



MEMORANDUM

To: Public Works Committee

Through: Carl S. Goldsmith, Director of Public Works *g*

From: David P. Gorman, PE, Asst. Director of Public Works *DPG*

Date: October 20, 2008

Subject: Proposed Policy for Mailbox Replacement Impacted by Snow Removal Operations

The Village does not currently have a formal policy for replacing mailboxes that are damaged or destroyed during snow removal operations. Presently, Public Works installs a temporary mailbox and/or post when either is damaged or knocked down during snow removal operations. Public Works installs permanent replacements at the end of winter. Staff requests that the Public Works Committee recommend a policy to the Village Board of Trustees. The following policy incorporates comments made by the Committee on October 14th.

Background:

Public Works typically damages 100 mailboxes each winter. The replacement cost for last winter was \$25 each, plus labor. Investigations have determined that many of the mailboxes that were damaged or destroyed had been improperly installed, meaning that they were not installed in accordance with Village Code and United State Postal Service (USPS) regulations. Many of the mailboxes are too close to the curb or hang over the curb so they are either hit by the plow or pushed over by plowed snow.

Village Ordinance No. 5146 directed residents to bring all non-conforming mailboxes into compliance by Nov 15, 2002. However, a survey of all street-side mailboxes was supposed to have been completed by that time. Such a survey was not completed until the summer of 2008.

An increasing number of residents are installing ornate mailboxes, increasing the difficulty of obtaining replacements that meet resident approval. Additionally, many days are required to purchase, assemble and install the new mailboxes during the busy period when the Department is transitioning from winter to spring.

Survey:

Staff measured mailboxes this Summer and determined that a total of 2,237 mailboxes were not in compliance with regulations. There were 309 that were either too close to or over the curb. Another 8 were structural. As soon as the Village Board approves the new policy, a letter will be sent to these 317 residents advising them to modify their mailboxes by June 1, 2009.

October 17, 2008

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Draft Policy:

Staff proposes a policy that reimburses residents with properly installed mailboxes for the cost of materials associated with replacing a basic mailbox. When identified by staff or notified by a resident, staff will install a temporary mailbox within one working day after the end of the storm. The Village will reimburse residents with properly installed mailboxes for the cost of materials for a basic metal mailbox and wooden post. The resident may purchase a different type to be installed on their behalf by Public Works but the reimbursement amount will be a set amount based on the basic type. The temporary mailbox would be returned to the Village before the reimbursement is made. Damaged mailboxes that clearly did not meet Post Office and Village installation standards as of June 1, 2009 will not be reimbursed. Letters would be mailed to the owners of the non-conforming mailboxes this Fall to document and advise that those mailboxes must be adjusted or replaced per the regulations.

Recommendation:

Staff requests that the Committee recommend the proposed policy to the Village Board of Trustees. Staff desires that the Board would pass this policy on November 20th so that homeowners may have sufficient time to adjust mailbox posts prior to June 1, 2009 and, ideally, before the onset of this winter.

DG:dg Policy Proposal Mail Boxes - PWC Memo R2

attachment: revised draft policy

cc: David Hulseberg, Village Manager
Keith Surges, Operations Superintendent
Angela Podesta, Utilities Superintendent

DRAFT

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

VILLAGE BOARD POLICY MEMORANDUM

Number:

Date:

I. Purpose

To establish a Village policy for the replacement of mailboxes knocked down or damaged by the Village during snow removal operations.

II. Procedures/Guidelines

When identified by staff or notified by a resident that snow removal operations have damaged a mailbox and/or post, Public Works will install a temporary metal mailbox and wooden post within one working day after the end of the storm.

The resident may either keep the temporary mailbox or opt for a different replacement mailbox. The resident shall purchase the different mailbox and the Village will reimburse the resident for the cost of a basic mailbox provided that the mailbox was originally installed per Village Code (Title 9, Chapter 97, Section 97.010). The resident must provide copies of paid receipts to Public Works and the temporary mailbox no later than May 15th in order to claim for reimbursement. Public Works will install the permanent mailbox when so requested by the resident.

The Village will not reimburse a resident when the mailbox was not installed per Village Code as of June 1, 2009. In particular, the box must not hang over the curb or be within 6 inches of the face of the curb.

Public Works will inform each resident in writing when their box is located too close to, or over the curb. Public Works will maintain a list of all residents whose boxes are located too close or over the curb.

Legislation/Documentation

§ 97.010 USE AND MAINTENANCE OF PARKWAY

(A) The Village hereby grants a revocable permission for each property owner and/or resident to beautify the portion of the land owned by, or dedicated to the Village and located between said owner's or resident's premises and the adjoining curb line (the parkway area); provided, however, that no encumbrance other than grass and/or those permitted by and planted under the provisions of Title 9, Chapter 99 of the Code of Ordinances are to be established on the parkway area, said establishment shall be done in accordance with all other applicable Village Codes and Ordinances.

(B) It shall be the duty of each owner of or person residing on property abutting on a parkway area to maintain the grass on the parkway by keeping its height at a level which complies with the Village Code. This duty shall extend only to grass and weed cutting and its imposition does not entail any further duties or responsibilities.

(C) United States Postal Service approved mailboxes are permitted within the parkway area only under the following conditions:

(1) The front face of the mailbox, once mounted, shall be six inches (6") to eight inches (8") from the back of the curb, or if no curb is present, from the road pavement, unless otherwise approved by the Postmaster due to road and/or curb conditions.

(2) The distance from grade to the bottom surface of the mailbox shall be forty-one inches (41") to forty-five inches (45"), unless otherwise approved by the Postmaster due to road and/or curb conditions.

(3) Mailbox and mailbox mounting structures shall provide a breakaway feature, as recommended by the Federal Highway Administration and the United States Postal Service, as follows:

(a) The mailbox shall be mounted on a mounting structure of the following sizes and materials and no others:

1) A wood or plastic post of which the area of an average cross section may not be more than sixteen (16) square inches.

2) A metal post not more than two inches (2") in diameter.

(b) Permitted mounting structures shall be affixed as follows:

1) A wood or plastic post shall be embedded in crushed stone in a twelve inch (12") diameter hole to a depth of thirty six inches (36") below grade.

2) A metal post shall be embedded twenty four inches (24") in concrete in a thirty six inch (36") hold of twelve inch (12") diameter.

(c) Mailboxes shall be securely affixed to the required mounting structure.

(4) Residents should take all necessary precautions to prevent damage to any existing utility located in the parkway.

(5) Any nonconforming mailbox or mailbox mounting structure shall be brought into compliance on or before November 15, 2002.

(Ord. 3449, passed 9/5/91; Ord. 5146, passed 6/20/02)

§ 97.999 PENALTY.

Any person, firm, or corporation who or which shall violate any of the provisions of this chapter shall be subject to a fine upon conviction thereof of not less than \$25 nor more than \$750, and each day such violation is permitted to continue shall constitute a separate offense.

STRUCTURAL MAILBOX LETTER
(10/20/08 DRAFT)

(date)

Resident

Lombard, IL 60148

RE: Unauthorized Mailbox Structure

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Village of Lombard has observed that you have constructed a mailbox structure in the public parkway in front of your property. Such structures are not allowed in the parkway per the attached Village Code §97.010. Structural mailboxes present a hazard and liability for traffic accidents and interfere with underground utility work.

Please remove the mailbox structure by June 1, 2009. Failure to remove the structure by this date may result in a ticket and/or forced removal of the structure without further notice. The Village sincerely hopes to avoid such action.

Please call me at (630) 620-5740 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

David P. Gorman, PE
Asst. Dir. of Public Works

DG:dg Structural Mailbox Letter

attachments: § 97.010, § 97.999 and Mailbox Inspection Form

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