

An Unexpected Email from an Out-of-Town Home Buyer:

4/22/15

Dear Broadband Committee:

I would like to reinforce certain excellent points you make on your website regarding the value of broadband service to New Salem. My wife and I would very much like to relocate to New Salem from where we currently live in the Boston area. We've admired the town for years. We love its rural character. We looked at a property in town last fall that is perfect for us. It has the requisite amount of open land for us to indulge our passion for growing flowers and organic vegetables and fruits as we wind down our current professional lives. We are low key, sociable folks who would want to volunteer and otherwise be involved in town affairs, and by fixing up the property; we'd be helping to maintain the wonderful, rural aesthetic of the town. Certainly, we'd be contributing to the tax base and the town's economy in other ways as well.

Alas, we just cannot relocate to New Salem in the absence of high-speed Internet service. For the next few years, we'd need to have the service for our jobs, as we'd be working from home a couple of days per week in lieu of commuting into Boston. Of course, we'd also want the service for non-work reasons. We've come to depend on it. We think of high-speed Internet service as an essential utility nowadays -- as essential as electricity and running water. A broker called us last night with an early heads-up on another property he thinks will be coming on the market in New Salem. He correctly thought that the property would be to our liking. Unfortunately, I had to tell him that it's just not in the cards for us to relocate there until and unless we can be assured of having high-speed Internet access. He fully understood: he's hearing more and more of this from potential buyers in the North Quabbin area.

I hope that testimony like this can help you in your efforts to get sufficient political and financial backing for your efforts. Whether or not we are able to join you in your lovely community, it really is essential in this day and age to have high-speed Internet service if a town wants to remain economically and socially viable in the long run. You really don't want to risk becoming a backwater community.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Karl Quackenbush