Robert Norse contributed to this article.

Downtown For All has begun plans to make citizen’s arrests of well-to-do citizens sitting down on the sidewalk waiting for a trendy breakfast at Zachary’s or for jaywalking across the street by the Cinema 9. Selective enforcement is the key to banishing the beggars on Pacific Avenue. If well-dressed middle-class people and visiting tourists receive $162 citations for sitting or crossing a street, the council may just rush back to reconsider.

Noddy is not grateful. "City Council just killed our successful, voluntary Street Performers Guidelines with bad new laws that are simply stupid," Noddy said. "These guidelines took us months to hammer out in 1980 and have worked well for years. Now the Downtown Commission invites me to 'help' rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic? No thanks!"

The ordinances began to take effect on August 23. After a two-week warning period, the police will begin to ticket homeless people for standing and holding a sign after dark which says: "Cold, Hungry, Homeless, Please Help. God Bless!"

Violators must pay the state $162. If they don’t pay the fine, they will be arrested and jailed for an additional $200 booking fee. Repeat offenders may face the irony of a probation condition that ties them to the Santa Cruz area for three years, but bars them from the downtown area, as is being done with minor marijuana dealers in the latest police crackdown and selective enforcement.

On August 12, the Citizen Police Review Board voted to hold a special hearing to look into police harassment and selective enforcement downtown. A day later, activists asked the Downtown Commission to try to stop the new laws. "At least wait until you hear from Berkeley, Olympia, and Portland on alternative solutions," said an activist from Downtown For All, an organization that formed precisely to oppose the new laws.

It seems that Tom Noddy’s internationally famous "Bubble Magic" show will be barred in all commercial districts under MC 9.50.020, which bans “[Any] liquid substance to be thrown, discharged, launched, spilled, or to become airborne.” Porter told the Downtown Commission he wanted traditional performers like Noddy to be exempted.

An obscure part of the ordinance bans the purchase of an item for an amount that is so much larger than the value of the item that both parties agree it is a donation. One young woman commented. "I tried to get some items for my apartment on Pacific Avenue — $60 for a pot! Sheets for $125! I feel I must be donating well above the true value when I shop on Pacific Avenue!"

Santa Cruz poster warns the public about the repressive downtown ordinances.

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