the great events happening at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.

<http://simsburymeadowsmusic.com/>



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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:

30 Business Books in 30 Minutes: Join Business Resource Center Coordinator Sarah Loudenslager as she highlights a variety of titles – one a minute for 30 minutes – that range from classics to new and noteworthy. Wednesday, July 5 from 6:30-7:30 PM. For more information, click [here](#).

To register for these free programs or to see all the great educational programs offered to assist small businesses in Simsbury, please contact Sarah Loudenslager, Business Resource Coordinator, at (860) 658-7663, ext. 2107 or visit the Library website:

<http://www.libraryinsight.com/calendare.asp?jx=sc&xc=1>

Economic Development Links

- [Economic Development Strategic Plan and Activities Report](#)
- [Town of Simsbury Residential Development Trends](#)
- [Small Business Assistance Programs](#)
- [Town of Simsbury Parking Study](#)



IN SIMSBURY

Aspen Green (formerly referred to as *Garden Homes*) on the south side of town along Hopmeadow Street is now under construction – building foundations have been completed and framing is underway. 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. June 15, 2017 is the targeted move-in date for some tenants. You can visit Garden Homes' website at <http://www.gardenhomes.com/> for more information about the development company. For information regarding rentals, you can visit their website at: <http://www.liveataspengreen.com/>.

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 reaffirmed in April, 2017 that they have delayed a start date in Simsbury indefinitely based on internal financial priorities and commitments elsewhere. 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.

The Silverman Group: On May 3, 2017, the Town's Zoning Commission approved an application that was submitted on April 4, 2017 by Silverman SL for an approval under the Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code. The approval permits the construction of a 120 bed assisted living facility (146,100 sq. ft.), 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. This application was the second part of the Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code permitting process. The first part began back in October of 2016 when The Silverman Group submitted their Master Plan for the northern portion (40 acres) of the former Hartford property, which was approved by the Town's Zoning Commission and Design Review Board. In order for construction to move forward, the applicant still needs to receive two additional permits from the State of Connecticut: the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). It is anticipated that construction will begin mid to late summer.

[The Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code](#) was adopted on July 7, 2014 and went into effect on August 1, 2014. The Code was adopted after a systematic study of the site was undertaken by the Town of Simsbury and The Hartford in 2013 utilizing various consultants, including Gateway Planning, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Catalyst and CB Richard Ellis.

On the Horizon

Deepwater Wind Tobacco Valley Solar Project: Deepwater Wind held an Open Meeting at Simsbury High School on Thursday, June 22 sharing updated information about the project incorporating public feedback. You can watch it on [Simsbury Community Television](#) once it has been posted.

Deepwater Wind held an open meeting on May 11 to enable residents to learn about their proposed Tobacco Valley Solar Project located off Hoskins and County Road. This is not a Town project and does not involve town approvals. The project involves the sale of private property from a private seller to a private business. Deepwater Wind representatives were

available to speak about various aspects of the project including key features and benefits, wetlands studies, environmental information, visual renderings, landscaping and more. They also answered questions from residents. If you were not able to attend the meeting, you can watch it [here](#).

On June 7, an open house with town staff was held at Eno Memorial Hall to answer residents' questions about the proposed solar project process. You can watch that meeting taped by Simsbury Community Television [here](#).

The project is not subject to the town zoning requirements and accordingly will not be submitted to the Planning, Zoning or Conservation Boards for approvals. Because this solar project will generate greater than one (1) megawatt of energy, Connecticut State law requires that the approval process be done through the Connecticut Siting Council with opportunities for public input as part of State approvals. Deepwater Wind indicated they would file an application with the Siting Council in late June. The Town has some building permitting responsibility and will be alerted to all of the proceedings before the Siting Council, but does not have the authority to decide whether or not the project can move forward. The Town will seek party status in the Connecticut Siting Council proceeding. As of June 26, 2017, no application has been submitted and Deepwater Wind plans are not final. Deepwater Wind indicated they invite input from residents.

Town Counsel Robert Decrescenzo spoke to the Board of Selectmen on May 22nd about what the Siting Council is and the Town's limited role in the process. To see that discussion, visit [here](#).

To speak with a Deepwater Wind representative with questions, objections, concerns and suggestions, please contact Aileen Kenney at 401-648-0607 or akenney@dwwind.com.

More information about Deepwater Wind can be found at: <http://dwwind.com/>

Information about the Deepwater Wind Solar project in Simsbury can be found [here](#)

Girard Brothers Corporation: 32 and 36 Iron Horse Blvd. (Simscrest-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." Contact Lisa at: lhevner@simsbury-ct.gov or (860) 658-3230

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"
– Martin Luther King