



SCHOOL LAKE NATURE PRESERVE

Wally and Bridget Marx – June 13, 2017



MEDINA CD-PUD DISTRICT

“The purpose of this district is to preserve the City’s ecological resources, wildlife corridors, scenic views, and rural character while allowing residential development consistent with the goals and objectives of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Report as updated from time to time.”

Design flexibility depends upon the amount and quality of conservation area, public access to same, and how well the project achieves the following conservation objectives over conventional development:

Objective One

Protect/restore ecological function of native hardwood forests (e.g. Maple-Basswood)

Objective Two

Protect/preserve lakes, streams, & wetlands beyond existing regulations

Objective Three

Protect/restore ecological resources, including priority areas on the Composite Open Space map

Objective Four

Reserve connections between land and water ecological resources for habitat corridors

Objective Five

Reserve land for public/private trails to create connections to existing or planned trails

Objectives Six & Seven (secondary)

Protect scenic views and reserve land for public/private Open Space

AMOUNT AND QUALITY OF CONSERVATION AREA

	Deer Hill Preserve	School Lake Nature Preserve
CONSERVATION EASEMENT ACRES	89 (55% of total)	70 (78% of total)
CONSERVATION ASSETS	Tamarack bog	Tamarack/black ash wetland complex Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods remnants School Lake and shore line
% BUILDABLE DONATED	35.6	40.1

AMOUNT AND QUALITY OF CONSERVATION AREA

Conventional Development

Existing regulations protect about 49 acres of conservation area. Less restrictive Medina wetland buffer rules would continue to apply to the area around the tamarack wetland complex.

CD-PUD

The conservation easement will protect nearly 70 acres – 42% more conservation area than would be protected by conventional development. In addition, more restrictive MCWD buffer rules will apply to all wetlands, including the tamarack wetland complex.



AMOUNT AND QUALITY OF CONSERVATION AREA

- An “old-growth woods” is “a natural forest that has developed over at least 120 years without severe disturbance.”
- Minnesota’s old-growth forests have declined by 96% over the last 150 years
- The Medina Natural Resource Inventory states that privately-owned old-growth fragments “are likely the highest priority sites to consider [for] acquisition and protection in the near future.”
- Benefits of old-growth woods vs. younger stands: better animal habitat, more resilient against invasive species/climate change, valuable for scientific study, high aesthetic/spiritual appeal
- Only eight old-growth fragments are accessible to the public in Minnesota, all located in state or national parks/forests and scientific and natural areas (SNAs)
- **Three Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods fragments exist on the Marx property; all three will be accessible to the public**



OBJECTIVE ONE

Protect/restore the ecological function of native hardwood forests (e.g. Maple-Basswood)

Conventional Development

Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods trees can be harvested, up to 15% of the total number of “Significant Trees” on each lot. No “invasive tree” replacement plan is required.

CD-PUD

All Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods trees are protected by the conservation easement. In addition, invasive box elder trees will be thinned and replaced with higher-quality trees under a tree restoration plan.



OBJECTIVE TWO

Protect/preserve lakes, streams & wetlands beyond existing regulations

In addition to the Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods, Hennepin County foresters have identified the 11-acre tamarack wetland complex as a high priority conservation area. The School Lake shoreline is also a significant animal habitat.

Conventional Development

Medina wetland buffers would continue to apply to the tamarack wetland complex. These and other wetlands can be reduced with mitigation credits. Trees and other vegetation can be cut outside of the "shore impact zone."

CD-PUD

More restrictive MCWD buffers will protect all wetlands on the property. All of the above areas are further protected by the conservation easement, which makes cutting and other vegetation removal subject to approval by the MCWD.



OBJECTIVE THREE

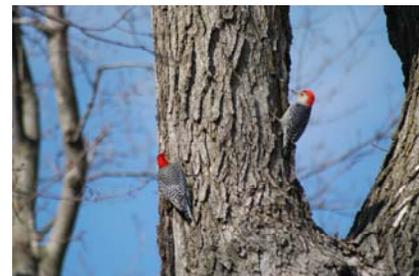
Protect/restore ecological resources, including priority areas on the Composite Open Space map

Conventional Development

Trees within the Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods, which are identified within the Medina Composite Open Space map, can be cut. Fencing, mowing and other activity is relatively unrestricted outside of wetlands and the School Lake "shore impact zone."

CD-PUD

All activity within the conservation easement area, including cutting, fencing, and mowing, is restricted and requires prior MCWD approval, both inside and outside of wetlands and the "shore impact zone."



OBJECTIVE FOUR

Reserve ecological connections between land and water ecological resources for habitat corridors

Conventional Development

Ecological connections are not reserved. Large areas outside of the School Lake “shore impact zone” are unprotected; e.g. three acres of unprotected steep slopes can be cut, fenced, or otherwise impaired. Less restrictive Medina buffer rules continue to apply to the tamarack wetland on the west parcel.

CD-PUD

All ecological connections are protected by MCWD wetland buffers and the conservation easement, which protects habitat corridors between School Lake, the tamarack wetland complex, and other ecologically significant areas.



OBJECTIVE FIVE

Reserve land for public/private trails to create connections to existing or planned trails

Conventional Development

Currently there are no public trails on the property. The bridle path along School Lake can be eliminated

CD-PUD

The existing bridle path is protected as a private trail, and a separate, designated public trail will allow views of the Old-Growth Big Woods, tamarack wetland complex, and School Lake. In addition, the City will obtain an east-west easement through the southern parcel as needed to connect to planned public trails to the east and west of the property.



OBJECTIVES SIX & SEVEN (SECONDARY)

Protect scenic views and viewsheds, and reserve land for public/private Open Space

Conventional Development

Trees in the Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods along Parkview Drive can be harvested. Restrictions on mowing and fencing are limited to wetlands, buffers and the “shore impact zone.” No land for Open Space is required.



CD-PUD

The Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods is completely protected. Within the conservation easement area, all activity outside the School Lake “shore impact zone” is restricted. Land reserved for public trails will provide Open Space and allow viewsheds of School Lake to the north and the tamarack wetland complex to the southwest.



FUTURE CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The property is within the Metropolitan Council’s 2040 Long-Term Wastewater Service Area, which means it eventually will be connected to the regional sewer system. This will open up a total of 29 acres in the north and east parcels for conventional sewer development. Under Medina’s rules for sewer residential areas, allowable density will be much higher than it is now:

Low-Density Residential:
2-3.5/acre, or **58 to 102 lots**

Mid-Density Residential:
3-5/acre, or **99 to 141 lots**

Lake Front: 7 to 11 lots



In contrast, under the proposed CD-PUD, density is locked at a maximum of **6 lots**, in perpetuity.

Summary: The Marx property is “exceptional,” and merits a full density bonus

	Deer Hill Preserve	School Lake Nature Preserve
CONSERVATION EASEMENT ACRES	89 (55% of total)	70 (78% of total)
NATIVE CONSERVATION ASSETS	Tamarack bog	Tamarack/black ash wetland complex Maple-Basswood Old-Growth Big Woods remnants School Lake and shore line
% BUILDABLE DONATED	35.6	40.1
PUBLIC TRAIL	Yes	Yes
CONSERVATION RESTORATION	Yes	Yes
UNMOLESTED WETLANDS	No	Yes
EASEMENT HOLDER	MCWD	MCWD
BASE LOTS	22	3
BONUS LOTS	19	3
DENSITY BONUS	1.86x	2x
TOTAL LOTS	41	6

