

Students decry UCSC growth

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SANTA CRUZ — Student activists jammed a campus planning committee meeting Thursday to protest plans to build two new colleges at UC Santa Cruz. The protest turned the planned 45-minute meeting into a chaotic two-hour debate over continued development at the scenic campus.

The Campus Physical Planning Committee was set to review architects' models of the as-yet unnamed colleges Nine and Ten, proposed to be built in an undeveloped area north of the Cowell Student Health Center. The new colleges, and housing for up to 1,500 students, are included in UCSC's long-range development plan, and state funds for design have already been approved by the Legislature.

The planning committee had hoped to review schematic plans for the new buildings and send a recommendation

to Chancellor Robert Stevens. Stevens, in turn, planned to present the plans to the UC Regents at their May 17 meeting in San Francisco. But the group postponed a decision on the plans due to a technical oversight, and will ask Stevens to postpone his presentation to the Regents for another month.

Dozens of student protestors promenade on the lawn outside the committee's meeting room, brandishing signs saying "Eight is Enough," "No More Condos," and "Save Elfland." The protestors were clearly visible through the meeting room's full-length picture windows, which also offered a fine view of the proposed building site. Drumming and protest chants, audible through the open windows, occasionally threatened to drown out discussion inside the room, and some protestors even banged on the plate glass for emphasis.

"Open the curtains and look at what

you plan to pave over," cried one student.

The protestors later moved inside and asked why new buildings are needed, since many students like the small-campus feel of UCSC and oppose expansion of the campus.

"We're here because you're here," said Wendel Brase, committee chairman and vice-chancellor of finance, planning and administration, "because more students are choosing to attend here. This is not something we're anxious to do for our own sake. It's a public need we're trying to address."

Protestors and some university staff members also criticized the design of the model buildings, calling them "brutal four-story blocks." The architectural model showed a cluster of large academic buildings at the core of the project surrounded by many smaller housing units. Professor Ray Collett

questioned the "odd bulges ... strange looking geometrical angles" and cited a lack of coherent visual theme in the buildings.

Architect Mike Keller defended the design, calling it "vigorous," but said the models were only schematic, accurately showing the size and floor space but not necessarily exterior design. Final exterior design must still be studied, according to project manager Bill Taber.

The committee agreed to table the project for one month after student representative Victor Peskin pointed out that the campus Building Committee had not seen the models or voted to approve the project. The committee voted to ask Chancellor Stevens to delay presentation to the regents for one month to allow the Building Committee to review the project and send it back to the committee for review June 7.