

TO: Hunters Glen/ Cove residents  
FROM: Peri D.  
RE: Public Broadband Meeting (Early December 2018)

Several Hunters Glen/Cove residents attended the Broadband meeting last week and are sharing the information they heard.

IF you have questions please contact\*: (They may have a survey available to you.)  
RiverStreet <http://myriverstreet.net/?t=r>  
or  
Morris Broadband <http://myriverstreet.net/?t=r>

NOTE: \* I cannot assist you - I am just the messenger.

REPORT:

Broadband Meeting report - from County meeting

From Kerry C. :

It looks like the initial WestNGN Broadband web survey produced positive numbers for RiverStreet to further study our market, with some 87% of respondents stating they were highly motivated to switch providers. It appears that RiverStreet is looking to further gauge interest via response to the weblink that Jim provided before implementing a traditional direct mail and radio out-reach campaign. But, they also appear to be carrying a fair amount of debt, some \$40m, and still have much work in front of them to complete installations that they're currently committed to. I think if they do eventually become a player in Henderson county, it's a 5 to 10 year proposition before we ever see them up here.

All that said, they look serious. Enough to pose a threat to Morris Broadband's lock on the area. And the mere threat of competition will likely push Morris to accelerate their upgrading efforts, to our benefit.

As of midnight last night, all customers with MBB service of 25/3Mb or higher have had their speeds doubled. Our personal service is now 50/5Mb. We use a streaming TV service (Direct TV NOW) and the improvement in network performance is stark after the Morris upgrade. Before the increase, streaming was almost impossible between 6-10pm everyday because of network congestion, and when I'd measure our service it had fallen to somewhere around 5/1Mb. Last night it was rock solid at 50/5Mb between 6 and 10pm. Since we all share a common "coaxial" based service, it will always fluctuate depending on the user load. "Fiber" service directly to each home is the only way to provide a constant speed. All providers are working towards that end.

One last item of interest... the FCC has defined minimum bandwidth for "Broadband" as 25/3Mb. This is forcing Morris to quickly adjust their services to reflect that, and eventually remove their two service tiers below that spec. By law, no company will be allowed to advertise their service as "Broadband" if it doesn't meet the minimum specification.

I believe all good news yesterday, from both companies. Cable service is slow and expensive to implement, especially in this terrain. Hopefully we'll see further improvements sooner than later.

PS: One item I forget from yesterday's meeting is that River Street has a grand total of 3 techs servicing their current installations. Karen and I both looked at each other kinda sideways at that comment. As painful as an outage is, at least Morris has more hands on deck, and their GM did a good job explaining how they determine their repair que.

From Jim S. :

There were two presentations; one from Morris Broad Band which essentially was a short description of what the company has been doing to upgrade its services. Morris is putting in more fiber optics and upgrading the speeds of upload and download. Some of the work has been completed but it was not noted as to what parts of the local service area had been upgraded nor when other parts of the service area were due for the upgrades.

The majority of the evening's presentations was that of River Street Networks. The company is headquartered in Wilkes, NC (on the border with Tennessee). While it is small, the company's focus is high speed (25Mbps (download)/3Mbps (upload) through dedicated fiber optic cable -- in rural and small municipalities. (To put this into a meaningful context, I just checked my ATT service and got 1.8 down and .5 up). They have a competitive presence in a number of NC

counties already. The service model they use is based on the one used to link all facets of the Research Triangle down state. You can get a better overview of the company at their web site <http://myriverstreet.net/?t=r>

Presently, the company is surveying Henderson County for interest. There was mention of a recent survey that was encouraging for the company and they see the Hendersonville area as a good market to enter. I don't think we'll see much overnight but my feeling is that company is going to continue to "test the waters" and if the surveys support it; they will get busy in very short order which means 12-18 months.

From Karen J. :

From what we garnered from the presentation was that even if Hend Cty expressed interest, the area wouldn't see the START of work for our county for at least another five + yrs. They are only 30% completed with implementation in other areas that were surveyed two years ago.