

Opponents Not Buying Plan to Limit Yard Sales Ordinance Proposed in **Pine Lake**

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Report on opposition among residents to **Pine Lake's** plans to limit where and how often they can hold yard sales. Under the proposed ordinance, residents would be required to leave a \$10 deposit each time they want to have a yard sale to ensure that sale signs are taken down and the property cleaned up afterward. Residents also would have to notify the city three days in advance so police could determine whether there is adequate parking in the neighborhood for a yard sale. Some **Pine Lake** residents say the city's plans to limit where and how often they can hold yard sales is not only inconvenient - it's almost un-American.

Under the proposed ordinance, residents would be required to leave a \$10 deposit each time they want to have a yard sale to ensure that sale signs are taken down and the property cleaned up afterward. Residents also would have to notify the city three days in advance so police could determine whether there is adequate parking in the neighborhood for a yard sale. If not, residents would have to hold it on the porch of the town clubhouse. **Pine Lake** officials say the city's narrow streets offer limited parking, and having residents hold yard sales at the clubhouse would eliminate traffic congestion. The ordinance also would limit residents to two yard sales a year, with each lasting a maximum of three days. "[The ordinance] is mainly so we can control public safety and partly to avoid having people hold yard sales as a business," said Mayor Neil Copeland.

Bob Townsend, who estimates he had at least 10 yard sales last year in preparation for his August moving date, said city police stopped his wife from holding a yard sale several weeks ago. "I told them to show me something in the books that says you can't hold a yard sale on your own property, and they couldn't," he said. "No one ever approached me about it last year." Mr. Townsend said he has a sign next to his front door advertising an indoor sale, and added that he might hold another yard sale in the near future "if it's pretty."

The **Pine Lake** City Council held the first of three required readings on the proposed ordinance at its April meeting. According to Police Chief Sam Schlesinger, violators can be fined up to \$1,000. Ralph Touch, a former city councilman, said that if the ordinance was passed, it would "rub against the grain" of most residents. "I think it's a direct affront on an American pastime . . . something the city has no business interfering with," Mr. Touch said. Mr. Touch, who was approached by the city when he and some neighbors held a yard sale on their dead-end street, agreed that certain parking guidelines are needed. But he said using the clubhouse as an alternative location and placing other restrictions on such a common activity are not a good idea. "Parking at the clubhouse isn't any better. [Instead], anyone having a yard sale should let the police department know so they can assign parking on one side of the street," he said.

Mayor Copeland said he believes the proposed ordinance will probably spur more residents to hold yard sales rather than inhibit them. "The ordinance is not being restrictive, it's just placing controls," he said. "We're working toward an ideal for upgrading [the city].. We have to keep our standards high."