

Knox Tract Development Plans - David Whitworth

On July 8th, 2015 a meeting of neighbors and the developer was held at a home on Running Rope to discuss the Knox tract rezoning case and the plan to build homes there.

The Knox Tract is a 5.8 acre ranchette/homestead tucked away, almost hidden, between Running Rope and Greystone Drive. Margaret Knox, who is in her 90s, lives on the family property that started out as 250 acres before parcels were sold off over the years, with the remaining tract enveloped by Northwest Hills. The property has been sold to the developer; however she will remain on the property as long as she wishes.

Steve Portnoy, the developer (working for owner Jimmy Nassour who was not present), and Alice Glasco (the zoning case consultant) presented site plans and renderings to the neighbors attending the meeting.

The current proposal is for 11 detached homes. A prior plan submitted in 2012 was for a multi-lot subdivision using existing SF-3 zoning. That approach required many variances because, although this is a large tract for 11 homes, SF-3 zoning is more tailored to the geometry of traditional blocks and streets. In this new submittal the developer is asking for rezoning to SF-6 to allow them to build the 11 detached homes on one large lot, with the land owned together in divided shares and the homes owned individually, all sold under a condo regime. The developer is trying to accomplish the same housing layout, but through a different method.

The 11 homes are proposed to be of similar size, quality, and density of the surrounding homes, albeit through a unique approach to accommodate the nature of the tract which will have only one street in and out. Under SF-6, the proposed homes would be required to follow compatibility regulations such as a 25-foot buffer from existing homes.

An issue for the neighborhood to consider is that SF-6 zoning allows much denser housing than SF-3 zoning, and certainly more than the proposed 11 homes. It will be very important if this rezoning case proceeds as requested, that a "conditional overlay" be applied to the zoning to limit the site to 11 homes. This requirement would stay with the land even if sold to a new developer; the current developer has agreed to such a conditional overlay as part of this zoning request.

The proposed homes will be 2500sf-3500sf, selling for \$800k and more. The homes will have an operating HOA that will maintain the resulting large green space around the spring that exists on the property and is protected by the city as an environmental feature. No heritage trees are planned to be removed and it may be possible to set this as a requirement through conditional overlay as well.

Neighbors raised many questions about architecture, project duration, noise, drainage, and maintenance of the undeveloped portion. Construction would likely be a 1 year disruption on Running Rope, but construction hours and cleanliness would have to adhere to city ordinance.

To see a visual concept for site, refer to this file: ***2015 07 15 Knox Tract Conceptual Site Plan.***