

www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/clout/chi-antiwar-protesters-and-city-agree-on-nato-march-route-20120404,0,1486648.story

chicagotribune.com

Anti-war protesters and city agree on NATO march route

By David Heinzmann

Clout Street

5:45 PM CDT, April 4, 2012

After weeks of disa

advertisement

greement, the city of Chicago and anti-war demonstrators have settled on an alternate route for a protest march on the first day of the NATO summit in May.

The city today granted a parade permit to the Coalition Against NATO/G8 War and Poverty Agenda that will begin at the city's preferred location --outside the Loop -- but will venture into the busy State Street corridor before heading south to McCormick Place convention center where world leaders will hold their meetings.

Protest organizer Andy Thayer said his group was satisfied with the alternate route for that Sunday, May 20, and would accept the permit so they could begin to publicize the specifics of the event.

However, Thayer said the city has yet to answer the protesters' demand that Chicago officials back them up if the U.S. Secret Service tried to curtail the route to keep protesters out of "sight and sound" range of McCormick Place for security reasons.

City officials could not be immediately reached for comment.

The protest group wanted to start at Daley Plaza, but city officials said a large demonstration in the narrower and more crowded streets of the Loop would pose an unacceptable public safety risk at a time when about 50 foreign delegations are likely to be moving through downtown in heavily guarded motorcades.

City lawyers argued last week that demonstrators have a right to march but not a right to cause gridlock in the city.

Protesters argued that the city has been inconsistent and disingenuous with its treatment of their permit application. The Department of Transportation had approved a permit for an identical march the day before, May 19, when that was going to be the first day of the G-8 summit. But after President Barack Obama moved G-8 to Camp David, Thayer filed a new application to move the march back one day.

City officials defended the route change by saying that NATO would draw more delegations -- and more

traffic congestion -- than G-8.

Copyright © 2012, [Chicago Tribune](#)