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## Tamarac golf course rezoning dropped

### Owner withdraws application; Wednesday meeting canceled

By Lisa J. Huriash, Sun Sentinel

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#### TAMARAC

Residents who oppose building on a golf course at Woodmont declared victory after the owner dropped a request to rezone for a housing and commercial project.

Mark Schmidt wanted to put 255 single-family homes and nearly 61,000 square feet of commercial space on the Pines golf course at Woodmont. The residents launched an expensive protest, sent their lawyers to court and planned to show up in force at a Wednesday night rezoning hearing.

Schmidt's attorneys scuttled that plan by withdrawing the application Wednesday morning. If Schmidt were to decide to file again, the application process would start all over.

"I take this better than a unanimous win — they didn't even show up," said Woodmont resident Keenan Poole, who helped organize the protesters. "In football terms, they forfeited."

He credits the residents with defeating the owner's and developer's plan.

"They started seeing the grass-roots support. They didn't think we were a power to deal with and when they saw the army marching to City Hall, they backed down."

In his letter to Tamarac commissioners, Schmidt's attorney Scott Backman said that while the Pines property ultimately will be developed, for now, economic reality dictates it won't operate as a golf course, either.

"Please be advised that the financial strain being suffered by Woodmont remains critical and the unfortunate consequence of withdrawing the applications will result in the imminent closure of the Pines course," Backman wrote. "It remains Woodmont's intent to continue working with the city on an acceptable development plan for the Pines Course."

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Schmidt's secretary said he was on a cruise and unavailable for comment.

He did not plan to attend Wednesday's meeting because residents were "misdirecting their hostility" toward him, said his son Justin Schmidt.

Justin Schmidt said the main reason for pulling the application is that Woodmont could not reach an agreement with Lennar, the home builder, in time for the commission meeting.

He said the course may close temporarily during this summer's off-season, and in the fall the owner will re-evaluate what to do next.

Schmidt said residents' opposition figured into the decision.

"We needed the city's cooperation to do a project like this and the greater the opposition, the less comfort level the city has," he said. The owner wants to make "everyone comfortable with the fact a project has to be built and what that project is going to look like."

A lawyer for residents who opposed the plan said they're not giving up.

"The residents remain vigilant about maintaining their way of life and their golf course community and they will continue to do everything in their power to make sure they protect themselves from potential destruction on the golf course and their community," said Keith Poliakoff, the attorney for Save Woodmont Inc.

Poole said instead of sitting in a marathon commission meeting Wednesday night, he could take his neighbors out and buy "the first five pitchers of beer. It's time to celebrate."

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