

Hello Folks,

My name is Joe Nowicki and I live at 125 Long Plain Road. I have lived here for more than a dozen years and in Leverett for more than 14. I moved a mile and a half up the road to my current home from North Amherst where I lived for 16 years. I am writing to you about your request for information in the town newsletter regarding the phone/broadband situation in town. I would have liked to attend the meeting but I was unable to as my work schedule demands a great deal from me.

In terms of the phone service on Long Plain Road (Rt. 63), well it has been a bltant case of highway robbery. In the past 4 years alone I was forced to call verizon 11 times because one or both of the phone lines coming into the house wouldn't work. One phone is exclusively used for a computer and that is critical for my work. Most of the time the lines after a rain were full of static and unuseable for a computer (4 bps??) and there were several times in which both phones did not work. I kept after the verizon repair folks and the district supervisor became a persons contact because of my calling. I usually got no where until I found a contact at the State House in the Secretary of State's Office. She got on the case and then Verizon did in a very nice way. They rebated me for lost service and installed sophisticated filters on my Phone lines as they enter my house. All the wiring from the street to the house is state of the art but what's out on the road is not so good. The verizon repair guys told me over and over again that the lines on Rt 63 were old and probably receiving electricity from the lines on the same poles. Phone service has been better but still sketchy when it rains.

In terms of faster internet I am still waiting. I emailed verizon as I was told to do when I called town hall. Ms. Cummings never returned my notes. I tried the verizon web site but was told my house was not on line. The issue with all this is not simply lack of contact with the net but living here is impacting my work. As a public school administrator and a College Professor I find growing demands to be able to work from home as well as from my schools. I can't do that from my home at the moment. So I am asking if the DSL was a political sham or if I will really be connected. Folks just down the road from this house in other towns do live in the 21st century while here it's the 3rd world.

While I'm on it it would be nice for the town to not oppose cell phone service. I need a cell phone for work but can't use it at my house. No towers are located along Rt. 63 (or anywhere in Leverett as I can tell). I have had the experience of no land line phone service because of terrible line and not be able to call because I have no cell service. I own some land here and often think that cell phone might be a safety fall back when I am working in the woods behind the house but not in Leverett. We can come into the modern world while maintaining the qualities of the past.

I hope my suggestions shed some light on all this. Contact me if you need more information. Contact me if you have any more information.

