



Fred Gibbs circulates petition in front of Brookdale Post Office

Plan to move Brookdale Post Office not getting town's stamp of approval

By JOAN RAYMOND
Sentinel Staff Writer

BROOKDALE — Regional postmaster Bill Lawrence thought everything was hunky dory about his decision to move the Brookdale Post Office.

"I thought everybody would be happy," Lawrence said Friday.

Today's post office on Highway 9 "is just not nice. It's no place for anybody to have to work," said Lawrence.

Brookdale Postmaster Donna Snyder "deserves more and so does the public," said Lawrence. The post office is old, the roof leaks, there's not much heat and the toilet is tacky, he said.

A new post office at the Brookdale Lodge will be bigger, nicer, more convenient and have better parking, according to Lawrence.

Not only that. Lawrence said the new post office will be more secure. Just before Christmas burglars forced their way into the post office and emptied the 300 rented postoffice boxes, making off with several bins of mail and packages. Post box keys were also stolen, so all the locks had to be changed.

Lawrence said after the burglaries he gave

a higher priority to moving the Brookdale postoffice. If the plan moves smoothly through the postal bureaucracy, Lawrence said the move could become reality in about three months.

Brookdale resident Fred Gibbs opposes the move unless something is done first to make access safe to the new post office.

Lately, Gibbs — an eight-year resident who works as a firefighter in San Jose — has become almost as permanent a fixture at the post office as the post boxes. He's been circulating a petition which has been signed by 170 postal patrons.

Gibbs said he agrees there are good reasons for moving the postoffice. "This is not an anti-post office petition. It's a safety issue," said Gibbs.

The petition states "some of us and even our families stand a very good chance of getting hurt or possibly killed in attempting to get our mail."

The site of the new post office is on a blind curve with no crosswalks or left-hand turn lanes.

Gibbs said he, too, is concerned about the working conditions for Postmaster Snyder.

"We want her to get in and out safely."

If the post office is moved to the Brookdale Lodge site, Gibbs said he "would not recommend sending children to get the mail."

Drivers do not respect the 25 mph speed limit, said Gibbs. Also, he said, post office patrons would have to walk on Highway 9 to get to the new postoffice.

Gibbs admits, however, some residents today have to walk on the busy state highway to reach the existing post office.

Even if the post office isn't moved, said Gibbs, "we want crosswalks, sidewalks and enforcement of the speed laws."

Gibbs said other sites available would be safer. "If we're going to move it, let's do it right, so we can all get our mail safely."

Lawrence said he has no objections to the safety features, but added Gibbs "is asking me to do things I can't do."

"If the county wants to apply to have flashing lights and crosswalks and left-hand turn lanes, I have no objections. It's none of my business."

He notes Highway 9 is controlled by the state.

Added Lawrence: "You have to turn left where the post office is now."