

The Alternative Press

Millburn Township Committee Considers Smoking Ban for Parks

David Lackey, June 18, 2014

MILLBURN, NJ – The Township Committee took under consideration a new ordinance that would prohibit smoking in public parks at its meeting on Tuesday evening. The proposed ban was suggested by the Millburn Environmental Commission and brought forth by the Commission's Township Committee liaison, Sandra Haimoff.

At its meeting last week, the Environmental Commission passed a resolution on the issue and drafted a proposed resolution for the Township Committee to consider. Each member of the Township Committee had been given a large packet containing the resolution and supporting materials.

The Millburn Municipal Alliance Committee (MMAC) has asked that specific language be added to the ordinance specifying that marijuana smoking is also included in the ban, despite being illegal already. This is to help raise awareness of marijuana smoking as a growing problem in the community, according to a MMAC spokesperson, and would cover the issue in case the legal status of marijuana should change.

Committeeman Ian Mount questioned the need for such specific language.

“Didn't the original ordinance cover the smoking of anything? The smoke-free air act covers any smokable substance. I'm not sure I see the need to add anything. There are other illegal substances in addition to marijuana.”

The issue of e-cigarettes was raised as a possible exception to the ban.

“Why vapors? It does not produce second-hand smoke. It does not start forest fires. It does not produce waste the way tobacco cigarettes do,” said Committeeperson Sari Greenberg.

Mayor Robert Tillotson agreed, saying electronic cigarettes pose no environmental threat, and suggested making an exception.

“If we decide we are in favor of this, I would suggest we give this sample ordinance to our attorney to see if there is anything missing or anything to add,” said Haimoff.

The Committee decided to move forward and have the Township's attorney look at the ordinance and continue the discussion.

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