
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Eric Wellman – First Selectman
DATE: June 24, 2019

Planning Department

- The Zoning Commission approved a text amendment on behalf of McLean at their June 3rd meeting . The text amendment was required as part of the development of a new 74 unit independent living building within the existing campus.
- 200 Hopmeadow Street (former Hartford property): The project includes 282 rental units (about half have been permitted so far), a 120 bed assisted living facility, and 11 thousand square feet of commercial space. All of the development is on the north side of the property. The south side, where the former Hartford building was located, has no development at this time. Construction is underway and the assisted living facility is expected to be open by August.
- Planning Director Mike Glidden recently shared an update with the Economic Development Commission, summarizing key projects around town that are either planned or underway. It has the latest update on projects we frequently receive questions about including the former Hartford property, Powder Forest, and the Big Y parcel. You can find the full PowerPoint [here](#).

Ribbon Cuttings & New Businesses

- Metro Bis is holding a ribbon cutting in their new location at 690 Hopmeadow Street, June 25th at 5:00.
- We are pleased to welcome SOMA Grille, which recently opened in the 1820 House. Their ribbon cutting will be held July 9th at 5pm.
- Welcome Board and Brush to Simsbury Town Shoppes. Board and Brush is a do it yourself wood sign workshop.

Opportunities to Serve Your Town

There are more than a dozen boards and commissions that serve our town whose members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. I frequently meet people who are interested in opportunities to serve, but don't know what's out there or how to get involved. That's why I'll be including a standing section in my First Selectman's report with current vacancies. Boards with openings include:

- Board of Ethics
- Community for Care
- Design Review Board
- Historic District Commission
- Insurance Committee
- Public Building Committee
- Recycling Committee
- Tourism Committee

If you're interested in applying for any of these opportunities, you can submit a [volunteer form](#) online. If you have any questions, you can always reach out to me directly at ewellman@simsbury-ct.gov.

Tobacco Valley Solar

Construction is underway on the Tobacco Valley Solar development on the north side of town off of Hoskins and County Roads. Construction is expected to wrap up in mid-October. I recognize how disruptive the construction process is for residents who live in the area. One of the most important things

we can do is keep the lines of communication open through the summer. Anyone with concerns can always reach out to me or to Aaron Svedlow, the project's development manager (aaron@nleservices.com).

I'm told that the next 5 to 6 weeks will be the most disruptive from a noise standpoint due to the pounding of pilings into the soil. Toward the end of July/early August, the noise level is expected to be significantly reduced as the panels are installed on the stands.

At our May 29th Board of Selectman meeting, Planning Director Mike Glidden and town engineer Jeff Shea shared a presentation on the Tobacco Valley Solar Project, the 26 Megawatt solar installation. You can access a link to that presentation [here](#).

If you're interested in learning more about the project, we have aggregated additional information on the [First Selectman's Page](#) of the Town website.

Summer Reading Program

The Simsbury Library's summer reading program is back and people of all ages are encouraged to participate. The program runs through August 10th.

- Log your reading to earn prizes
- Each time you visit the library you'll get a raffle ticket for the chance to win one of many great prizes
- Each week, the library will be doing different giveaways. This week is a tote bag and next week is a free swim pass to Simsbury Farms.

You can learn more about the program and sign up [here](#).

Bike at Rotary Park

Bring your bike to Rotary Park on Ironhorse Blvd. on July 10th from 2 – 3:30pm. There will be free helmet fittings provided by the Simsbury Police Department, bicycle safety checks provided by the Bicycle Cellar and a frozen treat for all who attend. Thank you to the Simsbury Public Library and the Bicycle Advisory Committee for organizing.

Picnic in the Park

The Aging and Disability Commission and the Simsbury Special Education Parent Teacher Organization invite all residents of Simsbury who have a disability to join us for a picnic, ice cream truck, and entertainment at St. Catherine of Siena Church. The event is free and will be taking place July 27th from 11:30 – 1:30. A big thank you to Kane's Market and the Aging and Disability Commission for providing the food. Please RSVP to Diana Yeisley Yeisley2@comcast.net or call the Senior Center 860-658-3273.

School News

The Board of Education has engaged a consulting firm on a Facilities Master Plan to develop a roadmap to address concerns around aging buildings and student capacity. On June 5th, the District held a public hearing and information session to solicit feedback and share some initial findings around enrollment projections and building conditions. You can learn more about the work going on and find a link to that presentation [here](#).

New Park Construction

This month the town is beginning work on a new park next to the Flower Bridge. It will include new landscaping, paver walkways, and a new pavilion. This project will also improve access to the river for the launching of kayaks. While this park will enhance an already amazing attraction, the town will unfortunately need to close the Flower Bridge for much of the 2019 season.

If you have questions about the new park or the bridge closure, I encourage you to [review a presentation](#), which was delivered earlier this spring to the Board of Selectmen. The temporary closure of the bridge is not something we take lightly, but I'm very excited that we'll be able to unveil the new park in time for Simsbury's 350th celebration.

2019 Hometown Hero Awards

Congratulations to our 2019 Hometown Heroes! This year's recipients include an amazing group of Simsbury residents: Nancy Buggy, Lisa Gray, Ferg Jansen, Laura Riley, and The Simsbury Garden Club. Each year, the Town designates Hometown Heroes to recognize people and organizations who go above and beyond to give back to our community. In my time as First Selectman, I have been deeply touched by the level of engagement in our community and the many ways people give their time and talent to make our town the beautiful place it is to live. Congratulations to the 2019 recipients!

Simsbury Featured in CT Magazine

The May issue of Connecticut Magazine featured a [beautiful article about Simsbury](#). It shared many of the places we love including our farms, hikes, and restaurants, and is a reminder how fortunate we are to live in this community!

Save the Dates!

The Board of Selectman has approved public gathering permits for the following 2019 events:

- [The Valley Collector Club Car Show](#) will take place Sunday July 21st in the parking lots along Iron Horse Blvd.
- Simsbury is the summer home of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra! [The Talcott Mountain Music Festival](#) will feature five concerts June – July (6/28, 7/5, 7/12, 7/19, 7/26)
- The Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department is hosting a Chicken Barbecue on June 29th at the Weatogue Fire Station in celebration of their 75th anniversary.
- [Circus Smirkus](#) is a youth traveling circus that will be coming to the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center July 30th and 31st for four shows.
- The 2019 CT Volley DIG Tournament is a volley ball tournament that will be taking place August 3rd and 4th at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center. Spectators are welcome to watch for free.
- Septemberfest is a 3 day event at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center from September 6th – 8th. This year's event will feature a fire truck parade on Iron Horse Blvd. in celebration of the Fire Department's 75th Anniversary.
- The Simsbury Woman's Club's [50th Arts and Crafts Festival](#) will take place September 14th and 15th in the parking lots along Iron Horse Blvd.
- The [2019 Walk MS](#) will take place September 15th starting at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.
- The annual [Fly-In, Car Show, and Food Truck Festival](#) will be taking place September 22nd at Simsbury Airport with a rain date of September 29th.
- The 2019 [Spooktacular Chili Challenge](#) is scheduled for October 20th at the Simsbury Meadows Performing Arts Center.

STEM Summer Camps

The Simsbury Public Library is offering two STEM summer camps to introduce elementary-age students to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

- July 22nd – 26th
- From 9:30 – noon, camp will be offered to students entering grades 1 – 3.
- From 1 – 5pm, there will be a session for girls entering grades 4 – 6.
- Cost is \$25

- [Learn more here](#)

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: June 24, 2019

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Economic Development: One of the four focus areas identified by the Board of Selectmen for the new Economic Development Commission (EDC) is business recruitment, retention and outreach. As part of that initiative, the EDC recently piloted a business roundtable event on June 12th. The purpose of the roundtable is to discuss challenges facing local business owners, better understand the issues that are important to them, and learn how we as a town can better support our business community. Approximately 25 business owners, Town staff, and members of the EDC gathered at Westminster School to engage in open dialogue on what is working well, identify areas of concern, and discuss the changes that need to be made in order for businesses to grow and prosper in Simsbury. From signage regulations to parking and traffic control, the group discussed the challenges facing current business owners and those seeking to open businesses here in Town. The EDC will use the feedback collected at the roundtables to make recommendations on existing policies, creating incentives and providing business resources. Approximately 25-30 businesses will be invited to each quarterly event on a rotating basis; the next roundtable will take place in September.

Naming of the New Park at 1 Old Bridge Road: If you have a name you would like to suggest for the new Park being constructed at 1 Old Bridge Road, please go to our website and complete the proposal form. The Town Manager's Office is currently accepting suggestions through 7:00pm on July 15th. The 1 Old Bridge Road Park Naming Rights Committee is scheduled to meet in late July to review the suggestions and prepare a recommendation that will be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen at a meeting later this summer or early fall. Please contact the Town Manager's Office if you have any questions.

Open Space Advisory Duties: The Open Space Committee has established a work group to aid in updating our open space acquisition guidelines (first update since the late 1990's), creating a stewardship policy, recommending land management policies/practices, and updating our agricultural leases. The work group kicked-off this project today. The work group will primarily be staffed by the Culture, Parks and Recreation Department and the Planning Department.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES

Library: Beginning July 1, Simsbury Public Library will begin a one year fine free pilot. Overdue materials borrowed from Simsbury Library will not be assessed fines. This initiative is being undertaken to remove the barrier of fines and increase access to the Library's materials and services. For those wishing to contribute to the Library financially, there will be Library Support Jars available at both checkout desks for this purpose. Fines will continue to be assessed for high demand items such as museum passes, pronto books and the Library of Things. Users will also still be responsible for the cost of lost or damaged items.

Planning: FEMA has contacted the Town regarding engineering models associated with flood insurance rate map updates (see attached correspondence). The new maps and flood insurance study have not been completed. Planning Staff will monitor the progress on this project.