

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 21, 2006

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION ON THE RELOCATION OF THE UNITED STATES POST OFFICE, GEORGE MASON BRANCH

ISSUE: Resolution on the United States Postal Service (USPS) relocation from its George Mason Station (Prince and Washington Streets).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the attached resolution which encourages USPS to relocate the George Mason Station as close as possible to the current facility.

DISCUSSION: The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) is the property owner of the building at 126 South Washington Street, which contains their organization headquarters. NCMEC officially notified USPS a number of years ago that their lease for post office space would not be renewed. NCMEC has grown significantly since it moved into 126 South Washington, and it intends to use the space in its building currently occupied by USPS for their own purposes.

In order to increase the chances of a qualified site being submitted, City and AEDP staff have been seeking out potential sites, and encouraging those site's owners or brokers to submit a proposal to users. The attached resolution mirrors the resolution adopted by the Old Town Civic Association, and follows on to its request that Council adopt a similar resolution.

The site criteria as stated by the USPS are approximately 3600 square feet of net interior space located on a ground floor retail area. The space ideally should be located within the 22314 Zip Code in an area generally bounded by Cameron Run, Telegraph Road, King St. and the Potomac River. USPS officials have stated their goal to relocate the facility as close as possible to its existing location. However, the tight retail market in Old Town will make this goal challenging to achieve.

On May 3, 2006, USPS notified City officials of the need for relocation. This initiated a site identification process which includes the following targets.

May 24: Public Meeting held by USPS officials discussing the relocation with citizens (held at 277 S. Washington St.) Followed by a 30-day public comment period. Public

input at the meeting focused on the need to keep the station as close as possible to the current facility.

June 23: Solicitation for site proposals is posted in local publications and at the current George Mason Station. Proposals are to be submitted within 30-days of posting.

Late July: All submissions will be made public and posted at the George Mason Station. Each will be labeled as “contending” or “non-contending.” USPS will also note its top contenders (no more than three). Posting will continue for a 30-day public comment period.

Late August: USPS will notify the City of its chosen site.

ATTACHMENT: Proposed resolution

STAFF:

Tom Fairchild, Business Facilitator

Stephanie Landrum, Acting Executive Director, AEDP

RESOLUTION # _____

WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has been advised that its landlord will not renew USPS' lease for the George Mason Postal Station at 126 Washington Street when it expires at the end of March 2007; and

WHEREAS, the unique character of the community of Old Town in Alexandria depends on the continued vitality of both its historic residential community and its vigorous commercial sector; and

WHEREAS, the George Mason Station is a valued part of the healthy mix of residential, business and service uses in Old Town's livable and walkable community; and

WHEREAS, the George Mason Station provides an essential service to both the residential and business communities of Old Town, and its loss would damage both, and indeed the entire City of Alexandria.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alexandria City Council urges the United States Postal Service, if at all possible, to relocate the George Mason Branch within the area bounded by Fairfax, Prince, Patrick and Cameron Streets in Old Town and, ideally, as close as possible to its present site near the intersection of Prince and Washington Streets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Alexandria City Council and the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership plan to provide assistance to the USPS in identifying alternative sites that would preserve this important asset to our community and to its small businesses, and strongly urge USPS to avail itself of that assistance in its search for a new location for the George Mason Station within the heart of Old Town Alexandria.

Adopted: June 27, 2006

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William D. Euille, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 2193

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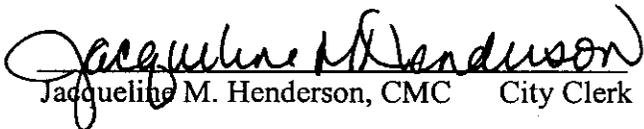
Adopted: June 27, 2006



WILLIAM D. EULLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk