

# Postal Union: Residents Want More Service

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"I think it's bad anytime you have to stand in line for an hour to get one package mailed off," he said Monday. "It's a big mess out here sometimes."

He said the problem could be eliminated if the Main branch offered more services. Dr. Jeff Miller was more vociferous.

"It doesn't make sense to have all of this parking space and this huge building and you can't even mail a package here," said Miller, a local optometrist. "It ought to be investigated or closed down altogether."

Miller said it was an inconvenience to people who live and work in the area to have to go to another post office to receive services they should be able to receive in their neighborhood post office.

"We shouldn't have to go somewhere else for anything," he said. "Look at the size of this parking lot. We ought to be able to do more than buy stamps out of a machine from a facility like this."

Ernestine N. Carter, president of the local postal service union, said it has always been a concern that there is no window service offered at the Main branch. She said the space for a window section in the Main branch, which is in the heart of the African-American community, is vacant.

"It is in the center of the black community, but it does not benefit the black community," Carter said. "There are limited-income people in the area who have to catch a bus to cash food-stamp vouchers."

"This is one of the issue that customers come into the post office everyday wanting to know the answer to," said Carter, who works in the Main branch. "They want to know why they can't come into the station and get money orders; they want to know why they can't come into the station and get food stamps or mail a small package."

She said union members will conduct a poll of several area residents on what type of service they would like to see in the area and submit it to Postmaster J. Mark Matics.

Matics, whose office is at the Main branch, said the branch is a delivery and distribution center and that it did not replace the old Main branch on Fifth Street and that it was never intended to offer "retail services" when it began operation March 1991.

When the old Main branch was closed down, he said, it was replaced with the Center City

branch on Town Run Lane, which offers full services.

"Retail was really all left downtown, where it should be," Matics said. He said there have been discussions about adding a

window to the Main branch, but there are no plans to do so.

"If he is as concerned about the public as he says," said Carter, "then why is this concern that the public has not been

remedied? Their question then is: 'What is this big, beautiful building here for?'"

Others, like Belinda Humphrey, don't complain because they have gotten used to

it. The secretary of New Covenant Church off Stratford Road lives near the Main branch, but handles most of the church mailings at the Miller Street branch.

"When I leave here, I've got an eight-mile drive over there and back," she said. "I've been doing it so long, I'm used to it now."

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### CORRECTION

A story in last week's issue of the *Chronicle* on talk show host Rolonda Watts incorrectly quoted her mother, Velma Watts. Velma Watts said Rolonda was "precocious as a child," not "precarious." The *Chronicle* regrets this error.

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