



July 3, 2013

Final Determination Regarding Relocation of Retail Services in La Jolla, California

In accordance with the procedures set forth at 39 C.F.R. 241.4(6), this is the final review determination of the Vice President, Facilities, of the United States Postal Service ("Postal Service") with respect to the Postal Service's March 22, 2013 decision regarding relocation of retail services from the La Jolla Post Office located at 1140 Wall Street, La Jolla, CA (the "La Jolla Post Office").

On March 22, 2013, the Postal Service announced its decision approving relocation of the La Jolla Post Office retail services to a yet-to-be determined location and stated that the Postal Service plans to sell the La Jolla Post Office and to undertake marketing that would allow for a potential sale/lease back. Following that announcement, the Postal Service received requests for review of that decision from Congresswoman Susan Davis, Congressman Scott Peters, Mayor Bob Filner, Councilmember Sherri Lightner, the Save Our La Jolla Post Office Task Force, the La Jolla Historical Society, the La Jolla Village Merchants Association and a number of individuals (I refer below to all of the foregoing collectively as "concerned parties"). In making this final determination, I have obtained the views of the Postal Service decision maker, reviewed relevant parts of the project file and carefully considered all the concerns expressed by the concerned parties in their requests for review of the decision. While I am sympathetic to the concerns raised, upon a review of the facts, for the reasons set forth below, I will not set aside the Postal Service's decision.

The concerns raised by the concerned parties can be grouped as follows:

(1) opposition to relocating services from the existing site, as expressed by community members and the above-mentioned elected officials, and the potential for adverse economic effect on the immediate neighborhood resulting from relocation, (2) selection of a relocation site for a new post office, (3) alleged failure to comply with certain federal statutes and regulations and apprehension about the future of the mural in the La Jolla Post Office, (4) allowing an opportunity for a community group to purchase the building and lease back space to the Postal Service, and (5) Postal Service plans for Postal Service employees at the current site. I have briefly addressed these concerns below:

1. Opposition to Relocation and Potential Adverse Economic Effect. We understand and appreciate the comments expressing heartfelt attachment to the La Jolla Post Office building and its employees as a part of the community. It is a role we intend to preserve as much as possible. However, while the Postal

Service takes pride in its role in every community, our exigent financial circumstances force us to pursue every opportunity to reduce costs and generate revenue. Accordingly, we will pursue relocation opportunities for the La Jolla Post Office as well as a sale transaction that could include a lease to the Postal Service allowing existing Postal Service services to remain in place.

2. Selection of Relocation Site. Some comments voiced concerns that a relocation site would prove less desirable in terms of cost, location and other factors. The Postal Service will only consider relocation sites that are suitable for our customers and meet all postal operation needs. Our goal is to identify a location as close to the current site as possible and within the same ZIP Code. If we relocate to a new site, we expect to continue to provide the same services during the same operating hours as we provide at the existing site. Additionally, the Postal Service has greatly expanded access to postal products and services in recent years. Almost 40 percent of our total retail revenue comes from this expanded access, including stamps in ATM's, supermarkets and drug stores and shipping services in office supply stores. Nearly all of the services available in the La Jolla Post Office are available online at usps.com. After issuing this final review determination, the Postal Service will undertake a site selection process that includes notice to officials and the public of potential alternative site(s) and solicitation of comments.

3. Alleged Failure to Comply With Certain Federal Statutes and Regulations: Concern for the Mural. Some concerned parties alleged that the Postal Service failed to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and its corresponding federal regulations (collectively, NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act and its corresponding federal regulations (collectively, NHPA). Some concerned parties expressed related apprehension about the future of the mural in the La Jolla Post Office and for the public's continued access to it. Regarding the NEPA, some alleged that NEPA required the Postal Service to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) prior to announcing its March 22 relocation decision. However, as that decision noted, the Postal Service has not yet identified potential relocation site(s). Until we have a proposal to relocate the La Jolla Post Office customer retail services to one or more specific alternative sites, we cannot meaningfully evaluate the effects of the relocation. Therefore, under applicable regulations, undertaking a NEPA review would be premature. The Postal Service will comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements under NEPA when the Postal Service has such a relocation proposal and also when it has a proposal for reuse or disposal of the La Jolla Post Office. Regarding the NHPA, we are engaged in the Section 106 process with the applicable governmental authorities and we will complete this process prior to any sale of the La Jolla Post Office. Finally, as we have with many other relocations, if we sell the existing site and relocate to another site, we will retain ownership of the mural and provide for its upkeep and public access through an agreement with the new building owner.

4. Allowing a Purchase Opportunity for a Community Group. Some concerned parties, including Congressman Peters, wrote in support of the Postal Service allowing an opportunity for a community group to purchase the La Jolla Post Office building and lease space to the Postal Service. At such time as the Postal Service markets the La Jolla Post Office building, we will, of course, consider all reasonable proposals for acquiring the building.
5. Postal Service Plans for Existing Employees. One individual expressed concern for our employees at the La Jolla Post Office. If we relocate the La Jolla Post Office services to another site, we will not terminate the La Jolla Post Office employees, but transfer them to the new site.

While the Postal Service is sensitive to the impact of this decision on its customers and the La Jolla community, I am satisfied the March 22 relocation decision properly took into account community input and is consistent with Postal Service objectives. As the concerned parties are no doubt aware, Postal Service operations are not supported by tax dollars. Like other businesses, the Postal Service must control costs and generate revenue.

In reaching this decision, I considered all of the public input received, but the objections expressed do not outweigh the financial exigencies facing the Postal Service. Accordingly, I conclude that there is no basis to set aside the March 22 decision regarding relocation of the La Jolla Post Office. This is the final determination of the Postal Service with respect to this matter, and there is no right to further administrative or judicial review of this decision.



Tom A. Samra
Vice President