

N. Main condo backer pulls out

Developer cites 'uncertainties' about downtown density

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Toll Brothers, co-developer of the proposed North Main Condominiums, has pulled out of the project, saying it can't wait for Ann Arbor to make up its mind about greater density.

"There were too many uncertainties, too many hurdles," said

Bloomfield Township developer Mel VanderBrug, who with fellow developer Don Colone, had co-partnered with Toll Brothers on the project. A spokesman for the Toll Brothers, which builds housing around the country and has a divisional office in Farmington, could not be reached for comment.

A written statement from VanderBrug says he recently asked the city Planning Commission to table the proposal so they could redesign the project and that he and Colone are talking with other possible

partners. In a telephone interview, VanderBrug said they might also downsize the project.

Last year, Ann Arbor residents voted overwhelmingly to approve a tax for a greenbelt around the city. However, they continue voicing concern over the density of development such a greenbelt would necessitate.

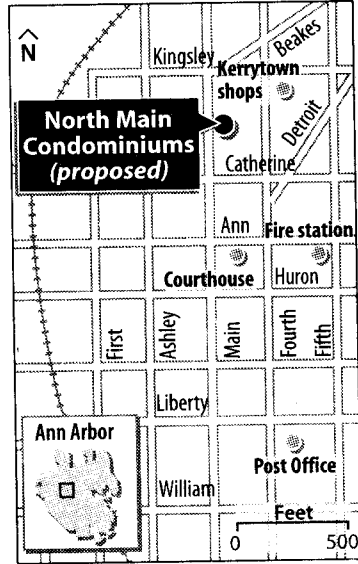
Planning Commission Member Jean Carlberg said it is very clear the community doesn't have consensus on whether it wants more residents downtown and needs to have a com-

munity discussion.

Local developer Ed Shaffran said losing Toll Brothers was disappointing.

"Toll Brothers is a New York Stock Exchange company," Shaffran said. "They have how many billions in assets? I can't imagine Toll Brothers come in as a minority player."

Shaffran said the company probably figured it needed a specific number of stories to make a profit and didn't think it could with a reduced plan.



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