

Opposition Rally Barred From Central Square

February 16, 2012

The  **Moscow Times**

Organizers of a Feb. 26 opposition rally called "Farewell to Putin's Political Winter" said their application to hold the event on Ploshchad Revolyutsii next to the Kremlin was rejected by City Hall.

City officials told organizers Wednesday night that the protest could not be held on Ploshchad Revolyutsii and proposed moving the rally to Bolotnaya Ploshchad or Tarasa Shevchenko Naberezhnaya, according to a press release by unregistered opposition party Left Front, RIA-Novosti reported.

Officials cited a previously planned event for the holiday of Maslenitsa celebrating the end of winter that will take place at the same location.

Left Front coordinator Sergei Udaltsov said organizers may consider changing the format of the rally to one that does not require the city's approval, such as a flash mob or a meeting with members of the State Duma.

On Wednesday, Deputy Mayor Alexander Gorbenko said there was a 99-percent chance that the application for the rally would be rejected, not only because of the Maslenitsa event, but also because the deputy mayor had information suggesting the attendance would be far greater than the 1,000 people declared in the application, RIA-Novosti reported.

Udaltsov solicited the opinions of Twitter users Thursday morning, writing, "The mayor's office suggests moving Farewell to Political Winter on Feb. 26 from Ploshchad Revolyutsii to a different place. Move it or hold it as a flash mob?"

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/02/16/opposition-rally-barred-from-central-square-a12672>