

Final word on project delayed

By JANETTE WILLIAMS
STAFF WRITER

Council mulls Ambassador West details

PASADENA — The third attempt to develop 19.72 acres of the former Ambassador College campus at the city's western entrance failed to get final City Council approval Monday night and will come up for discussion again April 2.

After four hours of public testimony and duelling legal opinions on a dis-

puted property line, Mayor Bill Bogaard said the council wants to clarify some details before giving Ambassador West a green light, as had been recommended by city staff.

However, Bogaard and other council members seemed to indicate an overall favorable opinion of the project, the third in eight years proposed for a

scenic section of the former campus of the World Wide Church of God.

Greg Galletly, president of developer Dorn Platz, said Tuesday he was "pleasantly surprised" by the level of support, and wasn't disappointed the council wants to revisit the plans.

"It's a complex project, and the City Council asked some astute questions

dealing with density transfers and park dedication," Galletly said.

However, he said, it was unlikely the project's only controversial element, the 450,000-square-foot Sunrise Senior Living project, could be downsized. "It would change the economics of the plan by trying to move the density somewhere else ... and then

unintended consequences kick in," he said. "We've worked hard to integrate everything."

If the project is approved, ground-breaking could start in about a year, Galletly said, adding that 25 units of affordable housing in restored campus apartment buildings are included.

Two earlier proposals were for as many as 1,900 houses on the entire

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Robert Silverstein, acting for the church, said the project could not be approved since the final environmental impact report was "fatally flawed" and based on wrong information.

Madison was referring to a sparring match between attorneys for developer Dorn Platz and Harvest Rock Church over a survey that the church's attorneys claim wrongly assigns some of its property to Dorn Platz.

"It's unfortunate we have this conflict, but I feel we're close."

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PROJECT City Council to revisit plan

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47-acre campus, which the church later sold off in three pieces, Dorn Platz's plan leaves 72 percent of the remaining west campus as open space, preserving the historic houses and gardens and saving 80 percent of the trees; it's favored by the neighbors who fought both previous development attempts.

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Public comment was evenly divided on the luxury senior condo development adjacent to the Ambassador Auditorium. Some, including members of Harvest Rock Church, said the building is too massive for the site and would overpower the auditorium, which the church has owned since 2004. Others said the city needs high-end senior housing and the size is a trade-off for open space.

Richard Bruckner, the city's director of development, said

there's "no argument" the building is large, but city zoning specifically directs density to the eastern edge of the site to allow open space on the rest.

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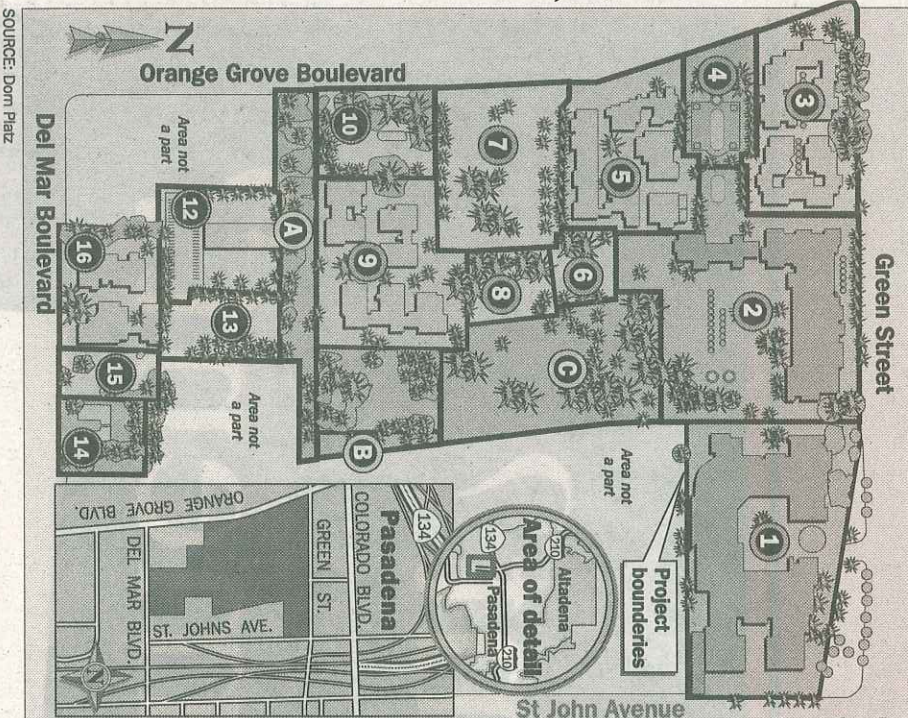
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SOURCE: Dorn Platz

Staff graphic by MANUEL AMAYA

The Ambassador West project

Plans for the 19.72-acre Ambassador West project would keep 72 percent of the former Worldwide Church of God Headquarters as open space, including the European-style gardens.

- New senior life/care**
 - 1) Lower campus
 - 2) Upper campus
- New multifamily residential**
 - 3) Italian garden residences
 - 4) Italian garden residences
 - 5) Grove residences
 - 6) Del Mar residences
- Preservation/reuse**
 - 7) Merritt Mansion & gardens
 - 8) Terrace Villa
 - 9) South Orange Grove Apartments
 - 10) Mayfair Marston
 - 11) Rankin House
 - 12) Villa Francesca Apartments
 - 13) Grove Manor
 - 14) Manor Del Mar
- Gardens/open space**
 - 15) Italian gardens
 - 16) Fowler gardens
 - 17) Rose garden
 - 18) Grove walk & stream
 - 19) Terrace walk
 - 20) The Great Lawn

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