

The Bergen Record

## Tenaflly anti-smoking policy being crafted

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TENAFLY — The Borough Council is set to craft an official non-smoking policy for borough buildings, parks and athletic courts, joining a region-wide movement in imposing bans on open-air public spaces.

The proposal comes after Borough Administrator Jewel Thompson-Chin discovered that the borough lacked such a policy for its buildings while the Department of Public Works was aiming to post signage warning smokers not to light up.

DPW Director Bob Beutel "was looking into putting up some no-smoking signs, only to find that we didn't codify it," Thompson-Chin told the council on Sept. 24. "He has given me a model ordinance that I'm looking at. The model ordinance doesn't allow smoking on Earth, so we have to kind of, tone it down, just a little."

Originally Thompson-Chin was interested in drafting an ordinance for borough buildings, but after increasing support from the council, will add smoking bans at parks. However, Beutel recommended drawing up an ordinance for municipal buildings first, because adding parks could ignite controversy.

### **Controversy a concern**

"His true intent was to deal with buildings, and he was concerned about the issue of parks being, in and of itself, controversial and possibly delaying the ordinance," Thompson-Chin said.

Despite those initial concerns, the council will draw up an ordinance banning smoking at all borough facilities and present it for a first reading at the next meeting, on Oct. 22.

If the ordinance is adopted, Tenaflly would join, Closter, Glen Rock, Paramus, Garfield, North Bergen, Secaucus, Wayne and a slew of other communities that have banned smoking in parks or recreational areas.

### **Many statewide**

More than 160 municipalities in 12 counties statewide restrict smoking in outdoor public areas.

That municipalities include 14 in Passaic County and 22 in Bergen County, according to Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy (GASP), which has advocated for such laws across the state.

GASP Executive Director Karen Blumenfeld said the trend to ban smoking is occurring in part because people saw the success of New Jersey's Smoke-Free Air Act of 2006, which banned smoking in indoor public places and workplaces.

Another turning point came in 2011, when New York City prohibited smoking in all its parks and beaches, inspiring New Jersey towns and cities to do the same.

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