

Northeast Facilities Service Office

CERTIFIED MAIL # 7099 3400 0005 4167 9185
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

October 19, 2004

Ms. Ruth Pierpont, Director
Bureau of Field Services, NY State Parks, Rec. & Historic Preservation
PO Box 189
Peebles Island, NY 12188

Re: Aurora, NY 13026-9998
Main Post Office

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

In consonance with the provisions of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act and the Historic Preservation Act, we are forwarding for your review, information relating to the proposed relocation of the subject facility.

Currently the Aurora Post Office is located in the brick faced, concrete block former Aurora fire station building. We have been there pursuant to a lease since 1979. The loading of the mail for this facility must be made through the front door which is undesirable at best and in this instance has been determined to be unsafe.

The Aurora Foundation has offered to relocate the Aurora Post Office back into the historic building next door. We have initiated the Community Contact process and held an initial public meeting in Aurora. As the Postal Service considers this specific opportunity, and as we receive and review and respond to public input of the citizens of Aurora, we would also like to begin the 106 process with this notice to your good offices.

The Postal Service feels very fortunate indeed to have received this offer from the Aurora Foundation. It is the determination of the Postal Service that the new space offered, is within a significant building which, I have been told has served as a local school as well as containing the Village Post Office for many years. The wife of one of the former Postmasters informed me that subject building originally contained the Aurora Post Office initially in the 30s and 40s and again in the 1970s, until it was moved to the current site in 1979.

We have made the determination that the property which we are considering relocating from has no historical significance, as it is a plain cinder block, flat roof building which was constructed in 1957 to serve as a fire station. I have been informed that should the Postal Service relocate to the offered space, the Village of Aurora, with the aid of the Aurora Foundation, is considering the demolition of this building as part of a plan to improve the safety and expand the public parking lot, and to improve the access to the near by public park.

The building which has formerly housed the Post Office, and in which we have again been offered first floor space, has been under renovation and restoration by the Aurora Foundation for some time. I understand that they have also performed substantial work on several other historic properties in the Village including the Aurora Inn. Should the Postal Service decide to go forward with the offered relocation of the Aurora Post Office, we intend to share all our plans for the project with your office, requesting your review and comment.

One significant point that I want to specifically clarify here, is that the long standing and ongoing repair and renovations of the subject and other buildings by the Aurora Foundation is in no way dependant upon, nor was any of it specifically initiated by, or in any way the result of the proposed offered relocation of the Post Office. We did not initiate any conversations or approach them to suggest this project. The replacement of the Aurora Post Office is not currently on the Northe East Area list for consideration of replacement within the Postal Service.

Others Colleagues of mine in this the Northeast Area Facilities Office were initially contacted by the Mayor of Aurora and informed that the Aurora Foundation would like to bring the Post Office back into its original building. (I understand that the Foundation has also offered the Village office space on the first floor of this building as well.) This project was assigned to me several months ago. I contacted the Mayor and met with him in late September. I explained the Community Contact Process as well as the 106 process and he scheduled the initial public meeting that was held last week on October 12, 2004. It appears clear that the Foundation will continue to complete it's renovation of the subject building and ultimately presumably find other tenants, should the Postal Service and Village decide not to lease space the offered.

Certainly the proposal to attract the Postal Service is very generous, as the Foundation has offered to design and construct the new Post Office space in accordance with our requirements and at their sole expense. They have offered to charge a rent similar to that which we currently pay for our significantly inferior existing quarters. In addition to providing full handicapped accessibility, they have

offered to construct a new loading dock.

I make this point about the prior and ongoing work of the Foundation specifically, as I have been informed by Karen A. Hindenlang of the Aurora Coalition, Inc. that it is her allegation that the Aurora Foundation has previously operated at odds with several aspect of the Historic Preservation Act.

I have no knowledge of any facts related to her allegations, but I suspect, from the pointed nature of her recent e-mail to me, that your office has already been made aware of her position. Clearly the Postal Service is interested in considering the opportunity which has been offered by the Aurora Foundation to relocate back into an historic building which was our former address. We also, as I am sure you can understand, have the strongest possible aversion to any attempts at being pulled into former or ongoing "range war" battles between the Aurora Coalition and the Aurora Foundation or the Village or of Aurora.

I have included pictures of the subject buildings and the immediate vicinity of the current, former (and possibly future) Aurora PO, as well as a map to assist in your review. Should you have any questions, or if I may provide additional information or be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call me on 860.295.7181. Thank you for your consideration of this proposed move.

Sincerely

William S. Moncrief
Real Estate Specialist / Historic Preservation Coordinator

Enclosures, as stated