

Cedar Grove looks at smoking ban

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A proposal to ban smoking in [Cedar Grove](#) parks is still under review.

Councilman Peter Tanella, a liaison to the township's Advisory Health Council - which proposed a self-enforced ban - mentioned the suggestion during a Monday evening council meeting. There, the proposal met some opposition from council members who want to shy away from a toothless ban.

Mayor Robert O'Toole said he opposed drafting an ordinance that wouldn't bring any legal repercussions or enforcement.

"Just to make an ordinance just to look good, I'm not in favor of it," O'Toole said.

One scenario envisioned by council members was confusion that could occur if a person called police on a smoker, especially since officers have no authority to intervene.

The last time the health council proposed the idea, Township Manager Thomas Tucci said, officials received "mixed reaction" from sports leagues.

"The big discussion last time was: how do you enforce this?" he said.

Under the Breathe Easy/Smoke Free Parks Initiative proposed in September 2013, the town would post signs to deter smoking in parks and ball fields. (A ban wouldn't apply to county parks.)

At that time, at least eight other towns in [Essex County](#) had extended the bans to parks, said a representative of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy, a New Jersey-based anti-smoking group.

Regardless of what the law is, Councilman Joseph Chiusolo said, "if we can't properly enforce it, there's no sense putting together a law because it's only going to hinder it." He added that signs should indicate the township would "suggest" or "support" a smoke-free environment.

Tanella will again meet with the Advisory Health Council to come up with language geared to the non-binding nature of the signs.

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