

Postal Regulatory Commission
Office of the Chief Admin. Officer

SEP 21 2011

BEFORE THE
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268

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In the Matter of:

LEONARDSVILLE NY 13364
Post Office State ZIP Code

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Docket No: A 2011-51

KINGSLEY D. WRATTEN, Petitioner(s)

PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

1. Petitioner(s) are appealing the Postal Service's Final Determination concerning the LEONARDSVILLE NY post office. The Final Determination was posted 08/09/2011 (date)

2. In accordance with applicable law, 39 U.S.C. § 404(d)(5), the Petitioner(s) request the Postal Regulatory Commission to review the Postal Service's determination on the basis of the record before the Postal Service in the making of the determination.

3. Petitioners: Please set out below the reasons why you believe the Postal Service's Final Determination should be reversed and returned to the Postal Service for further consideration. (See pages of the Instructions for an outline of the kinds of reasons the law requires us to consider.) Please be as specific as possible. Please continue on additional paper if you need more space and attach the additional page(s) to this form.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED (2 PAGES)

RE: docket #A2011-51

The residents of Leonardsville NY do not believe that the U S Postal Service can provide regular and effective service to our area by consolidating the service with Bridgewater NY, five miles away. The proposed changes would place undue hardships on the many retired and elderly who live in the community (approximately 35% of the town), many of whom no longer drive. They have been told by the district manager that they should install RD boxes, but most of the streets are so narrow that snowplows would knock them down even if those residents were capable of shoveling their way to them. Leonardsville is located in a very snowy, "lake-effect" area of central NY State. These physical limitations can only be understood by making a site inspection, which the Postal Service has never done to our knowledge. For customers who leave their houses for work each day, the prospect of packages tied to a mailbox, leaving mail vulnerable for hours on end, and not being able to sign for medical shipments, etc., significantly lessen the desirability of roadside boxes; the only alternative being a 10 mile drive each day to pick up the mail, for many, in the opposite direction of their normal route to work.

Despite the bold statement made by USPS that "The growth of a community does not depend on the location of a Post Office", the residents of Leonardsville consider the post office to be an important component of the area's economic recovery. It would be very discouraging for local businesses, which have been struggling to revitalize the area, if they suddenly had to budget time and money to drive 10 miles each day for their mail. One potential business, a medical billing company, already decided to locate elsewhere based on the possibility of the post office closure. Another developing business, an artists' residency program, which relies heavily on certified postmarked applications, recommendations, and shipment of work samples, has contacted similar programs elsewhere and, by comparing figures of postal expenditures, believes that their business alone might double the revenue of our post office within two years. These are considerations not taken into account by the Postal Service because potential earnings were not part of their criterion; they only considered evidence of losses.

The Leonardsville Post Office building has always been well-maintained and the owner has never asked for an increase in lease monies, so we believe that the only criterion for closure MUST have been that the post office was losing money, even though the Postal Code states that "No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities" (39 USC 101 - Sec. 101b). Also, with their focus on the bottom line, it was not surprising that USPS completely disregarded the fact that our post office is historically important as one of the first to be established in former "Indian Territory" after the Revolution.

Leonardsville customers requested a Public Hearing (see amendment to Title 39, effective March 6, 1977) during the "Open House" held by USPS on April,29, 2011, and again in a letter to the Postal Operations Manager, dated April 29, 2011, but were told by the district manager that the "Open House" was the only meeting the Postal Service was obliged to hold. That "Open House" was scheduled one week after the initial "Public Notice of Proposal" was posted in the Post Office and was scheduled for the following Friday morning at 9 am in the lobby of the post office. Not only were the customers given precious little time to think and organize, but scheduling this meeting at a time when most customers were at work and in a place where everyone must stand, blocking the access of other customers to their mail boxes, persuaded us to suggest that the Public Hearing should be at the fire hall or in a church (both of these alternatives had been offered to USPS for this purpose). We never did get the Public Hearing we requested.

We believe that the elimination of the Leonardsville Post Office based solely on evidence of declining volume is in statutory "noncompliance" and not consistent with the spirit or the letter of the law or of current postal policy. Post offices contribute immeasurably to the social fabric and economic hope of rural areas such as ours and we respectfully request that the Postal Regulatory Commission return the USPS Final Determination To Close The Leonardsville, NY Post Office for reconsideration.

Submitted by:



Kingsley D. Wratten

PO Box 182, Leonardsville, NY 13364

(representing the customers of the Post Office at Leonardsville, NY, 13364)