

A2011-5

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

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Secretary  
Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20268-0001  
ph.: 202-789-6875

Postal Regulatory Commission  
Office of the Chief Admin. Officer

DEC 06 2010

Dear Secretary:

The document before you constitutes both

- 1) my PETITION FOR REVIEW OF A "FINAL DETERMINATION" of the US Postal Service to CLOSE the DETROIT, MI PENOBSCOT BUILDING POSTAL STORE, the only P.O, Branch in the Financial District of downtown Detroit, Michigan, 645 Griswold Street, Suite 100, Detroit, MI 48226-4010, effective as of Monday, January 3, 2011, but note that since the branch would not be open to customers on January 3, 2011, that means that the actual date of closure to customers would be Friday, December 31, 2010 which is the day before New Year's Eve, so the branch would undoubtedly close early, perhaps around noon, the exact time of closure to be announced and
- 2) my APPLICATION FOR SUSPENSION OF THIS "FINAL DETERMINATION" (the planned closure of the Detroit, MI Penobscot Building Postal Store) effective January 3, 2011, pending the outcome of my requested review.

I've lived at my current address for twelve years. My mail is delivered to my address by postal carriers at the Gratiot Branch P.O., but since the branch is located in a dangerous neighborhood, I never go there as I would have to, by bus. A city bus outside my apartment building, Elmwood Towers Apartments, can take me to the Financial District of downtown Detroit in approximately 10 minutes and I can alight from the bus at the NE corner of Griswold and W. Congress, in the heart of the SAFE TO BE OUT AND ABOUT Financial District, steps from the Penobscot Building and in a thoughtfully designed geographical area for conducting financial, legal, and retail business in the cluster of historic skyscrapers (of which the Penobscot Building is a magnificent 1928 example) and newer buildings designed to complement the architectural masterpieces of the 1920s and beyond: the Ford Building, the Buhl Building, the Guardian Building, One Woodward (one of the architects, Minoru Yamasaki), Comerica Tower (also known as One Detroit Center at 500 Woodward), the Chase Bank Building, Compuware World Headquarters, the First National Building, the Dime Building, and the Coleman A. Young Municipal Building, among others. (I wish I had an extra copy of the AIA (American Institute of Architects) Guide to Detroit Architecture (which is world renowned) so you could better comprehend the beauty and practicality of the area around the Penobscot Building and the building itself which houses the Penobscot Postal Store on the 1st floor. Anyone thinking of good city planning would locate a US Post Office Branch (as they did) in the Penobscot Building because of its architecture and central, well-guarded, and convenient location for all who would reach the area by car, cab, People Mover (elevated downtown train), bus, and on foot. The 2 alternate branches should the Penobscot Postal Store close: the Main Fort Street P.O. and the Postal Store in the Renaissance Center (RenCen), each of which, over the years, I have visited once, can never substitute for the Penobscot Building location. The Main Fort Street P.O. is in a bad neighborhood and it would take 4 buses roundtrip which is out of the question for me and it's a long walk from

the bus stop where I would alight to go to Millender Center on E. Jefferson, up the escalator or elevator to the 2nd floor and take the Skywalk over E. Jefferson to the small Renaissance Center Post Office and would definitely be a chore if I were carrying a box to be mailed. As I age (I'm nearing the end of my 7th decade), I increasingly appreciate the EASE of reaching the Detroit, MI Penobscot Building Postal Store where I've always had most pleasant experiences with the kind and professional clerks, especially Julie, buying commemorative stamps (the only kind I've used for years), bringing packages for mailing, and buying mailing supplies (you really sell the best, wide, clear package and all-purpose tape which I use at home almost every day for many purposes). Whenever I go to the Penobscot Postal Store, I combine my banking, photocopying, post office, government, and retail business all within and around the Penobscot Building. Should the Penobscot Postal Store close, it will be a big blow, a sad day for me and for so many others, unfortunately not as many others as in past years when there was considerably more retail on the 1st floor where the Post Office is and on the Concourse below; I can think of 8 major retail establishments that have left the Penobscot Building in the last 9 years. I wish someone who loved the building and could afford it would buy the Penobscot Building and recreate the retail that once existed for so many, many years. The lack of retail is not as acute in any other major downtown Detroit building as it is in the Penobscot. Of course, the Penobscot has the Friend of the Court and many floors of offices and retail above the 1st floor, but it's not visible when you enter the building.

When I went to the Penobscot P.O. to buy commemorative stamps on Wednesday, November 3, 2010, I read the upsetting Notice of the Jan. 3, 2011 Closure which had been posted earlier that day on the glass double doors to Suite 100, the Penobscot Postal Store, having first heard of the possibility of closure from my special clerk, Julie, in the summer of 2009 and having written and phoned appropriate people in Washington DC and Detroit to try to prevent the closure. I did not receive responses from the summer 2009 letters I wrote to Detroit Mayor, Dave Bing, and U.S. Representatives, John Conyers and Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, but I knew that I had alerted them to the possibility. However, in response to the many summer-fall 2009 letters I wrote on the subject of the possible closure, I DID receive the following gracious replies:

Aug. 26, 2009 Nancy Rettinhouse, District Manager, Detroit

Sept. 4, 09: Robert MacCloskey at Postal Service Headquarters, Washington, DC, on behalf of "John Potter (Postmaster General), the Postal Board of Governors and all involved in the consolidation of Post Office stations and branches"

Sept. 8, 2009: Debra Fuller, Consumer Research Analyst, Office of the Consumer Advocate, Washington, DC

Sept. 8, 2009: Pamela Collins, Manager, Consumer Affairs, Detroit

Nov. 16, 09: U.S. Senator Carl Levin, Washington, DC

Dec. 22, 09: U.S. Senator Carl Levin, Washington, DC who informed me that as a senior member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee which has legislative jurisdiction over the USPS, he was happy to report that as a result of his request that the USPS review the LARGE NUMBER of Michigan post offices under review, that the USPS had reduced the total number from 24 to 6. However, at this time, there is only ONE Detroit Post Office scheduled for closure effective Jan. 3, 2011, MY Post Office, wouldn't you know! the Penobscot Building Postal Store, the ONE (in addition to the Gratiot Branch) I want to stay open.

I wrote to Ruth Goldway on April 5, 2010 after seeing her for the 1st of 2 times on C-SPAN, BUT I mailed it to the wrong address at 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW and it was returned to me rather than being forwarded. I then researched the correct address for the Postal Regulatory Commission and on Nov. 6, 2010, after reading the closure notice at the Penobscot P.O. on Nov. 3, 2010, could send a letter to Ruth Goldway and U.S. Senator Carl Levin. My most recent THANKS for their superb assistance following my reading on Nov. 3, 2010 of the Penobscot Postal Store scheduled closure on Jan. 3, 2011 are extended to the following for their help

- a) by phone and fax, Carol Zarek, Review Coordinator, USPS, Detroit...and
- b) by phone, mail, and fax, Annie Kennedy, Consumer Relations Specialist, Postal Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC on behalf of Ruth Goldway, Chair, PRC.

Both U.S. Senator Carl Levin and Ruth Goldway, Chair, Postal Regulatory Commission, impress me with their comprehensive and compassionate understanding of all parties affected by the USPS and the challenges faced by the USPS in meeting its national and international obligations as THE U.S. provider of mail and package delivery services in the most difficult structural position of being neither a free-standing business like UPS, FedEx, and DHL, nor a Federal Government Department like the U.S. Department of Homeland Security which the US Postal Service once was before the Postal Reorganization Act of August 12, 1970 which became effective on July 1, 1971.

I must also add that not having access to a computer, I value the USPS all the more and it must be remembered that there are millions who do not use computers, both in the U.S. and around the world.

I believe that the USPS should either be once again as before Aug. 1970, a Federal Government Department or if a Federal Government Service Business, one which reduces Federal Government funding with income from customers, but not, what I understand it to be, a Federal Government-SUPERVISED business, responsible for all its funding from customers, expected to make a profit (but for whom?).

Please find enclosed a copy of the USPS NOTICE OF DETROIT, MI PENOBSCOT POSTAL STORE CLOSURE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 3, 2011.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

*Barbara R. Sherwood*

Barbara Sherwood, 1325 Chene Street, Apartment 617, Detroit, MI 48207-3853  
ph.: 313-392-0136 with voice mail after 7 rings

cc: U.S. Senator Carl Levin

enclosure

*Mike in the Ford Bldg. gave me this good idea!*

*Maybe the USPS could close the Renaissance Center P.O. & leave the Penobscot P.O. OPEN. Mike uses the Penobscot for his business.*

**Detroit District  
PO Closing Coordinator**



## ***PENOBSCOT FINANCE STATION***

November 3, 2010

### **Penobscot Branch will be closed as of January 3, 2011**

As a result of a study conducted last year, the Postal Service has made the decision to close the Penobscot Finance Station located at 645 Griswold St. Ste 100, Detroit MI. However, the office will be open and operational for at least 60 days from the date above.

Career employees will be reassigned in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and established repositioning processes. No dates have been set for personnel moves at this time.

This was a difficult decision but a necessary one. Because of the drastic decline in mail volume, the Postal Service is in a fiscal crisis and must take action to reduce the size of its retail and delivery network. By consolidating, streamlining and adjusting our operations, the Postal Service becomes a more efficient and effective organization.

Local mail delivery will not be affected by this move. Full retail services will be available in neighboring offices and our customers will continue to receive the same excellent service they always have.

**Nearby Station or Branch:**

George W Young (GWY) Main located at 1401 W Fort Street  
Renaissance Center located at 100 Renaissance Center Ste 1014

If you have questions, or need additional information, please call at 313 226-8723,  
Carol Zarek, Review Coordinator, Detroit District