

# Old Lyme's Hall's Rd. Improvements Committee Presents an Update for the Community, Offers New 'Overlay Zone' to Ease Property Owner Concerns

December 22, 2021 by [Admin](#) [Leave a Comment](#)



The Halls Road Improvements Committee is working diligently to create an improved environment for everyone along this stretch of the road between Rte. 156 and Lyme St.

**OLD LYME** — The Halls Road Improvements Committee (HRIC) is currently working on three key areas of the Halls Road Master Plan, as follows:

- rezoning the commercial district for future private development
- grant applications for public improvement
- signage along Halls Road.

Grants and re-zoning will require some additional funding to pay for outside technical expertise in particular areas.

**Re-zoning:**

The initial re-zoning application for the Halls Rd. Village District was withdrawn on Nov. 8, in part to permit the committee to make significant revisions.

The Village District proposal addressed the recommendations of the Master Plan but created nonconformity issues for existing properties. To meet the concerns of property owners, the committee is adopting a more flexible approach by creating a new *Overlay Zone*.

This new approach maintains the current C-30s zone, allowing owners to make changes to existing structures within the old regulations. If they wish to take advantage of the new opportunities, they can do so under the *Overlay Zone*, which permits the development of multi-family residential complexes mixed with commercial properties.

Elements of the original Village District proposal will be included within the *Overlay Zone*, such as buildings set close to Halls Rd. with commercial uses on the first floor and residential allowed above or beyond the roadway.

The *Overlay Zone* offers incentives for residential and commercial development along Halls Rd. that not only yield greater profit for property owners but also increase Old Lyme's tax base in the district.

Over time, this rezoning will create a vibrant, walkable, bike-able, mixed-use neighborhood focused on serving the retail and small-scale residential needs of Old Lyme.

### **Grants:**

The grants subcommittee will be applying for several grants to help implement the public improvements for landscaping, sidewalks, bikeways, lighting, and new crosswalks.

The largest grant from the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) is state-funded and will be reviewed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT.)

The BSC Group, which the Town of Old Lyme engaged to create a formal Halls Road Plan, has introduced CT DOT to the plans, but the LOTICIP review will be DOT's first *official* review of the HRIC plans.

With the full master plan and engineering details in hand, CT DOT will be prepared to approve or suggest changes to create what they call "complete streets" along Halls Rd.

The committee expects to apply by late 2022 with a goal to secure a grant by 2023-2024.

Additional grants for trails and connections will be applied for as early as January 2022. These focus on funding for the new pedestrian bridge and trails from Lyme Street and across the Lieutenant River.

### **Signage:**

The signage subcommittee is looking to clean up the roadway signage that has gone untended for many years. This would include straightening out sign posts and/or removing repetitive signs with the goal of making way-finding clear and attractive.

**Funding:**

In January, the committee will seek additional funding to cover the cost of legal help (both for zoning language and for easements along the proposed path), and for additional work from BSC Group (again, for both zoning and grants).

***Editor's Notes:** i) The HRIC welcomes comments on these revised proposals at [hallsroadcommittee@oldlyme-ct.gov](mailto:hallsroadcommittee@oldlyme-ct.gov). Also, if you would like to help with any aspect of the committee's work, contact the HRIC at [hallsroadcommittee@oldlyme-ct.gov](mailto:hallsroadcommittee@oldlyme-ct.gov).*

*ii) This article is based on a press release issued by the HRIC*