

A200-101

TO: POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
901 NEW YORK AVENUE NW SUITE 200
WASHINGTON DC, 20268-0001

RECEIVED

FROM: POSTAL PATRONS OF LORRAINE, NY 13659 2011 OCT 18 A 3: 24

RE: APPEAL OF CLOSURE DECISION FOR THE LORRAINE, NY
POST OFFICE

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OCT 17 2011

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Office of PAGR

On behalf of the residents in the Town of Lorraine, NY and the Town of Worth, NY we wish to request an appeal regarding the decision to close the post office located in Lorraine, NY, established April 21, 1805.

As residents and postal customers we are well aware of the financial bind facing the USPS and readily acknowledge that serious changes are necessary. However, we strongly believe that abandoning rural America with respect to window service is not the answer.

We would propose the following as a compromise solution that should be strongly considered and tried prior to the complete discontinuation of window service.

1. Provide window service on a part-time basis. (1/2 day every other day)
2. Operate the service with a clerk under supervision of the Adams P.O. which would eliminate the need of a postmaster
3. Maintain postal boxes in an enclosed area (lower rent based on lower heat requirement for part-time service?)
4. Arrange for 24 hour access to boxes (no cost)
5. Daily delivery and collection (no change except that the delivery carrier could collect outgoing mail instead of a special pick-up as is the current system)

Based on revenue figures supplied by the USPS the current revenue level of this office would cover the cost of this service. In this scenario this rural office would no longer be receiving a subsidy from larger offices and neither would the rural customers in Lorraine be subsidizing other offices, which would be the case if the office was completely eliminated.

Attached please find additional and expanded reasons to re-evaluate this decision.

We appreciate your time and consideration.

US Postal Service Customers:

Name: April Haga Address: 21007 Co Rt 93

Name: Tim Riley Address: 21007 Co Rt 93

Name: _____ Address: _____

ADDITIONAL AND EXPANDED REASONS TO RE-EVALUATE THE DECISION REGARDING THE LORRAINE, NY P.O.

1. POPULATION GROWTH

The Town of Lorraine has an 11% increase in population in the 2010 Census over the 2000 Census.

2. USPS ABANDONING FULL SERVICE IN RURAL AREAS

Recent articles in the print media as well as on news websites and TV make it very clear that the USPS is undertaking a mass closing across the country to save money. No one can argue that the postal system must undergo a major restructuring to provide a system of mail delivery with a reasonable price tag in this age of digital communication. However, there does not seem to be a long range plan of restructuring service delivery except to strip rural areas of small offices that are currently not at a break even level. In Lorraine the closure will add 10 miles (roundtrip) to any trip to the post office. For about one half of the 150 rural route customers this will make a round trip to the post office a 14 to 22 mile drive.

Current closures are targeting offices w/o postmasters. This is simply a situation that exists because the USPS has chosen not to appoint a postmaster for months or years at their discretion.

It is fair to argue that small offices are not cost effective. The question to ask is "Can these offices be restructured to have revenue cover expenses?" It is reasonable to assume that some can and some probably cannot. Small rural offices could be run with a clerk under the direction of a postmaster in a larger neighboring office, thus avoiding the higher pay classification of a postmaster. Also window service at most rural offices could be run on a part-time basis so that some level of local service could remain.

If the thousands of rural offices are closed as planned the revenue from these customers will be subsidizing continued service to the other areas while doing without service themselves. This seems to be a type of discrimination and rather unfair. Re-structuring delivery levels and modes to ALL customers is a much more appropriate move to address the current challenges.

3. EXTRA MILEAGE BURDEN

To suggest that all residents will always be able to take care of all postal needs whenever they are out and about in another town is not at all realistic. If the 240 customers served by the Lorraine post office find it necessary to make just six (6) extra trips to a post office per year for package pick up or mailing, money orders, etc.

4. LIMITED ON-LINE ACCESS FOR SERVICE

Currently the USPS is advertising on-line service. Unfortunately about 200 of the customers live in an area that is limited to dial-up service which is not very user friendly. Cell phone service to the vast majority of the customers is not available due to the distance from transmission towers. On-line service is not a viable alternative for this area.

5. EQUITY OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Within a 20 mile radius of the Lorraine P.O. there are 4 situations where offices exist with 1 mile to 3 miles between offices. In closing any one of those offices the maximum drive would be less than for Lorraine customers and in some instances fewer people would be impacted.

Two townships, the Towns of Lorraine and Worth, with eighty two square miles of area would be without a post office. The neighboring town of Henderson has a similar population base, a smaller area and two post offices just over a mile apart. The Town of Ellisburg has a similar area, about 2.5x the population, and after closing an office will still have 3 offices left, two of which are about one mile apart. The Town of Sandy Creek has two offices within a mile of each other.

The USPS needs to look at a re-structuring plan that takes equity into account for all citizens not just those in more populated areas.

6. POPULATION INCREASING

The Town of Lorraine posted an 11% population growth from the 2000 Census to the 2010 Census. There has been a steady increase in new homes and seasonal dwellings and this appears to be continuing based on recent land sales.

7. PROPERTY VALUE IMPACT

Any real estate agent will testify to the fact that availability of "services" impacts the value of property in an area. Although the loss of window service may not have a great impact on property values it is sure to have some negative impact. A couple of years ago a new resident in town related how great it was that they could walk to the post office. Any potential property buyer that is eliminated as such, due to limited services available, reduces the buyer pool and has a negative impact on property values.

8. POSSIBLE BUSINESS LOST

A prominent businessman from Clayton, NY has said that he always felt the building that is home to the Lorraine Post Office is the perfect location for a small mail order business due to the post office location. This obviously would be a plus for the community and the USPS as well. Since the talk of the possible post office closing discussion and exploration of this possible option has ceased. A postal operation at least on a part-time basis would allow this discussion and exploration to re-surface. It may be a long shot, but it would provide an option for a currently idle facility and generate revenue for the USPS.