

HALLS ROAD OVERLAY DISTRICT DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

1. Introduction

Old Lyme is a traditional New England coastal town in New London County, located at the mouth of the Connecticut River where it meets Long Island Sound. It has a rich history of farming, fishing, shipbuilding, light industry, and trade. It occupies about 27 square miles with a mix of shoreline, tidal marsh, inland wetlands, fields, and forested hills. The Connecticut River is the only major river in the northeastern United States without a major port or harbor at its mouth, and the lower Connecticut is relatively undisturbed by development. Old Lyme has several beaches, and waterfronts along both the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. The town has a strong sense of place, with numerous small and cohesive neighborhoods and a historic main thoroughfare on Lyme Street. In its day Old Lyme has played important roles in the political and cultural history of Connecticut and the nation.

In the years-long discussions leading to the Master Plan for Halls Road, the single most widely-shared concern among residents was that any new development should “look like Old Lyme.” These Design Guidelines address that shared concern. The Guidelines take Lyme Street, the town’s mixed-use main shopping district until 1960, as the model for Halls Road. The HROD zoning promotes the creation of a walk-able, bike-able, mixed-use town center along Halls Road; one that is an attractive place to live, work, browse, meet, and do business. The Design Review Process is an important part of creating a new town center that is integrated, visually and functionally, with the historic town center on Lyme Street.

2. Purpose

The purpose of these HROD Design Review Guidelines (“Guidelines”) is to establish clear standards for site work and structures to guide recommendations for new or renovated buildings within the HROD that will:

- provide a framework for design that draws inspiration from the traditions of Old Lyme and similarly situated Connecticut communities,
- promote the safe, functional, and attractive development of the HROD,
- enhance the public experience, and
- reinforce the enhancement of the distinctive landscape and architectural character within the Town of Old Lyme.

Images on the following pages reflect the character, style, design elements, scale, form, details, articulation, etc. that shall be reflected in the design of new or rehabilitated structures in the HROD.

A Halls Road Overlay District Design Review Committee shall have the responsibility of reviewing, in accordance with these Guidelines, the plans for any structure to be constructed, reconstructed, or exteriorly renovated or substantially changed in the District. The Design Review Committee shall consist of three residents of Old Lyme. While not required, it is preferable that at least one member of the Committee shall be a professional architect or other design professional licensed to practice in the State of Connecticut. If such professional architect or other design professional is not available on the Committee, the Committee shall hire a professional architect or other design professional to assist with the design review, and the cost of this peer review shall be paid by the applicant. The Committee may incorporate any peer review comments into their report.

3. Architectural Design

No Special Permit required under the Halls Road Overlay District zoning regulations shall be approved nor shall any building or structure be constructed, reconstructed, or exteriorly renovated or substantially improved in the District until the Zoning Commission considers the timely report of the Halls Road Overlay District Design Review Committee ("Committee") which shall provide recommendations regarding the overall architectural style of the proposed site and building design in accordance with these Guidelines. The Committee will review a project to determine if it is in harmony with these Guidelines, the District or sub-sections of the District in which such activity is taking place; protects property values in the District and preserves and enhances the beauty of the community, its historical integrity and architecture. In making the determination regarding architectural integrity and overall architectural style, the Committee shall take into consideration the architectural style of historic Lyme Street structures as depicted in these Guidelines.

In addition to reflecting the intent of these Guidelines, new buildings and renovations should be designed to fit the specific characteristics of their particular site. The architecture should be influenced by traditional New England building forms and town-making patterns, the specific needs of the intended users, the nature of the intended use and other site-specific factors. All buildings shall follow fundamental architectural principles of scale, massing and appropriate detail commensurate with the Design Criteria included in these Guidelines, and special attention will be paid to the essential elements of building design. These elements include, but are not limited to: foundations; windows, doors and shutters; porches, stoops, entries and railings; siding and trim; roofs and dormers; and appurtenances such as: chimneys, gutters and downspouts, columns, vents, exterior lighting and building identification.

Human Scale

Buildings and site elements should be designed to human scale. The forms, massing and openings of buildings should be proportional to the size of a human figure; average height of an adult male (5'9") or female (5' 4"). Many architectural elements can add scale to a building – such as water features, planters, doorways and recessed openings, divided pane windows, building mounted light fixtures, dormers, cupolas, projecting rooflines, covered walkways, colonnades, and similar features – provided they are designed as integral parts of the overall structure. Long straight walls exceeding 40' should use architectural features to give the appearance of smaller, individual buildings. Such features might include bays, projections, recesses, balconies, material variations, parapet heights, window patterns, and other architectural details.

Freestanding Accessory Structures

Where freestanding non-habitable structures are allowed (e.g., ATMs, garages, canopies, storage units, recycling sheds, trash enclosures, cart corrals, utility buildings) they should meet the same design standards as the principal building through repetition of architectural forms, materials, colors, and detailing.

Inappropriate Materials and Façade Treatment

Certain materials are not considered appropriate for use in the HROD. Such materials include but are not limited to: vinyl or aluminum siding; a faux brick or stone treatment; synthetic stucco (Dryvit) or Exterior Insulation & Finish Systems (EIFS) concrete or similar manufactured exterior block materials; blank walls exceeding ten feet (10') in length before there is a door, window, set-back, bump-outs or application of other architectural style that add interest and articulation to the façade; chain link

fence; PVC screening fence or panels. This list may be expanded when deemed appropriate by a recommendation by the Committee and final approval by the Commission.

4. Approving Authority

The final approving authority shall be the Old Lyme Zoning Commission.

5. Submission Requirements

The applicant shall provide adequate information to enable the Committee to make a determination if the project conforms to these Design Guidelines.

All applications under this section shall demonstrate how the appearance of the proposed structure conforms to the criteria in Section 7 of these Guidelines, and, if applicable, the criteria in the Zoning Regulations.Architectural Plans

For new construction and major alterations, an application shall include architectural plans of all buildings, other structures, site improvements and signs. Such plans shall include preliminary floor plans and exterior elevations showing height and bulk, roof lines, door and window details, exterior building materials, color and all exterior lighting and be stamped and signed by an architect licensed in the State of Connecticut.

Site Development Plans

Site Development Plans shall show paving materials, landscaping, fencing, lighting design and other features of the site and buildings which are visible from the exterior of any building on the site or from adjacent properties or streets and which may impact on the character or quality of life on adjoining properties and throughout the HROD. Design review requirements shall apply to all structures, exterior renovations, and substantial improvements within the HROD.

Streetscape Plans

In cases of new construction or major modifications to existing buildings, a scaled streetscape colored rendering showing the proposed structure(s) in relation to the context of the surrounding area, particularly regarding the criteria set forth in Section 7, shall be provided.

Said streetscape plan shall include the following:

- Building elevations.
- Streetscape materials and furniture.
- Other appurtenances (i.e., light fixtures/poles, utilities, signage, landscaping, street signs, etc.).

6. Design Criteria

The following criteria shall be considered in all designs. Designs shall be in keeping with the new architectural fabric of the District, which shall reflect the architectural style of Old Lyme as found along Lyme Street and the precedent images included in these Guidelines.

7. Criteria

Any new building or structure or exterior renovation or substantial improvement of a building or structure visible from a public street or water body should adhere to the following criteria.

- New construction and renovations should generally be compatible with the architectural style proposed for the District through these Guidelines.
- New construction and renovations to existing structures or buildings onsite that have no historical character, and which seek to create an incompatible appearance are discouraged.
- The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided unless the alteration is necessary and unavoidable to the renovation.
- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterizes a building, structure, or site and are consistent with these Guidelines should be treated with sensitivity.
- Deteriorated architectural features desired by these guidelines should be repaired or replaced to the extent possible.
- Renovations and additions which destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural characteristics as encouraged by these Guidelines are discouraged.
- Significant landscape features shall be designed by landscape architect licensed in the State of Connecticut.

8. Design Review Procedure

Application for Design Review Committee Recommendation

Each application for design review by the Committee shall accompany its associated Special Permit Application to the Commission and shall include ten (10) hard copies and one electronic file of the drawings and application materials, which shall meet the requirements of these Guidelines. Applications that are determined to be incomplete shall not be accepted.

All applicants are encouraged to participate in a pre-application development meeting with the Town's Zoning Enforcement Officer and/or the Committee itself to review the application and submission package.

Receipt and Review of Application

Upon receipt of the accompanying Special Permit Application by the Commission, the application for design review shall be referred to the Committee for a report and advisory recommendation. The Committee shall complete its review and report to the Commission within 35 days. In the event that a report is not forwarded to the Commission within 35 days of receipt, the report shall be deemed favorable by the Commission.

Glossary of Architectural Terms

- **Arcade:** A range of arches supported on piers or columns attached to or detached from the wall.
- **Architectural style:** the set of features that make a building or other structure notable and identifiable, such as the form, massing, historical elements, façade articulation, trim, details, fenestration, materials, and other elements contributing to an identifiable style.
- **Awning:** A roof-like cover extending over or in front of a storefront (as over the deck or in front of a door and/or window) as a shelter.
- **Bay:** A main division of a structure. A regularly repeated unit on a building elevation defined by columns, pilasters, or other vertical elements, or defined by a given number of windows or openings.

- Bay window: A window or series of windows forming a bay in a room and projecting outward from the wall.
- Blank Wall: An exterior building wall with no openings and generally constructed of a single material, uniform texture, and on a single plane.
- Brackets: Ornamental pieces placed under eaves, cornices, windowsills, etc., which appear to provide structural support.
- Bulkhead: A vertical partition separating compartments.
- Canopy: An ornamental projection, over a door, window, niche, etc.
- Clerestory: An outside wall of a room or building that rises above an adjoining roof and contains windows.
- Column: A supporting post--often round in shape--found on storefronts, porches, and balconies; may be fluted or smooth.
- Corner block: A square, relatively flat block of wood, often decoratively carved, placed at the upper corners on each side of the wood framing around a door.
- Cornice: The projecting uppermost portion of a wall, sometimes treated in a decorative manner with brackets.
- Cupola: A small roof tower, usually rising from the roof ridge.
- Dormer: A window set vertically in a structure projecting from a sloping roof.
- Eave: The part of the roof which extends beyond the side wall.
- Façade: The face of a building, especially the principal face.
- Fascia: Any relatively broad, flat, horizontal surface, as the outer edge of a cornice, a stringcourse, etc.
- Fenestration: The arrangement of windows and other openings in a wall.
- Frieze: The portion of the facade found just below the point where the wall surface meets the building's cornice or roof overhang.
- Front Lot-Line: On a regular lot, the front lot line is the shared line between the lot and a sidewalk/public right-of-way.
- Gambrel: A roof having two slopes on each side of the peak, the lower slope usually steeper than the upper one.
- Gable: The vertical triangular wall between the sloping ends of gable roof.
- Gable Roof: A roof that consists of two sloping planes that meet at the ridge or peak. The planes are supported at their ends by triangular, upward extensions of walls known as gables.
- Hipped Roof: A roof with four sloped sides.
- Mansard Roof: A roof that has two slopes on all four sides.
- Massing of the Building(s): The combined effect of the arrangement, volume, and shape of a building or group of buildings. Also called bulk.
- Muntin (or Window Bar) – A short bar used to separate glass in a sash into multiple lights. Also called a windowpane divider or a grille.
- Parapet: The portion of an exterior wall that rises entirely above the roof, usually in the form of a low retaining wall, the parapet may be shaped or stepped.
- Pediment: A low triangular gable above a cornice, topped by raking cornices and ornamented.
- Pilaster: A column partially embedded in a wall, usually non-structural and often decorated to resemble a classical column.
- Public Right-of-Way: Includes the street, curb and sidewalk area in front of private property at the front lot line.

- Quoin: Corner treatment for exterior walls, either in masonry or frame buildings.
- Roof: Flat or Pitched. Pitched roofs can be: Hip, Mansard, Gambrel, Gable, and more.
- Sash: (Window Sash) Framework of stiles and rails in which the lights of a window are set.
- Scale: A relative level or degree; to make in accordance with a particular proportion or scale with the surrounding architecture.
- Setback: An architectural expedient in which the upper stories of a tall building are stepped back from the lower stories, designed to permit more light to reach the street.
- Shingles: Thin pieces of wood or other material set in overlapping rows to form a roof or wall cladding.
- Side light: A framed area of fixed glass alongside a door or window opening.
- Storefront: The front side of a store or store building facing a street
- Substantial building or site renovation/rehabilitation: Any physical upgrades to a building, or structure with a value of labor and materials that is equal to or exceeds thirty percent (30%) of the assessed value of the building or structure. Any physical upgrades to a site with a value of labor and materials that is equal to or exceeds thirty percent (30%) of the assessed value of the parcel. The assessed value shall be the most current assessed value as determined by the Town of Old Lyme Assessors Department.
- Substantial Use change: Change of use within a Building or Structure or on a Lot, that may alter the overall character, quality, density, intensity, uses, amenities, traffic generation, parking facilities or other major features of the Building or Site, the permitting agency may determine that the modifications are so substantial as to be classified as substantial.
- Texture: The visual or tactile surface characteristics and appearance of a building
- Transom: A small-hinged window above a door or another window.
- Transparent Glass: Degree of Tinting: Capable of transmitting light so that objects may be easily seen on the other side.
- Turrets: A small tower that projects from the wall of a building, such as a medieval castle or baronial house. A building may have both towers and turrets; turrets might be smaller or higher, but the difference is generally considered to be that a turret projects from the edge of the building, rather than continuing to the ground.
- Valance: A short drapery, decorative board, or metal strip mounted across the top of an entry or window to conceal structural fixtures.

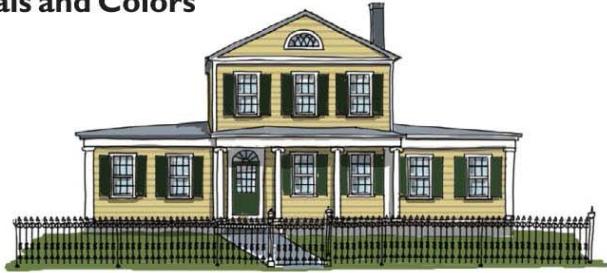
Examples of Acceptable Retail Storefronts from Lyme Street



**Examples of Acceptable
Architectural Styles**



Examples of Acceptable Building Materials and Colors



Examples of Acceptable Building Design with First Floor Retail





**Examples Showing
Acceptable Building
Relationship to
Streetscape**



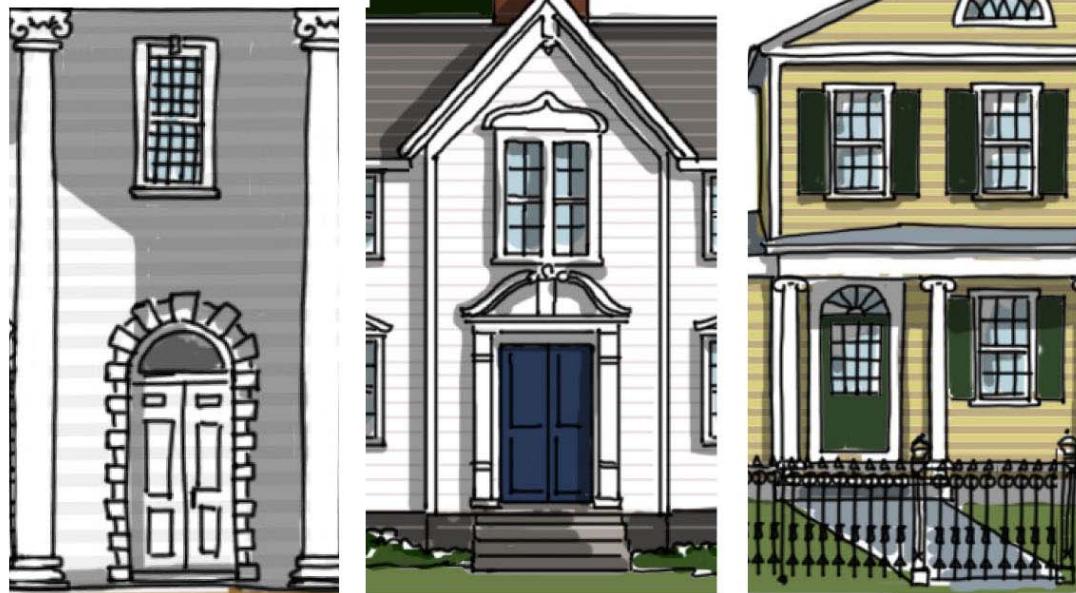
Acceptable Shop Windows, New England Character and Scale



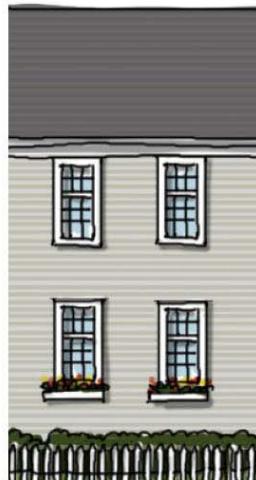
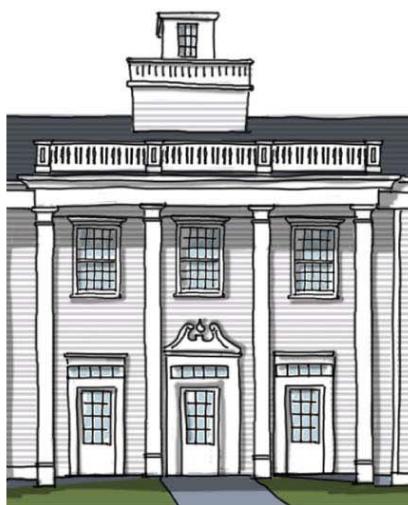
Acceptable Cluster Housing with Landscaping and Variation of Facades



**Examples of Acceptable
Entryway Treatments**



Examples of Acceptable Windows, Dormers, Doors, and Columns



Examples of Unacceptable Cluster Housing Designs

- **“Cookie Cutter” Repitition**
- **Garage as Entry Instead of Doorways**



Examples of Unacceptable Commercial Building Designs

- **Monolithic and Faux Mansard Roofline**
- **Extended Single Story**
- **Overpowering Signage**

