

## What's preventing Woodridge smoking ban?

Last February, (Assistant Village Manager) Peggy Halik responded to my concerns/questions about smoking in Woodridge and what actions the Woodridge leaders have/will take in this regard. Essentially, Peggy stated that "the Village Board adopted Resolution R11-2006 which urged the General Assembly to Approve State Legislation that Prohibits Smoking in Public Places throughout the State of Illinois" and that the General Assembly vote should occur "between March 3 and April 7."

I have two primary concerns at this point:

1) The window of opportunity has come and gone and best I know, no meaningful action has occurred and it is unclear to me what the time line would be for further action at the state level, if any.

2) Resolution R11-2006 states that "Woodridge elected officials have studied and discussed the impacts of secondhand smoke upon human wellness ..." and that "Woodridge officials determined at their October 27, 2005 Goal Setting session to support a ban on smoking in public places that encompassed County, Regional or State boundaries."

So, given that Woodridge officials understand this as a serious health issue and that they are willing to support a ban at county, regional or state boundaries, it seems to me that we have several unexplored options here other than waiting indefinitely for action at the state level.

Based on the aforementioned concerns, here are my questions:

\* What can we realistically count on at the state level?

\* What is occurring at the county level -- what can we do as citizens and leaders to make things happen at this level? SB2400? Other?

\* What is preventing Woodridge from forming alliances with surrounding townships to help level the playing field for our businesses who fear impact?

\* What is preventing Woodridge from taking a closer look at nearby towns who have successfully put municipal-level smoking bans in place?

Is it fear of business impact? If so, please read on.

The following is an excellent quote from [www.smokefreenaperville.org/](http://www.smokefreenaperville.org/)

"Studies show that across the country, there have been no significant change in sales receipts after smoke-free laws have been passed. You can protect the health -- and lives -- of workers without harming business."

Another quote from: [http://smokefreeillinois.org/pdfs/spf\\_pollresults.pdf](http://smokefreeillinois.org/pdfs/spf_pollresults.pdf).

"Over a quarter (26 percent) of all respondents said they would dine out more often if smoke-free laws were enacted. Only 10 percent of all voters said they would dine out less often. Frequent diners are more likely to increase their dining habits in a smoke-free Springfield (29 percent more often, 9 percent less often). Dining frequency would remain unchanged (63 percent about the same) for the majority of respondents under Smoke-Free policies."

I sincerely do not understand why, as leaders of Woodridge, you are not taking more action on this -- public smoking negatively impacts virtually everyone in our town and everyone who comes to visit.

"Over 75 percent of voters agree that local communities should be able to pass laws that make all public places smoke free." (quote from <http://smokefreeillinois.org/SmokeFreePollsSummary.pdf>)

Why would you not want to take action toward a smoking ban? Your thoughtful and thorough response to my concerns and questions would be very much appreciated.

**Mary McIlvain**

**Woodridge**