



TOWN OF BERLIN, VERMONT

Washington County

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January 12, 2011

The Honorable John E. Potter
Postmaster General
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-0010

The Berlin Selectboard on behalf of residents and businesses of the Town has requested on several occasions over the last 10 years that the U.S. Post Office re-establish a post office or station and a unique zip code within the Town of Berlin. Each request was backed by an untiring grassroots effort put forth by Town residents and area employers along with strong support from our congressional delegation and the Vermont legislature. Currently Berlin is served by three post offices (Montpelier, Barre City and Northfield), each with a different zip code and different mailing address. The Town has had several post offices in the past. One of the earliest post offices, located at Berlin Corner existed from 1825 until 1908. West Berlin also had a post office from 1884 to 1918 when the name of the village was changed to Riverton. The Riverton post office, with its own zip code, continued operation for the village until 1988.

There is now an opportunity for space to be made available in the Berlin Mall – the region's largest indoor retail space. The Berlin Selectboard would strongly urge the U. S. Post Office to consider this option being presented by the owners of the Berlin Mall to the benefit of the current and future residents and businesses in Berlin.

The Berlin Mall is located in Berlin's commercial district which encompasses much of the "plateau area" served by Route 62 and other town collector roads. The Mall is central to the region and is easily accessible from Interstate 89. The purpose of the district is to allow a variety of commercial uses consistent with the area's function as a regional commercial and service center and includes the Central Vermont Medical Center, the region's largest employer; Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont; Washington County

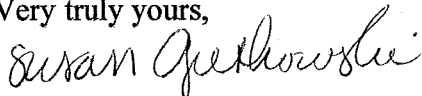
Mental Health; Berlin Convalescent Center; and Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice. These firms are not only likely to continue growing but also to spawn growth in additional health related businesses. The district also includes the Edward F. Knapp State Airport, the Vermont State Chamber of Commerce and Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

Over the years, Berlin has transformed from a predominantly rural community to a conglomeration of residential, commercial, and service-oriented businesses. It has become both an economic center and employment hub for all of Central Vermont, with a vibrant and diverse mixture of business types and locations. Berlin includes several unique business districts such as the commercial district, each providing different advantages to businesses and customers, and is also host to a variety of local and national businesses. The Town also offers numerous services to include local public safety; recreation; public and private school systems; several lending institutions; a large cross-section of housing; a thriving light industrial and manufacturing area; retail stores; automobile dealerships; nurseries and local produce venues and a winery; as well as restaurants and motels.

The lack of a zip code and post office has led to a number of documented service problems in Berlin, and there is a real concern that these service problems have the potential to impact the growth of business within Berlin. The numerous zip codes have caused increasing difficulties and confusion with emergency responders and with the computerized mailing and delivery systems used by governmental, nonprofit and private concerns and customers of the many business entities in Berlin.

A post office and zip code for Berlin would eliminate the service delivery and access problems so many experience. The Berlin Selectboard would be glad to resubmit copies of all of the petitions, letters of support and statistical information it has compiled in support of its request for a post office and zip code. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,



Susan Gretkowski, Chair
Berlin Selectboard

Cc: Berlin Selectboard
Berlin Economic Development Council
Jeff Schulz, Town Administrator