

# Businesses seek to hold off smoking ban

## Bar, theater, Chamber say customers would go to nearby communities

By Don Grigas  
Staff writer

The Woodridge Area Chamber of Commerce and some of its members are hoping Woodridge will hold off on crushing out smoking in the village.

They are going to ask village officials to adjust their timetable to enact a proposed smoking ban until either the state, or other surrounding communities, adopt their own bans.

Over the past few weeks the village has sought comments from residents via telephone comment line and mail, and will conduct a public hearing on the issue beginning at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 1, at Town Center, 5 Plaza Drive.

A few weeks ago trustees agreed to create an ordinance banning smoking with two exemptions — in private dwellings and at tobacco shops — and is expected to vote on it Thursday, March 15, with a target date of Sunday, July 1, for implementation.

"(But some) surrounding communities are not as far along as Woodridge in taking action on this ban," said Kiersten

Regelin, president of the Woodridge Area Chamber of Commerce.

Regelin said the chamber "remains committed to opposing any ordinance that would allow for a competitive disadvantage in surrounding municipalities."

"We are requesting that our Village Board of Trustees carefully consider the time frame of surrounding smoking ban ordinances before moving forward with a vote," Regelin said.

During a recent board workshop trustees said they wanted to vote on the proposed ordinance in March in order to provide the village three months to educate the public and businesses on the ordinance and its ramifications.

The state of Illinois is considering a smoking ban that could take effect Jan. 1, 2008.

"Believe me, if the state were to enact a statewide law prohibiting smoking, I

### Speak up on smoking

Residents who cannot attend a public hearing Thursday, March 1, to discuss a proposed smoking ban in Woodridge and want to give their opinion can call (630) 719-2903, or mail comments to: Village of Woodridge, Attn: Peg Hallik, 5 Plaza Drive, Woodridge, IL 60517.

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**Rich Moore**

Owner of Shanahan's Food & Spirits

would comply without a problem," said Rich Moore, owner of Shanahan's Food & Spirits, 75th Street and Woodward Avenue in Woodridge.

"But if other communities nearby still allow it, then it puts us at a significant disadvantage. About 40 percent of my clientele smokes, and if Woodridge were to implement a ban July 1, the loss of business over the next five months would really hurt our business," Moore said.

"Why the rush to put this in place? Can't we wait until other communities are on board so we all have the same level playing field?" said Moore, who also operates Shanahan's in Downers Grove.

Shanahan's in Woodridge is located about a mile north of the border of Bolingbrook, which is not considering a municipal smoking ban at this time.

"If Woodridge were more centrally located in DuPage County and the entire county were to enact a smoking ban, that might be different. But with Bolingbrook so close, and so many restaurants going up on Boughton Road, my customers can easily go there if they want to smoke while having a drink," Moore said.

Ted Bulthaupt, owner of Hollywood Boulevard Theater, 1001W. 75th St., Woodridge, said he opposes a local ban and has seen the impact a local ban can have on a business.

"I operated a similar theater in Indianapolis, and when that city enacted a smoking ban it resulted in a 25-percent loss of business, so I came here," Bulthaupt said.

Hollywood Theater is a multi-screen facility that provides food and beverages, and allows smoking at its bar.

"I think the fight for a smoking ban is noble, but as long as smoking is legal in this country and the government gets tax revenue from it, then government shouldn't restrict what I do in my theater," Bulthaupt said. "They shouldn't tell me how to cater to my customers on something that is legal."

Both proprietors said they will attend the public hearing March 1.

"I think everyone pretty much supports a statewide ban. ... I just don't want to see our village go it alone," Moore said.