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Residents ready for mail fight

By PAUL PIVATO
 Staff Reporter

The mailbox at Anne Derrett's home is somewhat of an anomaly.

In the three years it's been bolted to her brick wall, the gold-colored mailbox has never been opened.

The Derretts — like all the residents on Unionville's Addington Square — don't get home mail delivery and they're determined to take the matter all the way to the Supreme Court.

Along with neighbour Andre Foucault, Anne Derrett has led a group of angry residents in forming a lobby group known as RAM — Residents Against Mailboxes.

The mailboxes in question are the recent "superboxes" Canada Post has installed in newly-built subdivisions such as the one on Addington Square.

The group estimates that around 145,000 urban homes across Canada are now without home delivery.

"The government of this country is discriminating against Canadians because of where they live," said Mrs. Derrett. "The post office is reducing its deficit on the backs of a minority."

"People are very upset about this," she said. "They're receiving second-class service." She first moved to the Unionville subdivision three years ago under the impression she would eventually get home mail delivery.

But on January 13 of this year she received a letter, posted on the 5th, informing her Canada Post would be installing a temporary holding mailbox near her home.

That was the day, said Mrs. Derrett, that she and other irate neighbors gathered at her home and formed RAM.

The Unionville lobby group



Contrary to Canada Post's vision, community mailboxes won't be the wave of the future if a Unionville lobby group has its way — and the members are prepared to take their fight to the Supreme Court to prove it. Here, resident Anne Derrett is seen in front of her neighborhood box. — Sjoerd Witteveen

has since linked up with a similar national organization known as Citizens Unite For Equitable Postal Service.

The national group, which started in Ottawa, has spread to Calgary, Winnipeg and Montreal.

"On an issue such as this one, we're appealing to the basic sense of fair play that Canadians have," said Andre Foucault. "That's what we're banking on."

The lobby group has mounted a letter-writing campaign and wants town council to endorse a resolution opposing the lack of postal delivery to homes in new subdivisions.

Local members have already begun petitioning councillors for their support, said Mrs. Derrett.

Last week RAM received a strong endorsement from the Unionville Ratepayer's Association.

The reason for the support, according to association presi-

dent Colin Creasey, is discrimination.

"We're treating it as a ratepayer concern," he said. "It's not a matter of having to walk to get your mail — it's a matter of discrimination."

"They (new homeowners) are paying for a service the rest of us get. Why shouldn't they get the same service?"

Mr. Creasey added that the policy of not delivering mail to new subdivisions is only "the thin edge of the wedge."

"It wouldn't surprise me if next we got mail delivery every second day," he said. "Where does it stop?"

Anne Derrett, however, remains optimistic that they will eventually win home mail delivery.

"I want to open my door and reach for my mail like everyone else," she said. "And I will."

"We're going to win this one."

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