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Newark council passes anti-smoking, foreclosure ordinances

Naomi Nix , October 16, 2014

NEWARK — Newark's city council unanimously passed an ordinance Wednesday that bans smoking in city parks and recreational facilities.

The legislation expands an existing smoking ban in municipal buildings to include parks, city-owned or city-operated cars, and community centers.

The measure also expands the definition of smoking to include electronic cigarettes and hookah, the process of smoking flavored tobacco through pipes.

First-time offenders will face a \$250 fine, while second-time offenders face a \$500 fine. Those who commit subsequent offenses will be fined at \$1,000.

State lawmakers passed similar legislation in June, but it was ultimately vetoed by Gov. Chris Christie.

The city council also approved legislation proposed by the Newark mayor Ras Baraka's administration which would allow the city to fine out-of-state creditors up to \$2,500 a day for not maintaining vacant foreclosed or abandoned properties in their possession.

Newark activist Donna Jackson said she supported the city tackling the problem of abandoned properties, adding that officials should hire more inspectors to increase the number of violations given out.

“There are violations up the wazoo and we’re not getting the revenue because we don’t have inspectors,” she said. “We could generate more revenue.”

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http://www.nj.com/essex/index.ssf/2014/10/newark_council_passes_anti-smoking_foreclosure_ordinances.html#incart_river