

Daily Herald

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No ifs, ands or butts

Naperville votes to go smoke-free

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Posted Thursday, April 19, 2007

Smoke 'em while you can.

Naperville's city council passed a smoking ban Wednesday that is essentially a carbon copy of the state's proposed bill still meandering its way through the legislative process in Springfield.

The city had balked at a citywide smoking ban in March, but the movement was reinvigorated by the state Senate's passage of the bill at the end of the month.

The city's initial proposal got snagged on rules regarding smoking at outdoor festivals and outdoor dining areas. The proposed state law has no stipulations regarding outdoor public smoking.

The smoking ban would go into effect Jan. 1, 2008, the same as the state's proposed ban.

Councilmen John Rosanova and James Boyajian voted against the ban because some of the language in the ordinance doesn't apply to the city and is confusing, they said.

Councilman Grant Wehrli said he supported the state's proposal because it pertained only to "indoor air quality."

Leaders of Smoke-Free Naperville were elated by the council's decision.

"It's exactly what the council wanted," said Tony Andrews, the group's president. "The state's bill is a fabulous bill. It doesn't have anything about outdoors, which is what the council wanted. Besides, they can do something about that next summer."

The council has always supported a statewide ban because it was concerned a citywide ban would create an unfair advantage for restaurants and bars in bordering cities. Rosanova said he would expect the council to rescind the ordinance if the state doesn't pass its smoking ban.

"At least I would expect a great deal of conversation around that issue," he said. "I just don't understand why we passed an ordinance creating a law in Naperville based on a bill that hasn't even passed in the state and will probably change in some form from what we passed tonight."

The state's bill is up for debate in the state House. State Rep. Joe Dunn, a Naperville Republican, said he expected a decision by the House this week. But officials from Speaker

Michael Madigan's office said the smoking ban probably wouldn't make it to the House floor for debate for at least two weeks. The bill has yet to be assigned to a committee, according to the general assembly's Web site.

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