

Condo project near Beverly Center OK'd

The 12-story building is a compromise to help satisfy opponents.

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The Los Angeles City Council voted Wednesday to approve a 12-story condominium building near the Beverly Center that had drawn fire for months from neighborhood activists and a nearby hotel.

The unanimous vote will allow MCLV Properties LLC to demolish 84 apartments at the corner of 3rd Street and Wetherly Drive in the Beverly Grove neighborhood and build a 95-unit residential building.

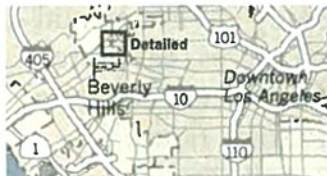
Opponents had included the Burton Way Foundation, a nonprofit group focused on the neighborhood near Beverly Center, and Burton Way Hotels, the owners of the nearby Four Seasons Hotel. Both said weeks ago that the city planned to provide the developer more height than the zoning allowed, since a portion of the site allows buildings no taller than 45 feet.

Before the vote, however, Councilman Paul Koretz said he believed that he had fashioned a compromise that would persuade the homeowners group and the owners of the Four Seasons Hotel not to sue to stop the project.

As part of that compromise, the developer agreed to redesign the project and reduce

Condos approved

The Los Angeles City Council has approved a controversial condominium building in the Beverly Grove neighborhood.



Sources: ESRI, TeleAtlas
Los Angeles Times

its height from 14 stories to 12 stories, said Koretz, who represents the area.

"I think everyone has reluctantly bought off on it," he said.

Neither side would say whether MCLV had made a private settlement with the project's foes.

Harald Hahn, president of the Burton Way Foundation, referred The Times to his lawyer, who had no comment. MCLV attorney R.J. Comer would not confirm the existence of any agreement.

The fight over the project saw both sides employ roughly a dozen City Hall lobbyists, lawyers and consultants to press Koretz to side with them.

In addition to Comer, MCLV relied on such lobbyists as Steve Afriat and Kristen Montet Lonner, who previously handled land-use issues for former Councilwoman Cindy Miskowski. The developer also had support from the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, which spent nearly \$22,000 on Koretz's behalf in his recent election.

Opponents of the project had their own firepower. Burton Way Hotels retained lobbyists John Ek and Rick Taylor, as well as outreach consultant Doane Liu, a onetime deputy mayor in the administration of former Mayor James Hahn. Neighbors near the site had their own team, including elections attorney Frederic Woocher, who represents at least two of the council's 15 members.

MCLV is a venture headed by the development firm Genton Barth. To win support for the project, MCLV agreed to rent 48 units in a nearby apartment building to employees of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center at a discounted rate.

The building already has 15 units available to hospital workers. Others will be leased to Cedars-Sinai employees as they become vacant, according to a fact sheet produced by the developer.

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