

Ambassador plan wins approval

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STAFF WRITER

Council OKs city's biggest development

PASADENA — It took eight years and two failed attempts to build on the prime 19.72-acre Ambassador College campus, but developers Dom Platz were given City Council approval Monday night for the largest project in city history.

The council, however, decided that the massive 450,000-square-foot Sunrise Senior Living complex — two

buildings, joined by a bridge — should be scaled back by at least 10,000 square feet. The building emerged as the only controversial aspect of the plan, drawing fire from Harvest Rock Church, which owns the adjacent Ambassador Auditorium.

Dom Platz President Greg Galletly said he felt "great" about the council's decision on the Ambassador West

project, and was confident the Sunrise building can be changed within the new limits.

"It will take several months to come up with a design that will make everyone happy," he said after the meeting. "This is a large, complicated project so we expected some discussion."

Mayor Bill Bogard said he expected the design commission to

"work hard with the developer to optimize the design features for this project."

The complex development wrestled with issues of density, open space, historic preservation and even disputed property lines on its way to approval Monday.

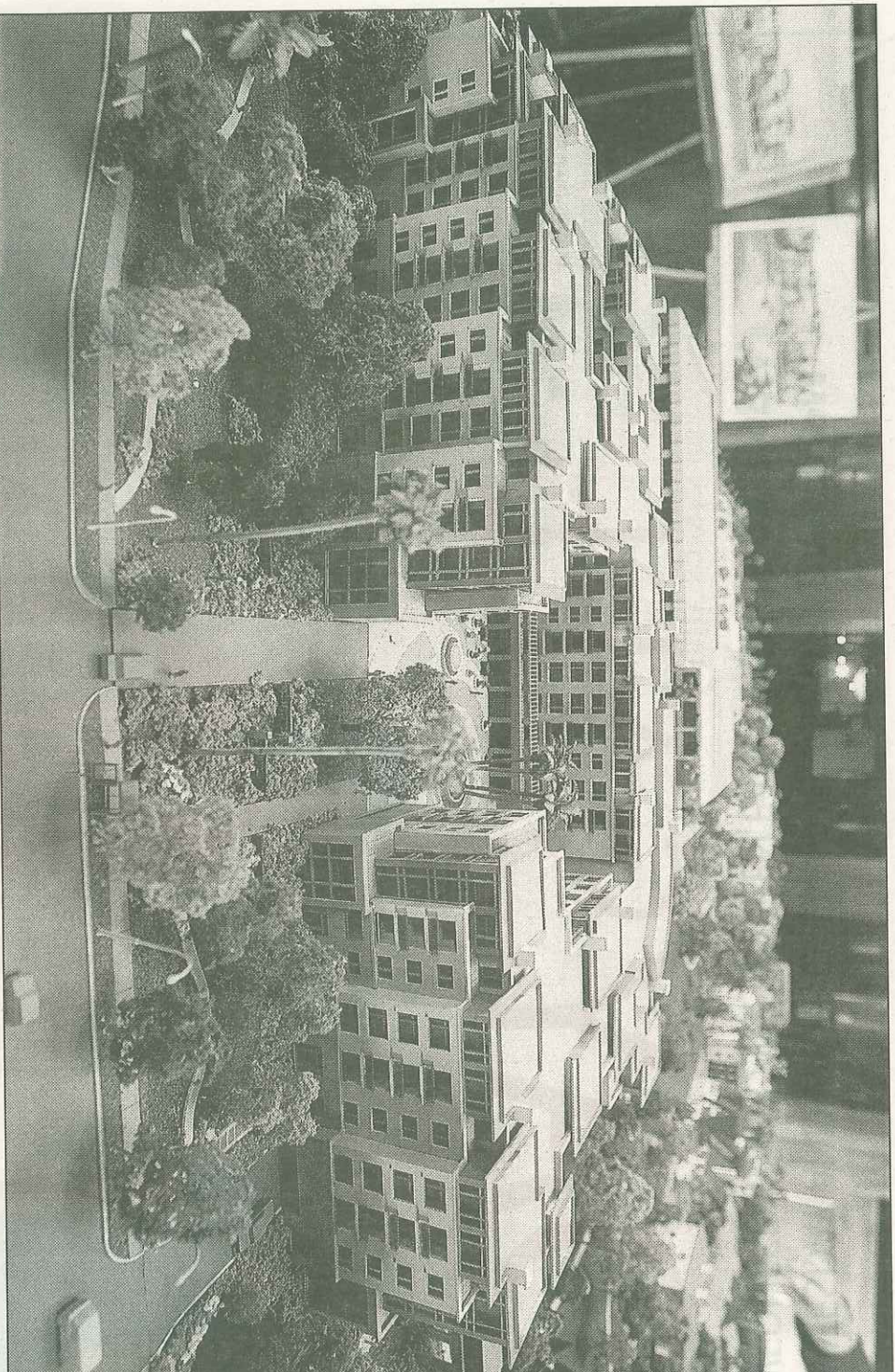
The council also approved the developer's offer to donate the 2.1-acre

Great Lawn as a city park instead of paying a Residential Impact Fee of \$4.2 million.

Based on estimates of the land values at \$2.9 million per acre, the staff report estimates the value of the land, plus perpetual maintenance and improvements — including a public restroom — would be more than \$6.9 million.

Officials from Harvest Rock Church disputed a survey they said wrongly

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STAFF / FILE
DONE DEAL: New condominiums, shown here in a model, will be part of the biggest project in Pasadena history approved by the City Council on Monday.

PROJECT Ambassador plans approved

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assigned some church property to Dom Platz.

Attorneys for the developer gave the city indemnity against possible legal action stemming from the disagreement, but Councilman Steve Madison

said it would be simpler to take the issue "off the table" by moving the Sunrise building about eight feet.

Support for the project was strong from neighbors, including the West Pasadena Residents Association, which saw the Sunrise complex's density

as a trade-off for preserving 72 percent of the site as open space, including the historic Italian Gardens, Grove Walk and Stream and Fowler Gardens, and retaining 83 percent of the

trees.

Two earlier proposals for the site allowed for up to 1,900 homes on the entire 47-acre Ambassador College campus, which was later sold off in three parts by the Worldwide Church of God.

The Ambassador West plan allows for 248 senior and assisted living units in a six-story, 450,000-square-foot building; 70 condos in two- and three-story buildings; reconfiguring existing apartments and

dormitory buildings into 46 apartments; converting some historic buildings to educational, institutional and office uses; and preserving historic buildings, landscape and open space.

Included on-site will be 25 affordable housing units, five moderate-income, eight low-income and 12 very low-income.

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