
FIRST SELECTMAN'S REPORT - OCTOBER 10TH, 2018

Bear Safety

We are hearing from a growing number of residents who are concerned about the increasing bear population. While bear sightings have become more common in recent years, this year we have seen a marked increase in bears coming closer to people's homes. This trend is reflected in our 9-1-1 call data and is personally concerning to me. Nationally, attacks by black bears are exceedingly rare. Still, I am concerned about the growing proximity of these wild animals.

I am in regular contact with Senator Witkos and Representative Hampton and have shared my concerns. Policy that would impact our bear population is determined at the state level, which is why we are reaching out to the relevant agency to share our concerns. I know that when the conversation comes up about managing our bear population it can evoke strong feelings. I want to be clear that I am not advocating any particular policy solution at this point. I'm a fact driven person and am interested in gathering information and learning more about how other parts of our country manage similar challenges so we, as a community, can determine the best path forward for Simsbury.

Thursday October 11th, from 6 – 8pm at Eno Hall, State Representative John Hampton will be hosting a forum on bear safety. Mark Rudewicz, the town's animal control officer will be there to answer your questions.

Economic Development Commission

At its meeting Wednesday October 10th, the Board of Selectmen appointed 7 town residents to serve on the new Economic Development Commission (EDC). Over the next month, my plan is to work with the Board of Selectmen to identify specific projects with measurable goals that the EDC will focus on in its first term. Nearly 20 people applied to serve on the new EDC. I am continually impressed by the passion and quality of people who step up to serve our town and I am grateful for everyone who applied.

Ribbon Cuttings

MedSpa CT will be holding a ribbon cutting on **Thursday October 18th, from 5:30 – 6:30pm** at the Simsbury Town Shops.

The new Dunkin Donuts at 1261 Hopmeadow Street is holding a ribbon cutting on **Thursday October 18th at 11:30am**.

Congratulations to Stop & Shop which held its grand re-opening last week to mark the completion of its renovated store.

Planning Update

- Work is proceeding at 200 Hopmeadow Street (40 acre parcel north of the former campus property). Presently the 120,000 sq ft assisted living facility is under construction. This facility will have 120 beds. 124 of the 280 residential units have been issued building permits and are presently under construction. The project is approaching a milestone based on residential units under construction that the two commercial buildings will have to be constructed.

- The zone change off route 44 has been filed and will be scheduled for a public hearing in November. The application is to change 18 acres located in Simsbury from the current R-40 (residential zoning district) to B3 (Design Business District).
- Dunkin Donuts received a certificate of occupancy. They will be opening the store location for 1261 Hopmeadow October 11, 2018 to the public and have a grand opening scheduled for October 18, 2018.
- Planning staff has been approached by a person who is interested in re-developing the Wagner Ford Site (aka Big Y property). No plans have been filed.
- No new news for Gibbs Mobile. We are waiting to hear from property owner as for status of negotiations with potential operator.

Simsbury Trail News

- Simsbury Free Bike will end the season on Monday, October 29. All bicycles will be removed from designated distribution centers until the season reopens on May 1, 2019. There is still time to ride the trails and enjoy the fall weather. To find a location go to www.simsbury.bike
- On Friday, October 12, Squadron Line School will participate in the Walk/Bike school event. This event is part of the national Safe Routes to School initiative. ***Drivers are reminded to take extra care in the area around arrival and dismissal time.***
- The Town of Simsbury now has an infrared trail counter that records the number of users passing it. A state-wide census of trail use is underway. Last year it recorded more than 1.4 million trips taken by walkers, cyclists, hikers and others looking to get outside. Simsbury now has the ability to obtain info about who is using the trails and helps the town and the state in their efforts of integrating trails into the community and vice versa.

Mark Your Calendar

Martin Luther King Groundbreaking Ceremony

Thursday October 11th at 5pm at the Simsbury Free Library, there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King in CT Memorial. Additional parking is available in the public parking lot at the end of Wilcox Street.

Simsbury Grange DIY Workshops

This fall the Simsbury Grange is cosponsoring a series of workshops on traditional “Do-It-Yourself” homesteading skills. The workshops will include woodworking, gardening and beekeeping and **start on Saturday October 13th from 8 am to 4 pm** with “Colonial Woodworking and Timber Framing.” This unique opportunity will overlap with the annual Heritage Day event at the Simsbury Historical Society, 800 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury. For questions and to RSVP contact the Simsbury Grange or nevancarling@gmail.com.

Richman Spooktacular Chili Challenge

Saturday October 27th from noon to 5pm at Simsbury Meadows, the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce presents its annual Chili Challenge. Admission is \$10 for anyone 11 and older. Admission includes all the chili you can eat, music, vendors, and a more. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit SimsburyChili.com.

Stay Connected

You can sign up for email updates from the town so you always know what's happening in our community. On the homepage of the Town website, click "[subscribe to news.](#)" and you'll be able to specify exactly what kind of news you want to receive.

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. We're always looking for volunteers willing to serve and I'm pleased to share that the Town has made the process easier and more transparent. You can learn more about all of our boards and commissions, current vacancies, and how to apply [here](#).

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Maria E. Capriola – Town Manager
DATE: October 10, 2018

BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUSINESS:

Budget Kick-Off: The tri-board meeting between the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and Board of Education has been scheduled for Monday, December 3, 2018 at 6pm in Program Room 1 of the Simsbury Public Library.

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS & NOTES:

Town Manager's Office: Our Deputy Town Manager and I attended our annual professional development conference from September 23rd-September 26th. We are grateful to the town for budgeting funds for us to attend and for supporting our development. We attended many informative sessions on topics such as: regulating short-term rentals; building a municipal broadband network; emerging workforce expectations; public investment as a catalyst for downtown economic development; age friendly communities; citizen engagement through social media; and creating an organizational culture to attract talent.

Culture, Parks and Recreation: The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association has selected Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation Director, Tom Tyburski, as its 2018 Outstanding Professional Of The Year. This award is truly a testament to Tom's hard work and dedication within the field of Parks and Recreation. On behalf of the Town of Simsbury, we congratulate Tom on this recognition. Tom will be honored at an awards luncheon on November 20th at Mohegan Sun and Convention Center.

Social Services: Elderly Outreach Services staff, Carolyn Krystiniak, will be completing her CHOICES training this month. The training focuses on the Medicare Medical Plans which involve original Medicare, Medicare Advantage Plans and the MSP eligibility program with LIS which assists the low income elderly with medical coverage. After a final examination she will be a certified CHOICES counselor and will begin assisting our seniors with their Medicare and supplemental health insurance plan needs. We are very pleased to be able to offer this service to our residents.

Social Services: We have concluded accepting applications for the Renters' Rebate program after having processed 130 applications for our residents. We are now beginning to take applications for the current energy assistance season. Households can apply for assistance for all heating sources including deliverable and non-deliverable sources. Please call Social Services at 860-658-3283 with questions or to make an appointment.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Freedom of Information Act Training: As a reminder, the Freedom of Information Act Training for Board, Committee, and Commission members and employees will be held on Monday, October 29, 2018 at 5:30pm in Program Room 1 of the Simsbury Public Library. The session will be conducted by Tom Hennick, Public Education Officer at the Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC). To RSVP, please contact Tom Fitzgerald at tmintern@simsbury-ct.gov or (860) 658-3230.