



**Susan Smith.: Delegate submission re. Canada Post Community Mailbox Conversion.
March 24, 2015.**

First of all, I would like to thank you for allowing me to speak, on behalf of both the Council of Canadians and London residents. Public consultation on the planned abandonment of door-to-door postal service and the large scale installation of public mailboxes is absolutely essential, and so I am happy to be taking part in this process.

That said, I must also submit to you that the consultation undertaken by Canada Post that I have witnessed is entirely unsatisfactory and insufficient. There has been no real public consultation about what kind of postal service Canadians want & need. Residents are simply being given a choice between alternatives the Post Office has already decided upon. This is not public consultation; it is public management. Full public consultation would mean real discussion with residents, including the disabled, the aged, and parents with children too young to be left unattended. It would mean implementing real solutions to their needs in each planned mailbox installation. I am not convinced that this is yet being done.

Canada Post is a publicly owned Crown Corporation, and yet the public is not being informed sufficiently and is certainly not being consulted as to the services it wants and expects from this highly successful corporation. I would strongly urge that the city make it a top priority to carry out community meetings for all concerned, with invitations to Canada Post officials, (including Deepak Chopra), federal MPs, and Mayor Matt Brown.

Further to issues related to the installation and use of public mailboxes, I put the following questions to the CWC.

- 1) Is there any consideration of the public health risk from idling vehicles of those picking up their mail – especially, for example, to babies and children who have to accompany their parent/guardian to the public mailbox?
- 2) Is the traffic congestion and increase in potential traffic hazards to residents being addressed as these plans are rolled out? Assuming that thorough and meaningful public

consultation carries on through this implementation process, is there going to be responsive, and costly, urban planning carried out to meet residents' needs and to meet the reality of vehicle traffic unique to affected neighbourhoods?

- 3) CWC has already heard from Canada Post that the Crown Corporation is to undertake maintenance, including snow removal, for SSMBs. The problem here is accountability. As other communities have found, this commitment is often not followed through and there is at present, no way to enforce these paper commitments (beyond calling a 1-800 number). It is essential that residents and the city know what mechanisms are to be in place, to enforce Canada Post's obligations in all these areas, or to recover costs from them if the City is forced to perform duties Canada Post has fallen short on.
- 4) In regard to hazards, whether that be injury to children by traffic, or by way of disabled or elderly residents falling, for instance, has the city considered the cost in terms of liability and lawsuits, if they are found negligent in any way that contributes to accidents and injury? Is Canada Post willing to take any administrative and fiscal responsibility in this regard, or is the cost to be borne fully by our municipal government?
- 5) Has Canada Post any contingency plans or any intention of coming to binding agreements with the municipality regarding such things as resident injury, mail theft and identity theft? Who is liable, if identity theft happens, as it is likely to? Will Canada Post efficiently and responsibly respond to instances of identity theft, from public mailboxes which may well become the next lucrative target for criminals? Or will liability rest with City Hall? Or, worse, will neither side bear any responsibility, leaving residents to fend for themselves, incurring cost in money, time and the real health effects of such invasion of their person and privacy?
- 6) Finally, has City Hall considered any adequate response to the issue of the inevitable lowering of property values in areas where public mailboxes are an inconvenience, vandalized, a traffic hazard, and a possible cause of personal injury to residents? Will the municipality consider lowering the property taxes of residences negatively affected? Or will they, out of necessity, have to raise taxes on London residents in order to meet the varied demands put upon them by this large-scale initiative?

These are but a few of the many serious questions that the public needs to be informed about, and, most of all, consulted about, meaningfully, long prior to Canada Post pushing these significant changes in service onto the tax-paying and vulnerable public.

Thanking you,

Susan Smith: delegation representative.

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