

NEWS

Longmont City Council majority balks at proposed downtown breezeway rules

Council may impose expanded downtown smoking ban



Laura Randolph walks to her yoga class from a Coffman Street parking lot to Main Street through one of the downtown Longmont breezeways on Saturday April 27 2019.

By **JOHN FRYAR** | jfryar@prairiemountainmedia.com | Longmont Times-Call

PUBLISHED: May 15, 2019 at 4:24 pm | UPDATED: May 15, 2019 at 4:24 pm

A Longmont City Council majority decided late Tuesday night not to give further consideration to an proposed ordinance that would have applied some of the city's public lands rules and regulations to downtown pedestrian breezeways and microplazas.

Council members voted 4-3 against advancing a staff-drafted ordinance that, among its other provisions, would have prohibited 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. gatherings or loitering in the breezeways connecting Main Street and the alleys behind the 300, 400 and 500 blocks of Main.

However, in a separate 4-3 Tuesday night vote, council agreed to schedule future actions on another proposed ordinance, [one that would impose an expanded downtown outdoor smoking ban.](#)

ADVERTISING

If there was any doubt that conservative state legislators are dead-set...

Mayor Brian Bagley made what turned out to be an unsuccessful motion to schedule future votes on the public lands ordinance that — if it were adopted — would include the downtown breezeways, and the microplazas behind the breezeways on the east side of Main, in some of the restrictions municipal code already contains for users of public lands such as parks, greenways and nature areas.

The Longmont Downtown Development Authority and city staff suggested council consider a measure extending those rules to the microplazas and breezeways as part of ongoing initiatives to improve the safety and appearance for people visiting, shopping, eating, dining and working downtown.

The proposed ordinance would have made it illegal to violate the city's noise ordinance, to deposit or leave litter outside of city-provided receptacles, to build fires outside of city-provided pits, to discharge fireworks or explosives, or to violate other posted rules in the breezeways and microplazas.

Other provisions in the ordinance would have forbidden using an inflatable bouncer, erecting a climbing wall, placing power cords across walkways, selling or consuming alcohol without a permit, or selling goods without a permit in the breezeways and microplazas.

Bagley said the public lands rules are needed downtown because on too many nights after the bars close "downtown is a mess," with people continuing to party in the breezeways since there are no specific city rules in place to get them to disperse as long as they aren't violating other laws.

However, the proposal to categorize breezeways and microplazas as public lands came under fire from some other council members.

"It is completely unnecessary to declare downtown a park," said Councilwoman Polly Christensen.

Councilman Tim Waters said, "It's not that I don't understand the problem" that supporters of the measure were trying to address, but he indicated he had questions about downtown enforcement of the public lands ordinance.

Councilwoman Marcia Martin said the council majority's consensus appeared to be that the proposed ordinance "needs more clarity" and should state more explicitly how it would work.

Christensen, Waters, Martin and Councilwoman Joan Peck voted in the majority against advancing the downtown public lands ordinance for further consideration. Councilwoman Bonnie Finley and Councilman Aren Rodriguez joined Bagley in voting to advance the measure.

A short time later, Martin, Peck and Waters voted for another Bagley motion to schedule future consideration of, and votes on, an ordinance that would expand downtown smoke-free zones to a six-block area of Main Street.

Christensen, Finley and Rodriguez voted against advancing the no-smoking-zone proposal, with Christensen saying she thought "this is the wrong way to go about things."

Christensen said she would support additional measures to protect people from smoking close to outdoor dining areas at downtown cafes' and restaurants, but opposed creating a larger downtown no-smoking zone..

If adopted in first- and second-reading votes, the ordinance would prohibit outdoor smoking and electronic vaping alongside Main between First and Longs Peak avenues, as well as on the street and in pedestrian crossings on those blocks of Main.

The no-smoking zone also would include the sidewalks along the half blocks immediately east and west of Main's intersections with First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Longs Peak avenues, as well as the east-west pedestrian breezeways linking the 300, 400 and 500 blocks of Main Street to the north-south alleys behind those blocks.

Council did not vote Tuesday on a staff and Downtown Development Authority proposal to assign park rangers to spend part of their time in the downtown business district, an idea Longmont natural resources manager David Bell last week said requires at least an informal council go-ahead to proceed.

City and Downtown Development Authority staff in a memo to council suggested the proposed downtown ranger program could include

Bell in an interview after Tuesday night's meeting said the city is proceeding with hiring three seasonal rangers who might spend portions of their shifts downtown.

However, once they're on staff those rangers — for the time being, at least — will be working in parks, greenways, open space and nature areas, including parks and greenways near downtown, but will not be spending time downtown, Bell said.



SPONSORED CONTENT

Mom Snaps Selfie From Dorm Room But Daughter Takes One Look And Knows She's Made A... [↗](#)

By Upbeat News

upbeat

Mom surprises her daughter at college with a selfie, but soon realizes she's made a terrible mistake...



John Fryar

John Fryar has covered Longmont city government since 1983.

[Follow John Fryar @jfyarTC](#)

Sponsored

Health And Wellness Is A Lifetime Journey

The road to health and wellness is a lifetime journey. You owe it to yourself to head over to the...

One By One Therapeutic Massage In Boulder

For a gentler approach to massage, especially deep tissue sessions, book with One By One Therapeutic Massage in Boulder. Owner...

Viegut Mortuary

Viegut Funeral Home believes everyone deserves dignity and respectful service. Since 2000, they have been committed to providing affordable funeral...

Commercial Cleaning Services Boulder

How clean is your office or workspace? You spend a good part of the day there, so you want it...

2 Bedroom Apartments For Rent

The Shores at McIntosh Lake has highly desirable 2 bedroom apartments for rent in Longmont. The spacious two-bedroom floor plans...