



SUGARLOAF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER March 2010

"Protecting our rural legacy"

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Another Blow to our Area!

Patrons of the Beallsville Postal Service were notified recently that their office would close on August 1, 2010 while they were requested to fill out a questionnaire about how the closing would impact them and their community! Sugarloaf Citizens Association has written three letters to the area's Postal Service officials, but has not received a clear answer about the closing of the Beallsville office.

We all know that the U.S. Postal Service is in genuine financial straits because of competing services. Still, there are many services that only a post office can provide. We still want to order things and send our packages by mail, and apply for passports at the post office. Rural residents rely on having their mail delivered to boxes or by mail carriers. While delivery could be supplied by other area post offices, it will require longer distances and thus higher cost both for the Postal Service and the patrons; many of the elderly will be greatly inconvenienced.

There appears to be a simple assumption that since there are relatively few rural postal patrons, rural offices can be closed without due consideration. We take exception to this assumption because it discredits the basic rights of the patrons of this public service.

Beallsville has had a post office since the early 1800's and although it is located in a historical district protected under the Montgomery County Code, the Postal Service has chosen to neglect such considerations. The Beallsville community may thus not be the only one in our region to lose its post office. It is imperative that the US Postal Service use transparent criteria that can be examined and challenged at public hearings. Rural people are mostly reasonable folks who will work hard to do what is right for our communities and citizens. We want an open process and a healthy dialogue when our basic rights for public service are threatened.

We want to remind area residents that the **Sugarloaf Citizens' Association's Annual Meeting** will be held at the Linden Farm at 20900 Martinsburg Rd, Dickerson, MD on April 17 beginning at 9:30. A full agenda will be presented in our next Newsletter.