

05/31/06

Fred:

Would you consider making the Woodridge Jubilee 100% smoke-free? If China can make the 2008 Olympic 100% smoke-free, certainly we can make the Jubilee smoke-free. With all the kids activities, crowds, etc., it would be a shame to allow smoking within the confines of the Jubilee.

Please consider it. I suppose if District 99 banned smoking on it's property, that would include the Jubilee grounds. But why wait for District 99 to do the right thing.

I also hope you will consider banning smoking at all of your parks. It would especially be appreciated during the free concerts in the parks, where there are dozens of kids running around. They shouldn't be subject to breathing, or even seeing for that matter, smoking at those family-friendly events.

Thank you. For more information, please go to [www.robertbrandt.org](http://www.robertbrandt.org)

/s/ Robert "Bob" Brandt  
Trustee - Village of Woodridge

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Bob,

response on following page ->

In response to your prior E-Mail to Mike Adams regarding smoking in the parks, the board informally discussed such a ban, however several questions were raised. The major objection to such a ban is the level of enforcement that is possible. We believe the police department has much more pressing issues than issuing P-Tickets to someone having a cigarette with their family while enjoying a park. I'm not a believer in passing legislation just for the sake of passing it if enforcement is nonexistent. Another major issue is just what you are requesting in your latest communication. What do you do about large community gatherings, such as Jubilee, the Fourth of July picnic at Castaldo Park, and even the Cultural Fest. One comment was that if we are selling alcohol, isn't banning smoking somewhat hypocritical? As you are aware, these events are jointly sponsored by the Village, Park District, Special Events Committee etc. If we were to take such a huge step as to ban all smoking at these events, all of the participating agencies and groups would have to be a part of that decision.

I understand your desire to eliminate smoking entirely, however I believe legislating it out of existence should be secondary to education and public awareness of the health issues involved. As an agency that deals with healthy lifestyles and physical well being the Park District is in the forefront of discouraging anything that will shorten ones life, however at this time I do not feel we are ready to declare a total ban on smoking in all of our parks. All of our facilities are entirely smoke free and I appreciate your concern for the wellness of our community. I will forward your request to Don Ritter who is our representative to the joint Jubilee Committee to discuss further for future events, however as this years event is in the final stages of preparation I believe it is to late to consider for 2006. The Board of Park Commissioners will continue to evaluate the situation and will do what we believe is in the best interest of the community.

Fred Hohnke  
President  
Woodridge Park District

06/05/06

Fred:

Thank you for your email. In a smoking ban workshop with the Village Board last Thursday, I brought up the idea of banning smoking in parks and at community events (both of which the Village has the power to do). Bill mentioned it was not for the Village to decide, but for the Park District to decide. In other words, the decision is entirely up to you.

Why do you think enforcement would be nonexistent? If there is a violation of the smoking ban - just like with the violation of any other ordinance, the police would rely on a resident to call in a complaint. I suspect that once smoking was banned in parks, it would empower residents to demand that people don't light up in parks. If someone continued to smoke after being requested to stop, the police could be called, just like the violation of any other ordinance (for example - if a resident is letting their dog run without a leash, I usually tell them the requirement to keep the dog on a leash; if they don't comply I call the non-emergency police number and lodge a complaint.) However right now, if I ask someone to put out a cigar at the park, and that person says "no," my only alternative (to keep my children safe) is to leave. Does that sound fair? Who are the parks for? Kids who are trying to play? Or smokers? I don't bring my kids to hookah bars, smokers shouldn't bring their cigarettes to the parks.

Banning smoking while allowing alcohol is not hypocritical. It's possible to drink responsibly without hurting anyone else around you, but it is IMPOSSIBLE to smoke without putting 4,000 cancer-causing chemicals and poisons into the air for everyone around you to breathe. As I mentioned in my email, keeping kids from even seeing smoking should be a goal, as that is an important step to starting kids on a healthy lifestyle. That being said, I think it's hypocritical for the Park District to allow smoking in the parks.

The answer isn't education and public awareness about the dangers of smoking - anyone with a brain knows smoking is bad for your health. Besides, it's not the SMOKER that I'm concerned about - it's the SECONDHAND SMOKER that needs our help. Smokers can smoke themselves to an early grave - I don't care - but they have no right to smoke anyone else into an early grave with deadly secondhand smoke.

The ONLY reason the Village is hesitating on a village-wide smoking ban is the negative economic impact it would supposedly have on our businesses (5 businesses complained). And we are addressing that concern with discussion of a regional ban. However, that isn't an issue with the Park District.

Might I suggest starting small? Try banning smoking in the parks during the free concerts in the parks. It would be easy to make sure people knew - have the band make an announcement. Anyone who continued to smoke would probably remain at the concert for awhile so the police could send a CSO to enforce the ban. And the person could be issued a warning only, instead of a ticket or being banned from the parks.

As I have become familiar with smoking ban issues, if you would like me to come to a Park District meeting to help facilitate further discussion, please let me know. Whatever I can do to help clear the air in our parks.

Alternatively, I encourage you to check with the Park Districts that have banned smoking and the communities that have banned smoking in parks and festivals. I think you'll find that there have been no problems and the no-smoking policy is greatly appreciated.

Hoffman Estates <http://www.homestead.com/robertbrandt/files/smoke030806a.pdf>

Park Ridge <http://www.homestead.com/robertbrandt/files/smoke011206a.pdf>

Buffalo Grove <http://www.bgparkdistrict.org/generalinfo.htm#smoking>

Deerfield <http://www.deerfield-il.org/pubs/smokingordinance.html>

Thank you.

/s/ Robert Brandt

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