



# Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET, SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Lisa L. Heavner - First Selectwoman

## *First Selectwoman's Report – November 13, 2017*

### **BUDGET UPDATE**

Dear Residents, Friends and Neighbors,

The State adopted a bipartisan compromise budget which was signed by the Governor on Halloween and results in \$357,458 in reduced state revenue to Simsbury. Fortunately, the state teacher pension cost shift to municipalities did not pass.

Because the state budget was not adopted prior to the start of our fiscal year, we included both expenditure and revenue contingencies to account for potential adverse impacts to municipal aid. During the budget process we incorporated savings by eliminating positions, moving out capital projects and adjusting our roads policy to road maintenance instead of road enhancements.

Due to careful, conservative budgeting by the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education, the Town does not anticipate sending out supplemental tax bills. Excess expenditure contingencies will be returned to the General Fund to help offset future tax increases and to further secure the Town's rainy day fund.

We know the State's failure to adopt a budget prior to the start of the Town of Simsbury's fiscal year was a major inconvenience for local taxpayers.

While this year's budget has been finalized, we anticipate continued difficult budgets for the next decade due to rising state pension and healthcare increases (due in part, to chronic underfunding by the state) and a slow-growing economy. These known factors will likely lead to future state deficits and tough state and local decisions going forward.

Your tax dollars support all that makes Simsbury the beautiful place we call home and we work hard every day to ensure you get quality and value for every tax dollar you contribute. While the years ahead will be challenging, the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education will continue to work together and with our state delegation for the best interests of Simsbury.

As we make hard choices and set priorities for the Town, we encourage all to be involved in the process. Give us your input and let us know what is important to you.

Sincerely,

Lisa Heavner  
First Selectwoman  
Town of Simsbury

Robert Pomeroy  
Chairman  
Board of Finance

Matthew Curtis  
Superintendent  
Simsbury Public Schools

## **Congratulations to Municipal Officials Elected to Office on November 7**

Congratulations to municipal officials elected on November 7 and thank you to *all* who ran for office. It's hard to put your name on a ballot and we appreciate your willingness to serve our community. A swearing-in ceremony will be held on December 4 at 6:00 p.m. at Eno Memorial Hall. All are welcome to attend!

The Town will be holding a required Close Vote Recanvass on Tuesday, November 14 because four of the elected offices were within less than one half of one percent of the total number of votes cast or the total number of electors checked as having voted in the election. Final results of the elections will be posted on the Town website [here](#).

## **Small Business Saturday: Shop Small! November 24 & 25**

Help us to support small business owners in Simsbury by shopping locally on Small Business Saturday on November 25 and on Black Friday – November 24. Economic research suggests that entrepreneurs and skilled workers are more likely to invest and settle in communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character.



Sponsored by the Simsbury Public Library and Main Street Partnership, bring any receipt from purchases made from a local business within the month of November to the Simsbury Public Library and you will be entered into a drawing to win a \$25 gift card to Fitzgerald's Foods. Please make sure to write your name and phone number on your ticket so we can contact you if you win.

## **Simsbury Celebrates on November 25**

Simsbury Celebrates is right around the corner on November 25! The fun begins at 4:00 PM, followed by a fire truck parade at 6:30 PM and fireworks at 7:30 PM. Check out the events schedule [here](#).

## **Celebrate the Season at the Senior Center!**



Join your Senior Center friends at the Holiday Party from 11 a.m. to 1p.m. on Thursday, December 7, at Eno Memorial Hall. The catered lunch will feature chicken piccata, glazed carrots, roasted potatoes, rolls and dessert. The Intonations Choral Group will begin the festivities at 11 a.m. with a sing-along to follow! The cost is \$8. To reserve your spot, please call the Senior Center at (860)658-3273.

## **Public Skating Sessions at Simsbury Farms Have Begun!**

The ice rink at Simsbury Farms is open for the season with public skating sessions on:

Saturdays: 2:15-4:15 PM and 7:30-9:00 PM

Sundays: 2:15-4:15 PM

### **Public Skate Fees:**

Residents	Children 15 and under and Senior Citizens 65+ \$3.00
	Adults \$4.00

Non-residents	Children 15 and under \$5.00
	Senior Citizens 65+ \$5.00
	Adult \$6.00

*Come join the fun!*

## **Simsbury Police Maintain State of Connecticut Accreditation**

On November 9, 2017 the Simsbury Police Department received re-accreditation through the State of Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council at an awards ceremony hosted at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. Accreditation is awarded to departments that demonstrate excellence over a three-year period in the delivery and management of police service. The department first attained state accreditation in 2004. The Simsbury Police Department is proud to be part of such a small group of departments in Connecticut to attain both State of Connecticut and national accreditation (CALEA).

## **The Latest Edition of the Senior Communicator is Hot Off the Presses**

Check out the November-December 2017 edition of the [Senior Communicator](#) for information on classes, programs, meals and more at the Senior Center. Great times are happening here!

## **Simsbury Police Department Safety Tips for Pedestrian and Bicyclists**

With the sun setting earlier, it may be more difficult for motorists to see you. Here are some safety tips to follow.

- ***Pedestrians:*** Walk facing oncoming traffic – Wear bright clothing both day and night - Wear reflective material and carry a flashlight at dusk or dawn – Don't wear headphones or talk on cellphones while crossing streets.
- ***Cyclists:*** Ride in the same direction as motor vehicles and use headlights, taillights and reflectors – Wear bright clothing both day and night – Always wear a helmet – Follow the same rules as motorists and obey all traffic signs and signals.



Remember to carry some type of ID and in the event of an emergency call 911. For more information on bicycle/pedestrian safety, please visit [here](#).

## **Connecticut Energy Assistance Program Available**

We are here to help ensure that you stay warm this winter! The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program provides assistance with winter heating costs for Connecticut's lower income households. The Town of Simsbury Social Services Department is available to take applications for this program. Size of household, income, assets, and age will determine the amount of benefits awarded. Please contact us at 860-658-3283 to make an appointment or discuss eligibility.

## **Residents Reminded to Inspect Mailboxes Before Winter Storms**



Winter is coming and the Simsbury Department of Public Works recommends residents take a few minutes to inspect their mailboxes and mailbox posts for cracks, dry rot or deterioration, especially where the post goes into the ground. Posts with cracks, dry rot or deterioration will most likely fail when hit with wet snow during the Town's snowplowing operations. It is easier to replace a weak or worn out mailbox post during the fall months before the ground is frozen.

If you have any questions on preparing your mailbox for the winter season, please visit the link to the town's mailbox information [here](#) or contact the Department of Public Works at 860.658.3222.

## **Town Forest Park Improvements**

Improvements to Town Forest Park approved in the June referendum budget have begun with an anticipated completion targeted for November 30, 2017. Improvements will include replacement of the trailhead footbridge, paved parking lot, paved walking path to the trailhead and pavilion restoration. Access to the parking area, trailhead and pavilion will be prohibited during construction and we request that residents seek alternative access points to the trail system. Thanks for working with us!



## **Help Prevent Car Thefts or Burglaries**

Help reduce car thefts and burglaries by not leaving your keys or valuables in your car and by locking your car. Click [here](#) to watch a Simsbury Policy video on preventing car thefts and burglaries.

## **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.

## **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](http://www.simsburyevents.com)



## **Town of Simsbury Charter, Ordinances Available On-Line in Electronic Format**

The Town of Simsbury’s Charter and Ordinances are now available on-line in electronic format. The service is provided by a cloud-based platform called eCode 360© by General Code, and it simplifies how you can access and use Simsbury’s municipal code on-line. It is built with intuitive design, responsive navigation and robust search functionality which will assist staff, elected officials, board members and residents while researching the Town Charter and Ordinances. When an amendment is made to the Charter or Code, the electronic version will automatically be updated by General Code. The new on-line electronic format can be accessed [here](#).

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### **Ribbon Cutting for Headdress Beauty Lounge**

A ribbon cutting sponsored by the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce for *Headdress Beauty Lounge* located at 1348 Hopmeadow Street was held on November 9, 2017, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Headdress Beauty offers beauty services in a way that nurtures inner beauty and peace. Check out their website [here](#).

### **Ribbon Cutting and Welcome to Dr. Douglas M. Hope**

Please join us for a ribbon cutting for *Dr. Douglas M. Hope*, DMD, MAGD, at 8 Plank Hill Road from 12:00-1:00 PM sponsored by the Simsbury Chamber on November 15, 2017. You can check out their website [here](#). Glad to have you in town!

### **Ribbon Cutting and Welcome to Hello Lovely**

Congratulations to *Hello Lovely* located at 771 Hopmeadow Street, offering makeup and lash extension artistry. A ribbon cutting sponsored by Main Street Partnership and the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce will be held on November 16 from 5:00-7:00 PM. Check out their website [here](#).

### **Ribbon Cutting for Thai Ocha**

Congratulations and welcome to Thai Ocha located at 1616 Hopmeadow Street, offering great Thai cuisine. A ribbon cutting, sponsored by the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce, will be held on November 28 from 5:30-6:30 PM. Check out their website [here](#).

### **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](#)

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

*Grant Writing for Businesses* – Wednesday, November 29, 5:30-7:30 PM

Guest speaker Rebecca Tuttle will show you how to incorporate grant writing techniques into your business plan. She will also discuss how to dig deeper into market research as it relates to developing your grant writing strategy. Co-Sponsored by the Greater Hartford SCORE. For more information or to register, click [here](#).





Aspen Green (formerly referred to as Garden Homes) on the south side of town along Hopmeadow Street is now under construction with some units occupied. 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). 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 complete on the first 128-unit phase. The second phase of 96 units is currently in construction with full completion in November 2018. The last phase of 48 townhomes is planned for 2019. You can visit their website at: <http://www.lifeinsimsbury.com> for information on their sale and rental offerings or <http://www.highcroftapartments.com/> for Highcroft.

Berkshire Bank: At the Corner of Bushy Hill and Albany Turnpike, Berkshire Bank has started their interior renovations. The Zoning Commission recently approved signage for the tenant. They hope to be open by the end of December.

Powder Forest - Carson Way: Single Family Homes/Cluster Development, 74 Units (Stratton Brook Rd.). To date, 21 units have been completed with another 6 units under construction and another unit about to go under construction. The anticipated completion date is 2022.

Cambridge Crossing: The Town planning boards have approved 88 residential units for the property along Hoskins Road with twenty percent affordable housing. The applicant has broken ground on the project. It is anticipated construction will continue over the next year.

### **Permitted**

Big Y reaffirmed in July 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.

Dunkin Donuts: Great American Donut Inc. of East Plainville, CT received approval to construct a new Dunkin Donuts store at 1225 Hopmeadow Street currently owned by Antonio's LLS. Construction was approved on September 18, 2017.

The Ensign House: Located on the corner of Drake Hill and Hopmeadow Street, this property was recently sold to Mark and Ieke Scully, with the goals of preserving "the stone mansion, turning it into residential apartments and building additional net zero residential units on the property."

### **The Silverman Group:**

On May 3, 2017, the Town's Zoning Commission approved an application by Silverman SL for an approval under the Hartford-Simsbury Form Based Code. The project 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 developer broke ground in mid-September.

## **On the Horizon**

*Deepwater Wind Tobacco Valley Solar Project:* Deepwater Wind has proposed a 26.4 megawatt solar project (Tobacco Valley Solar) located on five separate parcels of land totaling 289 acres of property owned by Griffin Land off Hoskins and County Roads in the North end of Simsbury. The land is currently zoned for industrial and residential use. Under Connecticut State law, entities of this size and output are permitted by the Connecticut Siting Council and are not subject to local zoning and land use requirements for the Town of Simsbury. Deepwater Wind has filed a Petition for Declaratory Ruling with the Connecticut Siting Council: Petition No. 1313, which can be found on the Connecticut Siting Council webpage [here](#). The Town requested and was granted party status in the Connecticut Siting Council proceeding.

The Siting Council concluded its public hearing on Petition 1313 – DWW Solar II, LLC on November 2, 2017. Counsel for the Town is currently preparing final briefs for the Siting Council.

*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>

*“What is the essence of life? To serve others and do good.”*

Aristotle

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