

Fremont cracks down on head shops

Posted on April 28, 2009 by Matt Artz

FREEMONT

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UPDATE: I was wrong. The council approved the head shop 5-0.

In about an hour, the City Council will decide whether or not to allow a new head shop in the Irvington district. The Planning Commission had refused to grant the prospective business owners a permit because head shops sell stuff like glass pipes that are used to smoke pot.

The permit battle led City Hall to determine whether regular old smoke shops were also selling the stuff without special head shop permit.

Guess what? They were.

It turns out Fremont effectively has eight head shops, only one of which legally sells the glass pipes and other paraphernalia legally. The Devil's Workshop in Niles opened shop before the city passed its head shop ordinance. All of the others are out of compliance.

The city has alerted five of them that they must apply for a head shop permit to continue selling the merchandise. Two of them must stop selling altogether because they are in areas not zoned for head shops.

The violators were:

- Cigarette Discounters, 34245 Fremont Blvd.
- Mike Smoke Shop, 35766 Fremont Blvd.
- Rocky Smoke Shop, 39471 Fremont Blvd.
- Fremont Smoke Shop, 40796 Fremont Blvd.
- Wonderland Smoke Shop, which is at Fremont and Chapel
- Smoke Zone, 46699 Mission Blvd.
- Underground Smoke Shop, 3633 Thornton Blvd.

If Fremont hadn't surveyed its smoke shops, it would have been vulnerable to the argument that it was playing tough with potential head shop owners who wanted to play by the rules, while turning a blind eye as other stores sold the stuff without a permit.

My guess is that this ends up giving the council a little extra cover to keep that prospective head shop from opening in Irvington. We'll find out soon enough.