

Maggie Bartenhagen. Abutter. Nick and I live on Jacksonville Stage Road, about a mile and a quarter from the proposed excavation site.

I'd like to share our personal experience with the impact of Mr. Pratt's proposed quarry on property values. We believe this experience serves as the equivalent of being a real estate canary in a coal mine – or rather, a canary near a schist quarry.

Our home has been on the market for approximately two years. We'd first decided to sell about four years ago, to live nearer our daughter in Massachusetts. That was before any of us knew about Mr. Denison's decision to lease land to Mr. Pratt for a quarry. However, even just this possibility has already had an impact on our ability to sell.

Not long ago, a couple had shown significant interest in our home, asking our realtor the types of questions suggesting to her the possibility that they were about to make an offer. Abiding by the Vermont Association of Realtors Full Disclosure Policy that Nick spoke about, she then informed them about just the possibility that a quarry might be established a mile or so away.

Hearing this, they then told her they were disappointed, but were no longer interested, and would continue looking elsewhere. We cannot help but assume that if this quarry was not being proposed, we might have sold our home to this couple at or near its fair market value.

We have since reduced the price of our property, given that experience. However, it is a very real possibility that if the quarry is actually permitted, our asking price may need to be lowered even more to compensate for its actual presence a mile and a quarter from our home.

In addition, for the next fifty years, our experience will very likely be repeated many times over as other Halifax residents attempt to sell their homes and land.

Are Mr. Denison or Mr. Pratt willing to compensate us, and other Halifax residents, for the property value loss we're likely to experience as a result of the presence of their quarry? Rhetorical question, of course, but certainly something for the ZBA to consider as they make their deliberations.