

NAHB Resolution

Title: Cluster Box Unit Mail Delivery  
Sponsor: HBA of Alabama  
Submitted by: Todd Slyman

WHEREAS, the delivery of mail is one of the basic functions of the federal government, specifically authorized by Congress in the Constitution;

WHEREAS, the United States Postal Service (USPS) is an independent branch of the Executive Office of the United States Government, governed by a nine member Board of Governors and overseen by the Postal Regulatory Commission, an independent oversight Commission whose members are also appointed by the President and whose appointment is approved by the Senate;

WHEREAS, the USPS has seen reduced revenues due to competition with private express carriers, innovations in delivery services, and dramatically oscillating fuel prices;

WHEREAS, in an effort to reduce delivery costs, effective April 5, 2012, the USPS revised the Postal Operations Manual (POM) regarding mode of delivery, giving it autonomy in determining how deliveries to new addresses will be made and effectively changing the way Americans receive mail by focusing delivery away from sidewalk and curbside delivery and towards delivery only to centralized Cluster Box Units (CBUs), Parcel Lockers, or UPSP-STD-4C Mail Boxes in new residential developments;

WHEREAS, to do so, the POM identifies centralized delivery as the default method and requires special approval to use curbside and sidewalk methods;

WHEREAS, the POM also requires newly established or extended business or residential customers to request and receive approval of the delivery location and mode of delivery from the local Postmaster or District designees, and specifies that these deliveries will not receive mail delivery service until the mail receptacles are installed and the units and locations are approved by the local postmaster;

WHEREAS, the USPS, and not the local planning department or municipal decision-making body, retains the authority to approve the mailbox site(s) and type(s) of equipment;

WHEREAS, centralized delivery may require developers to incur increased costs in the form of land to be used for the units themselves, as well as for access and parking, and possibly other safety and security features, none of which will be provided by the USPS;

WHEREAS, centralized delivery can be particularly problematic for projects that are already underway and the USPS has, in many instances, failed to adequately notify developers, engineers, surveyors, planning and zoning administrators, homeowners, or homeowners associations of this change in policy, thus necessitating the redesign of

subdivisions that have already been approved and/or are under construction to allow for centralized delivery of mail; and

WHEREAS, there has been inconsistent and uneven application of the POM by local postmasters or district designees and the POM does not provide adequate guidance as to when alternative delivery modes may be approved, how to address ongoing projects or who has the responsibility to maintain centralized delivery structures and under what circumstances,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) urge the United States Postal Service (USPS) to maintain the option of curbside or sidewalk delivery in new residential developments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NAHB actively oppose any effort by the USPS to mandate cluster mailbox delivery as the “preferred” method of delivery in new residential developments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NAHB encourage USPS to recognize that the various modes of delivery contained in the current Postal Operations Manual are valid for use by developers and builders;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NAHB urge the Postal Regulatory Commission to ensure through its oversight that the USPS abandon any policy that may disproportionately affect rural, lower income, elderly, disabled, and predominately minority communities across the country;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in the event that cluster mailbox units are installed, NAHB urge the USPS to provide for the maintenance of the units and assume all liability associated with such installation and maintenance;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NAHB urge Congress to hold hearings to examine the potential benefits and problems associated with widespread adoption of centralized delivery.

Board of Directors Action:	APPROVED
Executive Board Action:	Recommends Approval
Resolutions Committee Action:	Recommends Approval
Land Development Committee Action:	Recommends Approval
Federal Government Affairs Committee Action:	Recommends deferring action until the Land Development Committee meeting.

*If approved, this resolution would replace policy 2018.7 No. 3 Centralized Mail Delivery*

*This resolution was substantially revised during the committee review process and, therefore, will require a two-thirds majority vote by the Board of Directors for approval.*