

GlenCoveRecordPilot

Serving Glen Cove, Brookville, Glen Head, Glenwood Landing, Locust Valley, Old Brookville & Sea Cliff, NY

Hookah Lounges Outlawed

Written by Jill Nossa Wednesday, 30 July 2014

A public hearing was held last week to determine the fate of hookah lounges within the city limits of Glen Cove: it was decided they shall not be allowed. The City Council and Mayor Reginald Spinello voted to ban such establishments, a move that was well received by the majority of people present; only two people expressed opposition to the measure.

“These establishments are becoming rather trendy,” said Mayor Spinello.

The purpose of the amendment is to ban and prohibit hookah parlors in all zoning districts in the City of Glen Cove. The resolution states: “There are documented health risks associated with the smoking of tobacco or other substances through hookah pipes including the inhalation of higher concentrations of toxins than found in cigarette smoke. Hookah parlors have also been associated with certain illegal and antisocial activities, including underage drinking and their presence in a community exacerbates the inherent dangers of tobacco use around nontobacco users, exposes children to smoking, and increases the potential for minors to associate smoking and tobacco with a healthy lifestyle.”

“I’d rather see hookah lounges than ‘for rent’ signs,” said one man.

Jeff Peress spoke up towards the end of the meeting, also looking at the business aspect of such a place.

“There have been warning labels on cigarettes and tobacco for years, everyone knows it’s bad for us,” he said. “Still, there are a lot of vacant storefronts and this particular place might have generated business for the city.”

Carol Meschkow, Nassau Project Coordinator of the Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island, said, “I applaud and thank you for taking action. Over the past few months, you have been on a crusade to help prevent the next generation from smoking...and you’re winning.”

A public hearing regarding bicycle impoundments within the downtown area was also held; the mayor said the current fine for riding on sidewalks and speeding is \$15, which was often thrown out in courts. The resolution amended the law to increase the fine to \$75. He said it was mainly for those who riders who have repeatedly disregarded pedestrian safety, and that the riding on sidewalks has become a bit of a problem during events such as Downtown Sounds.

Drew Lawrence suggested they add more bike racks downtown and take other steps toward promoting bicycling.

Dave Nieri concurred, and also suggested designating a bike lane within the alleyways, which are often used as cut-throughs to avoid heavy traffic.

"It's a tool we can utilize to keep people safe," Lt. Christopher Ortiz said, noting that is strictly for the Glen and School Street area. "It's meant for the egregious person doing 20 miles per hour on a sidewalk."

Adam Ramadan suggested adding bike lanes as "the next logical step" toward bike safety.

The council also passed a resolution to form a Local Economic Assistance Corporation to complement the powers of the Glen Cove Industrial Development Agency. It is being created to help The Regency assisted living facility, which is building an Alzheimer's ward with 22 beds, purchasing new bonds and hoping that the new business model and lesser payments will lead to better success.

The attorney said, "Glen Cove has not had the ability to help its nonprofits...with this it can issue taxes and bonds, nonrecoursed through the city and LDC."

He said it is subject to FOIL and open meetings law. "In many ways it is a twin of the IDA, most likely it will appoint the same members as the IDA," he said.

The downside is that the Regency could go to the county and local control would be lost.

"I don't see the benefit to us," said one resident.

Ramadan quoted a report from NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, which said that Glen Cove's IDA had done "the worst job on record."

Spinello noted that the current IDA has a new administration and so does not have a track record.

Councilman Gallo asked about the monetary benefits to the city.

The attorney said the agency would generate more fees to the city at no cost to the city "It's very small in the first transaction...and more, by virtue of tax."

Details of the resolutions are posted on the city's website: www.glencove-li.us.

<http://www.antonnews.com/glencoverecordpilot/news/38824-hookah-lounges-outlawed.html>