

DESIGN GUIDELINES

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT



The Town of Simsbury seeks to protect its New England village character while creating opportunities for higher-density, mixed-use development.



The design guidelines illustrate strategies for integrating higher-density development with the traditional village character of the Town Center.



The design guidelines address positioning the taller portion of a building (A) to minimize shading on adjacent sidewalks and open spaces to prevent ice-over.

Town Center Design Guidelines

The Town of Simsbury, Connecticut, recently updated the regulatory system that shapes development in its historic center. Previously, Winter & Company had worked as a member of a consultant team to implement Connecticut's second form-based code in the Simsbury Town Center, and in this next assignment drafted new design guidelines that integrate with the code to protect historic resources and promote compatible redevelopment.

Simsbury is located at the northern end of the Farmington River Valley, on the outskirts of metropolitan Hartford. Its Town Center, on and around Hopmeadow Street, features historic New England residential, commercial and civic buildings, as well as newer development focused on retail and services.

A design charette conducted in 2009 by Winter & Company and Code Studio of Austin, Texas, helped articulate the community's vision for protecting the historic development pattern along Hopmeadow Street while encouraging compatible, mixed-use development closer to the Farmington River. The form-based Simsbury Center Code was a critical first step toward implementing the vision. The Town Center Design Guidelines provide an additional level of discussion and coordinate with the Code to provide innovative and flexible design solutions.



Town officials and residents helped shape the design guidelines and ensure that they are properly coordinated with the recently adopted form-based code for the Town Center.

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The complete Code and Design Guidelines system includes:

- » By-right code standards with flexibility provided through alternative compliance review using the design guidelines;
- » Extensively illustrated design guidelines to help shape development in several unique contexts throughout the Town Center;
- » An updated historic preservation system that is closely coordinated with the existing Simsbury Center Code and new Town Center Design Guidelines.

The project was completed in 2012.

SERVICES:

- » New Design Guidelines for the Town Center
- » Updates to the existing form-based Simsbury Center Code
- » Community workshops and stakeholder meetings

CLIENT:

Hiram Peck, Planning Director
City of Simsbury

DATE:

2011-2012

building modules Reflecting Traditional Lot and Building Widths



Traditional Building Widths. The traditional development pattern in the Town Center is composed primarily of smaller buildings reflecting the original pattern of underlying lots.



The design guidelines illustrate strategies for reflecting traditional lot and building widths in larger scale redevelopment.



The design guidelines help protect views towards the rural landscape of the Farmington River Valley and maintain the distinctive character of the Town Center.