Conservation Subdivision Lot Yield Study (at 4500 square foot min. lot size)

The Conservation Subdivision Regulation as proposed by the Planning Commission requires a lot yield study for the proposed property based on the underlying zoning classification in order to determine the maximum lot yield for the conservation subdivision including bonus. The comparison study below is for an R-4 density subdivision.

Assumptions:

- 100 acre site, R-4 zoning.
- Roads, right-of-way and MSD drainage on a typical site require 30% or 30 acres of land.
- R-4 minimum lot size is 9000 square feet, because of property geometry, terrain, road curvature and cul-de-sacs the average lot will be 10,500 square feet. 70 acres of the site remain for lot development. 70 ac. x 43,560 sf= 3,049,200 sf/10,500 sf= 290 lots.
- In the recent Ad Hoc Hearing the Metro Council Committee amended the conservation bonus for 30 to 34.99% open space to 5%. At 5% bonus the project would be entitled to 14 additional lots or a total of 304 lots. If the Planning Commission recommended 10% bonus was left in tact the yield would move to 318 lots.

Conservation Studies

Scenario 1

Assumptions:

- 100 acre site, R-4 zoning
- Roads, right-of-way and MSD drainage is lowered to 25% or 25 acres of land.
- Conservation land is at median between 30-34.99 % or 32.5% or 32.5 acres leaving 43.5 acres for lot development.
- For the same reasons of property geometry, terrain, road curvature and cul-de-sacs, the minimum 4500 sf lot is assumed to average 5250 sf. The lot yield math for this scenario is 43.5 acres x 43,560 sf =1,894,860 sf/5250 sf =360 lots, however the R-4 lot layout plus bonus only allows a maximum of 304 lots.

Scenario 2

Assumptions:

- All of the assumptions in Scenario 1 remain the same except the conservation land moves to 42.5% the median between 40 to 44.9%, or 42.5 acres of conservation land.
- The math on this scenario leaves 33.5 acres for lot development. 33.5 ac x 43560 sf = 1,459,260 sf /5250 sf =277 lots or less than 290 lots allowed under an R-4 plan, therefore economics would make use of the conservation option improbable.

Conclusions

Smaller lots sell for lesser prices than larger lots, without a substantial useable lot yield bonus it is unlikely a property developer will use the conservation option. The smaller lot sizes proposed by the Planning Commission and the bonus provisions of that document make it more likely for the conservation option to be used. If we are concerned with preserving land why do we care if lots are small?