Halls Road Improvements

Business and property owners’ presentation

FEB 2 & 10, 2022
Changes

Old Lyme proposes changes along Halls Road:

- New safety & roadway improvements paid for by the town with the aid of grants.

- New zoning options to encourage private development in line with the Halls Road Master Plan.
Why Change?

- To respond to major new market forces and changing social and demographic patterns
- To meet these challenges, to ensure a vibrant, profitable future for our primary retail district.

- Market Forces
- Housing Needs
- Social Changes
Changing market forces in retail

- Internet sales crushing many 'bricks & mortar' retail
- Pure "mall" model losing ground
- Mixed-use town centers most resilient vs. Internet.
- Retail walk-in traffic happens along walkable streetscapes.
- Current "Commercial-only" zoning on Halls Road attracts highway services rather than town-oriented services.
- Old Lyme’s Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is against Halls Road becoming a highway service plaza.
Changing housing needs

- Over 92% of Old Lyme housing is single-family house on its own lot.
- Smaller-scale housing options in high demand.
  - Young families
  - Older residents downsizing
- Old Lyme POCD has called for diversifying housing stock for over 20 years.
Changing market forces in retail

- Current C-30s 1950s zoning promotes strip malls with deep set-backs and maximal parking.
- Not geared to walking, biking, strolling or browsing
- The more life goes online, the more we need face-to-face contact and chance encounters with friends and neighbors.
- People want Halls Road to be a place for such encounters, but it is not designed for pedestrians and cyclists.
Working to meet the changes

- **2018-2019**: Advance CT and EDC provide research, surveys, workshops, public meetings

- **2020-2021**: formal Halls Road Master Plan creates a roadmap for the town’s future.

- **2021-Present**:
  - Grant applications for Public Improvements
  - New zoning overlay district to promote investment in goals of Master Plan.
Goal: Halls Road in 2050

- Walkable, bike-able, mixed-use town center
- Living neighborhood, not an I-95 plaza
- Connect historic Lyme St. and Arts District with Halls Road
- Visually attractive place to walk, browse, and meet friends – Old Lyme look (e.g. Lyme St.)
- Profitable, desirable place to do business
How do we get there?

- New Look: shops along Halls Road, residential above or behind
- Some businesses move up to the road, others remain where they are today.
- How to change from parking lots to a village street – *without compromising existing businesses?*
- New “overlay” zoning is the key
What is an “overlay district?”

- An alternative set of zoning regulations with broader land use options, different restrictions.
- Owners can choose either:
  - Stay with C-30s zoning
  - Use new Overlay District zoning
- Allows gradual implementation of Master Plan goals, on the investor’s time-table.
## Overlay District uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Group</th>
<th>C-30s</th>
<th>HROD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential – Single Family</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential – Multi Family</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stores</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Stations</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charging Stations</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pet Services</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Overlay District height and setbacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>C-30s</th>
<th>HROD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum number of stories in district</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum number of stories fronting Halls Road</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum number of stories 60’ from Halls Road</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum height in district</td>
<td>35’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum height fronting Halls Road</td>
<td>35’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum height 60’ from Halls Road</td>
<td>45’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum setback from Halls Road</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum setback from Halls Road</td>
<td>15’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum setback from rear of property line</td>
<td>40’</td>
<td>15’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum setback from other property line</td>
<td>20’</td>
<td>7.5’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum setback from residences &amp; rural districts</td>
<td>40’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Overlay District coverage and frontage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>C-30s</th>
<th>HROD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum floor area as a percentage of lot area</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum lot coverage by buildings &amp; structures as a percent of lot area</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum total lot coverage (all impermeable surfaces) as percent of lot area</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First floor commercial use is required within building fronting Halls Road to a minimum building depth of 40’</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcels having frontage along Halls Road must maximize façade oriented to Halls Road within front yard setback after subtracting: side yard setbacks: vehicular access drive; pedestrian circulation routes; and outdoor customer sitting/gathering spaces.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Guidelines for future construction</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Land use: C-30s vs. Overlay

**Existing C-30s Zoning Regulations**

- **LOT LINE**
  - Commercial or single family must be set back 60’ from RoW
  - Parking in front
  - LOT - 80 X 100’

**HALLS ROAD**

**Overlay District Regulations**

- **LOT LINE**
  - Parking behind
  - Residential can be 3-1/2 stories when more than 60’ from RoW

- **LOT**
  - 1st fl. residential allowed if more than 40’ from RoW
  - 1st floor commercial
  - 2nd floor residential or other

- **HALLS ROAD**

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*Legend: RoW = Right of Way*
Market logic of the Overlay District

- First floor front along Halls Road reserved for commercial use. (Residential above OK.)
- Commercial building must use the available frontage (not just a token, e.g. a free-standing ATM)
- Right to build residential is dependent on building commercial along Halls Road frontage
- (No cherry-picking)
Design Review Board

- Over 80% of Old Lyme residents say #1 goal is: make Halls Rd. “look like Old Lyme.” (~ Lyme St.)
- Formal, advisory process for Overlay District
- Zoning Commission has final say
- Professional and citizen Review Board members
- Not to “one design”
- Approved designs follow accepted professional architectural standards and reflect published Design Guidelines.
Timing: Adoption of Overlay District

- Apply to Zoning in mid-March
- Zoning has 65 days to review, including public meeting(s)
- Can add 65 days more if it chooses (rare)
- Goal: to be complete this summer (2022)
Sequence: Road Improvements

- Grant application process comes first
  - LOTCIP Grant ("Complete Streets")
  - CT-DOT approvals effectively a part of the LOTCIP grant process
  - Additional grants for trails and pedestrian

- Create formal Construction Drawings (town $)
- Construction out to bid, select contractor(s)
- Construction
Summary

- New sidewalks and bike paths will mean little, if Halls Road is dominated by parking lots or highway services.
- A walkable, bike-able, mixed-use town center that encourages browsing and walk-in traffic will help Halls Road stay competitive into the mid-21st century.
- The overlay district will allow major changes while protecting existing businesses.