

City Hall Turns Down Bolotnaya Rally Application

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Police forming a wall at the Bolotnaya Ploshchad protests in May 2012. **E. Razumny**

City Hall has refused to let political opposition groups lead a 30,000-man march through downtown Moscow on Oct. 26 in support of the defendants in the Bolotnaya case.

The 12 defendants have been charged with a range of offenses for their involvement in violent skirmishes that broke out between police and demonstrators at a rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad in May 2012. Human rights activists say the case is politically motivated and that the authorities provoked the rally's participants.

When asked whether City Hall would propose an alternative route instead of canceling the demonstration outright, Vasily Oleinik, first deputy head of the Regional Security Department, said Thursday that "the march has not been approved in general."

Following the rejection, co-organizer Pyotr Tsarkov said that the organizers planned to

reapply and suggest a different route, but Oleinik flatly dismissed the possibility, saying that it is now too late for them to organize a rally on the intended date, Interfax reported.

Oleinik said that the application was turned down because the form for public meetings had been filled out incorrectly. The organizers said on the form that the meeting would take the form of a procession, but then selected the level of medical care and security needed for a rally, he said.

The two organizers — the Committee for Protest Actions and the May 6 Committee — had planned to walk from Pushkin Square to Turgenev Square and then to Lubyankaya Ploshchad to lay flowers at the Solovetsky Stone, a memorial to those who suffered in the Soviet prison camp system.

The Bolotnoye case involves 12 defendants who are currently standing trial for participating in alleged "riots" at an anti-government rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad in May 2012. The opposition believes the case to be retaliation by the Kremlin against the protest movement and argues that no actual riots took place, saying that clashes with police at the rally were provoked by authorities.

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