

# Planning Commission tabled project over height concerns

"It is all about the numbers," he said. "Does it make economic sense? They obviously needed a specified number of units to pay for it and make a profit. If those numbers don't make sense, you go to the next deal."

VanderBrug has an agreement to buy the former St. Iolas Greek Orthodox Church from McKinley, the real estate firm south of the church. He and Colone would also purchase two houses north of the church from other sellers.

At a Sept. 21 meeting, the Planning Commission voted 8-0 to table the condominiums, agreeing with neighbors and business owners who said the combination of a 14-story tower and a nine-story tower is too massive for the site.

"I'm going to assume that another developer will come forward and show interest in that site and will develop a project that the whole community can support," said Carlberg.

VanderBrug says he recently

met with the Kerrytown District Association and Kerrytown merchants regarding the project and intends to meet with other neighborhood groups.

Meanwhile the public debate on the density issue and affordable housing in downtown Ann Arbor is likely to continue.

In meetings with the city, developers repeatedly cite high land prices and city requests for such things as affordable housing as reasons for relatively high prices — \$400,000 and more — for downtown condominiums.

At the same time, home buyers have been slow to pay such prices because in many cases, they can buy a similar-size house on a parcel of land for the same price or less — and still have easy access to downtown Ann Arbor.

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