

**HALLS ROAD
Improvements
COMMITTEE**

December 2021 Update

The Halls Road Improvements Committee is working on three key areas of the Halls Road Master Plan: rezoning the commercial district for future private development, grant applications for public improvements, and 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The initial re-zoning application for the Halls Road Village District was withdrawn on November 8, in part to permit the committee to make significant revisions.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 an Overlay Zone. This maintains the current C-30s zone, allowing owners to make changes to existing structures within the old regulations. If they want to take advantage of the new opportunities, they can do so under the new 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 Road 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 Road that not only yields greater profit for property owners but also increases 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, LOTCIP, is state-funded and will be reviewed by CT DOT. BSC has introduced DOT to the plans, but the LOTCIP review will be DOT's first *official* review of our plans. With the full master plan and engineering details in hand, DOT will be prepared to approve or suggest changes to create what they call "complete streets" along Halls Road. 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. Please contact us at hallsroadcommittee@oldlyme-ct.gov if you can help with the work or have grant recommendations.

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 to make wayfinding 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). Thank you for your interest. Your comments are welcome: hallsroadcommittee@oldlyme-ct.gov