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Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File); Nov 5, 1986;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times

pg. V_A6

Panel Dilutes, Then OKs Valley Village High-Rise Strictures

By RICHARD SIMON, *Times Staff Writer*

A City Council committee Tuesday approved a proposal to restrict the building of high-rise apartments in a residential neighborhood in North Hollywood, after exempting about a dozen properties on busy streets.

The action on development in Valley Village, a predominantly single-family area, came in a meeting that included an angry exchange between Councilmen Hal Bernson, a member of the committee, and Joel Wachs.

The proposal was sent to the full council by the Planning and Environment Committee. It would exempt several properties along major thoroughfares, such as Chandler Boulevard and Riverside Drive, where there has been intense development.

"This is 98% of what we wanted," Wachs, who represents much of the area and who sought the building restrictions, said after the 2-0 vote.

Tom Paterson, president of North Hollywood Homeowners Assn., said he was pleased.

Bernson and Wachs shouted at each other after Bernson proposed exempting all properties along major thoroughfares and those zoned or proposed to be zoned for apartments or condominiums in the North Hollywood community plan.

"You're excluding everyone," Wachs said angrily. He accused Bernson of only "pretending" to do something for homeowners who have complained about high-rises.

"Why don't you stop jacking them around?" Wachs shouted.

"I've had enough of your hyster-

ics," Bernson replied.

Chairwoman Pat Russell cut off debate so city planners could work out a compromise.

Wachs had been upset with the council, which on Oct. 15 sent his moratorium proposal back to committee.

The council had previously given tentative approval, 10 to 2, but a developer hoping to build on Riverside hired ex-Councilman Arthur K. Snyder to lobby for exemptions. The property owned by Snyder's client was among those exempted.

Relations between Wachs and his colleagues have been strained since the council in September approved a redistricting plan that stripped Wachs of 90% of his district and gave him new territory in the San Fernando Valley.

Valley Village homeowners have complained about parking problems, traffic congestion and blocked views from the construction of five-story apartment buildings next to their homes.

The measure approved Tuesday would restrict construction to the lowest density allowed under existing zoning. New buildings would be limited to two stories. The square footage of commercial development would be held to 1½ times the size of the lot.

The limits would be in effect until city planners could prepare a more stringent development plan.

Valley Village is south of Burbank Boulevard, west of the Hollywood Freeway, east of the Tujunga Wash next to Coldwater Canyon Boulevard and north of the Ventura Freeway.

