

Madison Eagle

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MADISON -- More restrictions may be ahead for cigarette smokers in Madison as the Borough Council considers a ban that includes all borough property such as public parks and recreational areas.

The Borough Council unanimously introduced the ordinance, which would amend Chapter 163 of the borough code entitled "Smoking," at its meeting Wednesday, Oct. 16. The proposed law is scheduled for a public hearing and a final vote when the council meets at 8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 28.

Council President Carmela Vitale opened the Oct. 16 discussion by noting that Madison was "ahead of the curve" when it banned smoking in the borough's public buildings in 1993.

"We want to protect residents from second-hand smoking," she said, adding that the proposed ordinance would benefit the borough's "sustainable" environmental goals.

Vitale then introduced two representatives from groups that advocate nonsmoking.

Alan Kantz from GASP, a nonprofit organization in Summit with a mission of promoting smoke-free air and tobacco-free lives, told the council that more than 210 towns in New Jersey, including neighboring Chatham, have smoke-free parks.

Lucille Talbot of the Cancer Coalition said that reducing second-hand smoke was the groups' major goal.

Enforcement?

Councilman Ben Wolkowitz asked how the ordinance could be enforced.

Vitale responded that signs would be posted and that the ordinance would be self-regulated. "Children hate smoking. They will go up to an adult and tell them not to smoke people will step up," she said.

Councilman Robert Landrigan, a veteran of the Madison Volunteer Ambulance Corps who also serves as the coordinator for the borough's Office of Emergency Management, noted that he had "seen too many people go to the hospital with respiratory illnesses."

Under the definition of the proposed ordinance, borough parks and recreational facilities include all public parks, playgrounds, ball fields, swimming pools, plazas publicly owned or leased by the borough, and all property owned or leased by the borough where the public is invited or permitted.

http://newjerseyhills.com/madison_eagle/news/madison-looks-to-widen-smoking-ban-to-parks-recreation-areas/article_9f9e01ea-3c28-11e3-8930-0019bb2963f4.html