

Draft Letter Appealing Relocation of Postal Services at Historic Venice Post Office

Vice President, Facilities
Attn: Diana K. Alvarado
Pacific Facilities Service Office
Facilities Planning and Requirements
395 Oyster Point Boulevard, Suite 225
South San Francisco, CA 94080-0300

Re: Appeal of Venice Neighborhood Council to Decision to Relocate Postal Services at Historic Venice Post Office

Dear Ms. Alvarado:

I am writing on behalf of the Venice Neighborhood Council (“VNC”) to appeal the decision to relocate retail postal services from the historic Venice Post Office located at 1601 Main Street to the annex at 313 Grand Boulevard. The VNC is part of the city of Los Angeles’s neighborhood council system designed to make government more responsive and to allow local input in decision making in this city of 4 million people. Many in our community of Venice have made it clear to the Board of the VNC that they are opposed to the proposed relocation and we urge you to reconsider this decision.

The proposed relocation will have an adverse and negative environmental impact on the residential neighborhood surrounding the annex and on the historic urban planning of Venice. Further, it jeopardizes the preservation of the architecturally distinguished historic Post Office, which is believed to be the only Works Projects Administration New Deal structure in Venice, and public access to the “Story of Venice” mural created by renowned artist Edward Biberman.

The relocation to the annex represents a dramatic intensification of use of that facility without adequate environmental review. Because the proposed use of the annex would consolidate existing carrier operations with new retail operations without any additional parking being provided, the combined operations would impose spillover parking impacts on the surrounding residential neighborhood, exacerbating an already significant parking problem for local residents and their guests, in this world renowned beach coastal community. More than 16 million people visit Venice beach each year creating a major impact on the Venice community and parking in the residential community surrounding the annex is especially a problem in the Summer. Adding a retail postal services at the annex would essentially transfer automobile and pedestrian traffic from the commercial area surrounding the historic post office to the residential community surrounding the annex.

Moreover, the historic post office has a long history as a local landmark. Its current location and design, built as a post office by an important architect, Louis Simon, is an important element of the planning and land use of our community and the abandonment of this facility as a post office in favor of the annex adversely affects our quality of life

and historic tradition. The proposed move further jeopardizes public access to the “Story of Venice” mural. Artist Edward Biberman is an icon of post war California Modernist artists. His work appears in the Smithsonian, the National Portrait Gallery, and LACMA, among many other collections. The main feature of the interior of the historic Post Office is this mural, where it has been since 1941. Continued public access to the mural is very important to our community.

It is our understanding that the need for expansion to the annex was necessary due to the closure of another facility in Los Angeles and the rerouting of certain postal operations for several surrounding communities to Venice. Our post office has always been enough to serve Venice and given the reported drop in use of retail postal services throughout the United States, it is difficult to see that our historic post office could not continue to serve the needs of Venice in the long term as well. Our town of Venice must not be so adversely affected due to postal service operations for communities outside of Venice.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Lucks

Cc: Congressperson Janice Hahn
Concilperson Bill Rosendahl
Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa