

Date of Posting: 05/27/2011

Posting Round Date:

Date of Removal: 07/28/2011

Removal Round Date:

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE CLEMONS, NY POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
SERVICE BY RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER 1358311 - 12819

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is proposing to close the Clemons, NY Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Whitehall Post Office, located eight miles away.

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster is reassigned on February 15, 2010. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue.

The office is being studied for possible closing or consolidation due to the following reasons: Clemons office is currently vacant. This is a management initiated study to determine if regular and effective service can be provided through alternate access. The closest office is Huletts Landing at a distance of 5.23 miles but the difficult terrain between the two offices would make the Whitehall office probably a more appealing choice at a distance of 7.57 miles.

The Clemons Post Office, an EAS-11 level, provides service from 08:00 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:45 Monday - Friday, 08:00 to 12:00 Saturday and lobby hours of 08:00 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 16:45 on Monday - Friday and 08:00 to 11:45 on Saturday to 37 post office box customers and 219 delivery customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail.

The retail window averaged eight transaction(s) accounting for eight minute(s) of retail workload daily. With minimal workload, the Postal Service feels that effective and regular service will be provided by rural route service. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$15,187 (40 revenue units) in FY 2008; \$14,607 (38 revenue units) in FY 2009; and \$12,431 (32 revenue units) in FY 2010. There were no permit mailer(s) or postage meter customer(s).

On May 11, 2011, representatives from the Postal Service were available at Whitehall Post Office lobby, 88 Broadway, Whitehall NY 12887 (Open House style format) to answer questions and provide information to customers. 8 customer(s) attended the meeting.

On May 02, 2011, 38 questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the Clemons Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at the Clemons Post Office. 9 questionnaires were returned. Responses regarding the proposed alternate service were as follows: 1 favorable, 5 unfavorable, and 3 expressed no opinion.

If this proposal is implemented, delivery and retail services will be provided by the Whitehall Post Office, an EAS-18 level office. Window service hours at the Whitehall Post Office are from 08:30 to 13:00 and 14:30 to 16:30, Monday through Friday, and 09:00 to 12:00 on Saturday. There are 131 post office boxes available.

Retail service is also available at the Huletts Landing Post Office an EAS-11 level office, located five miles away. Window service hours at Huletts Landing Post Office are from 08:00 to 13:00 and 13:30 to 16:15, Monday through Friday and 08:00 to 11:45 on Saturday. There are 13 post office boxes available for rent.

The following concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, from customer letters, on the petition, and from the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customers felt if a post office should be closed it should be the one at Huletts Landing.

Response: Huletts Landing serves more customers than Clemons. Huletts Landing also has an incumbent Postmaster, so it can not be considered for a study. Due to the difficult terrain, Whitehall was selected as the possible alternate office. We are also reviewing the possibility of a Contract Postal Unit or Village Post Office in Clemons if the criteria is feasible.
2. **Concern:** You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service

Response: Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.
3. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about package delivery and pickup (customer currently has street delivery)

Response: Rural carriers will deliver packages that fit in your rural mail box, if the package does not fit in the mail box, the carrier will deliver the package up to ½ mile off of the line of travel, at a designated place, such as on your porch or under a carport.
4. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about their 911 address

- Response:** 911 addresses are generally given by the county's 911 coordinator. The Postal Service does not establish 911 addresses. Any questions concerning your 911 address should be directed to the county's 911 coordinator.
5. **Concern:** Customers asked why their post office was being discontinued while others were retained
- Response:** Post offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is a vacancy in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.
6. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern about having to erect a rural mailbox
- Response:** Customers are not required to erect rural mailboxes. Customers may receive PO Box service from the administrative Post Office located 7.6 miles away.
7. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern over the apparent lack of interest by the Postal Service for the needs of the community
- Response:** The Postal Service is required to provide each community with regular and effective service, using the most cost efficient means possible. The proposed alternate delivery service will meet the mailing and service needs of the community in a more cost effective manner.
8. **Concern:** Customers felt the cost of postage was increasing while service was decreasing
- Response:** The Postal Service is not immune to rising costs affecting every family and business. We do not receive tax dollars to cover the cost of operations and must adjust our prices to cover our costs. The Postal Service Governors are responsible for approving prices for all Postal Service products and services. For mailing services prices, such as stamp prices, the Postal Service announces the new prices each February and they become effective each May. The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) reviews the new pricing for compliance with the price cap and other provisions of the Postal Act of 2006.
9. **Concern:** Customers inquired about mailbox installation and maintenance
- Response:** Customers are responsible for mailbox installation and maintenance. Mailboxes must be placed so that they may be safely and conveniently served by the carrier and must be located on the right-hand side of the road in the direction of the carrier's travel. Mailbox supports should conform to state laws and highway regulations. The Postal Service recommends that customers contact the administrative postmaster or carrier for advice on placement of mailboxes and mailbox height and supports.
10. **Concern:** Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance
- Response:** Carrier service is more cost-effective than maintaining a postal facility and postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates an positive annual savings.
11. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about a change of ZIP Code
- Response:** Customers who retain their PO Box or currently have street delivery WILL NOT be required to change their address. ONLY customers electing to close their PO Box and begin street delivery would be required to change their address, if a final determination is made to close or consolidate this office. 911 addresses are generally given by the county's 911 coordinator. The Postal Service does not establish 911 addresses. Any questions concerning your 911 address should be directed to the county's 911 coordinator.
12. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens

Response:

Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The rural or contract delivery carrier may provide retail services, alleviating the need to go to the post office. Stamps by Mail order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBUs can offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay post office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the post office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages of the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services may be provided by the rural or contract delivery carrier.
2. Meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier at the box to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in the mailing address. The community name will continue to be used in the new address. A carrier route address will be assigned.
4. A change in your PO Box Fees may be a result of this proposal.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Clemons is an unincorporated community located in Warren County. The community is administered politically by Robert Banks. Police protection is provided by the Washington County Sheriff Dept.. Fire protection is provided by the Dresden Volunteer Fire Department. The community is comprised of retired people, farmers/ranchers, and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses.

Businesses and organizations include: none . Residents may travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the Clemons Post Office will be available at the Whitehall Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the Whitehall Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed on the returned questionnaires, at the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Concern: | Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity |
| Response: | A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the Clemons Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory. |

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will not adversely affect the community.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster passed away on February 15, 2010. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) may be separated from the Postal Service. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected. .

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$ 44,941 with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-11, No COLA)	\$ 33,168
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$ 11,111
Annual Lease Costs	<u>+ \$ 4,800</u>
Total Annual Costs	\$ 49,079
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$ 4,138</u>
Total Annual Savings	<u>\$ 44,941</u>

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service is proposing to close the Clemons, NY Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Whitehall Post Office, located eight miles away.

The postmaster passed away on February 15, 2010. If the office has a noncareer PMR(s), they may be separated from the Postal Service; however, attempts will be made to reassign the employee(s) to a nearby facility. No other employee(s) will be adversely affected. Post office workload has declined. Effective and regular service will continue to be provided by rural route service.

The Clemons Post Office provided delivery and retail service to 37 PO Box customers and 219 delivery route customers. The daily retail window transactions averaged eight. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

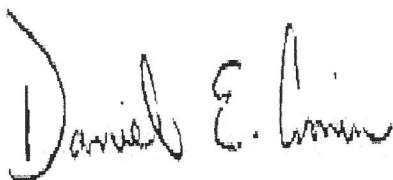
There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services may be available from a rural or contract delivery carrier, which could alleviate the need to travel to a post office for service. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$44,941 annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions with a rural or contract delivery carrier.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this proposal is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. Support Materials. Copies of all materials upon which this proposal is based are available for public inspection at the Clemons Post Office , Huletts Landing Post Office and Whitehall Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. This is a proposal. It is not a final determination to close this post office. If a final determination is made to close this post office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in this office.

The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Regulatory Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination.



DANIEL CRONIN
Manager, Post Office Operations

05/27/2011

Date

