

Concordia neighborhood name change proposal

Presentation Objectives

- Review history of Concordia neighborhood name
- Examine history of Concordia University & Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS)
- Discuss reasons name change is being proposed
- Identify how people and businesses may be impacted by a name change
- Talk about what work has been done to understand how a name change would occur
- Consider potential new names for neighborhood
- Assess level of interest in community for name change

Concordia neighborhood name brief history

- Named after Concordia University
- First official identification found in mid-1970s
- Former names of neighborhood include Irvington Park, town of Creighton, Heidelberg Addition, and Foxchase Addition

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Ask the Historian
What's in this neighborhood's name?

The question:
OK, I know this might seem obvious, but is it really? Where does our name Concordia come from and what were we called before that?
- Dan Weir

The historian reports:



No surprise here, Dan. Yes, the neighborhood we think of today as Concordia takes its name from Concordia University.

Opened in 1905 on six acres of land that was then at the edge of Portland-city limits, Concordia College was a simple two-story wood frame building that was home to the Oregon and Washington District of the Synod of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Before being known as Concordia, our area had several names, all stemming from the titles of the survey plats filed by real estate developers.

Operating primarily as a high school program for young men until the 1920s, Concordia gradually evolved into a junior college, added a co-ed mission and additional facilities in the 1930s, and became a full-fledged four-year college in 1977.

Along the way as Concordia's physical presence began to expand, the adjacent neighborhood took on its name, as in "We live over near Concordia." The first official reference we could find either in reporting or city reference to the Concordia neighborhood is in the mid-1920s.

But here's where it gets interesting. Before being known as Concordia, our area had several names, all stemming from the titles of the survey plats filed by real estate developers.

These names are lost to history today, but back then you probably would have told someone you lived in Irvington Park (just to be confused with Irvington), or in the Town of Creighton, or the Heidelberg Addition, or maybe the Foxchase Addition.



What's in a name? For this neighborhood, it's the local university. Photo courtesy of Concordia University.

tion.

All four are underlying plat names filed by developers who built the streets, alleys and houses in what we think of as Concordia today.

In those days - whatever you called it - our neighborhood was nearly off the radar screen, at the far end of the streetcar line, beyond the sewer and water system.

Here's how the July 23, 1911, issue of The Oregonian described the early neighborhood:

"Extensive improvements are being made in that portion of Irvington Park near the Concordia College building. This part is out in the open ground. Here the streets are being graded and cement sidewalks are being laid.

"Twelve cottages, costing on an average of \$6,000 each, have already been built in this new part of Irvington Park. Last week an eight-inch water main was laid on East Thirtieth street north, nearly to the Concordia College building, which will greatly increase the water supply of that territory."

Editor's note: If you have a question for the neighborhood historian, send it to NewsEditor@ConcordiaPNJ.org, or DanWeir@ConcordiaPNJ.org, or www.concordiahistory.org. If you enter the search term "plat," you'll learn more about the obscure names that once defined this area.

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Concordia University brief history

Concordia University

- 1905: Concordia Academy established to help educate pastors and parochial school teachers
- 1950: Junior college added
- 1962: Women accepted to Concordia High School
- 1977: Concordia separates from high school, becomes 4-year institution (Concordia College)
- 1995: Concordia College becomes Concordia University
- 1996-2010s: Concordia University expands its offerings, including education, business administration, nursing, and music
- 2020: Concordia University closes, due to decreased financial support from LCMS

“Concordia University (Oregon).” *Wikipedia.org*, 30 September 2020,
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concordia_University_\(Oregon\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concordia_University_(Oregon)). 27 October 2020.

“Concordia’s History.” *Concordia University*, <https://www.cu-portland.edu/about/history>. 27 October 2020.

Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod brief history

LCMS

- 1847: Church founded in the U.S. by Saxon-German immigrants
- 1877: Black Ministry within the church established
- 1922: Concordia College Alabama opens in Selma, (closed Spring, 2018)
- 1947: Longer name shortened to Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
- Over several decades, LCMS insisted on strict conformity to “pure doctrine” per The Bible and Lutheran confessions, resulting in multiple disagreements with other factions of Lutheran Church
- 2004: LCMS releases guidelines on women leadership within the church, permitting women to work in roles of “humanly-established offices”, but may not lead congregations
- 2014: LCMS identified as the third-least racially diverse religious group in the United States (95% white)
- 2019: LCMS passes resolution reaffirming “the biblical truth that God created humanity as male and female” and commended people who “continue to live chaste and decent lives in repentant faith” in spite of “same-sex attraction and gender identity confusion.”

Sources

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Reasons for proposed neighborhood name change

- Pivotal time in our world, nation, city, and neighborhood:
 - Movement For Black Lives (M4BL)
 - Attacks and threats (online, verbal, physical) towards women
 - Concordia University's exit from the neighborhood
- Concordia University is not reflective of our neighborhood
- Opportunity to honor an individual who has or people who have lived in the neighborhood or contributed to the neighborhood
- Names matter

Swaine, John & Adolphe, Juweek. "Violence in the name of Trump." *The Guardian*. 28 August 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2019/aug/28/in-the-name-of-trump-supporters-attacks-database>. 1 November 2020

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Potential impacts of name change on people and local businesses

Potential positive impacts

- Honor a marginalized or under-represented individual or group
- Increase community involvement
- Inspire and reflect inclusiveness

Potential negative impacts

- Financial
- Navigational
- Work

Area businesses with Concordia in name

- Concordia Ale House
- Concordia Chiropractic Center

City of Portland Revenue Division
Portland Revenue Online

Search

The purpose of this site is to assist the general public with confirming that businesses operating in the City of Portland are in compliance with the City's business tax code. For more information regarding this, please visit our regular press releases, [press releases](#).

DISCLAIMER: It is important to note that the Division's database is only as good as the information given to the Division by the business. There are many reasons why you may not be able to find a business. For further assistance, please contact the Division directly at 503.825.5157. Alternatively, you may wish to also search the [Oregon Secretary of State Business Registry](#).

Please enter the name or the address of the business you are looking for:

Business Name:
Address:

Businesses

Business Name	Location
UNITED CONCORDIA INSURANCE CO	15011 SE DIVISION ST STE 203 PORTLAND OR 97266-1338
UNITED CONCORDIA INSURANCE COMPANY INC	15011 SE DIVISION ST SUITE 203 PORTLAND OR 97266-1076
CONCORDIA CHIROPRACTIC CENTER LLC	4211 NE PRESIDENT ST PORTLAND OR 97213-1149

Businesses in area with names not reflective of their geography

- Concordia Chiropractic Center
- Laurelhurst Theater
- Mississippi Records

How to change a neighborhood name?

Timeline for resources investigated and work done

- **30 Jul:** started an ongoing dialogue with Associate Director of Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods
- **1 Aug:** contacted Community and Neighborhood Involvement Center (CNIC) program coordinator
- **1 Aug:** reached out to Doug Decker looking for help researching prominent Concordians
- **22 Aug:** sent e-mail to King Neighborhood Association at-large board member
- **22 Aug:** contacted Concordia Neighborhood Association (CNA) Chair, requesting to present at upcoming meeting

Continued...

- **3 Sep:** sent an inquiry to Multnomah County Library for help with learning about resources and process
- **3 Sep:** contacted the creators of *“Tales of Portland”*
- **30 Oct:** introduced to Cully Association of Neighbors Member at Large
- **31 Oct:** contacted Office of Community & Civic Life

Hi Dan,

Thanks for your question. My colleagues and I looked at the list of people you have already contacted. It sounds like you've covered the bases, and the Neighborhood Association would seem to be the logical source for the name change process details. Below is where we looked and what we found. As you have been quite thorough, you may have already found some or all of this!

We checked the City of Portland website to see if any neighborhood name change procedure was listed/identifiable in the [City Code](#); we did not find it, but we recommend you look as well, as we aren't attorneys and cannot advise on legal matters such as the City Code.

The City Code does have a section on [street name changes](#). A colleague shared a recent example of a [process petition](#) to change a street name in St. Johns, in case efforts for a neighborhood name change are similar.

We also searched in the [Historical Oregonian](#) for mentions of other neighborhood association name changes. I've attached a pdf from a September 14, 1987 calendar listing the Bridlemere-Robert Gray Neighborhood Association having a name change on the agenda for a then-upcoming meeting. You have access to the [Historical Oregonian](#) (coverage 1851-1987) and [The Oregonian](#) (1987-present) online with your library card and password.

Here is the City of Portland page on the [Concordia Neighborhood Association](#), in case you would want to contact anyone else besides the chair.

Suk Rhee is listed on the City of Portland [Community and Civic Life](#) main page, along with Commissioner Chibe Eudaty, so that seems like a useful contact you've already made.

Good luck with your project. Contact us anytime about this, or any other topic. Thanks for using your Multnomah County Library.

Sincerely,
Mandy
Information Services - Multnomah County Library
[http://co.lib.or.us/contact](mailto:mandy@co.lib.or.us/contact)
503.988.5123

Suggestions for new name

- Name of a deceased woman, BIPOC, or LGBTQIA+ person who has lived in Concordia and made a substantial contribution to the larger community
- Name of a deceased woman, BIPOC, or LGBTQIA+ person who made a substantial contribution to the Concordia neighborhood
- A word or name meaning openness & acceptance
- A name honoring a Native American group or tribe with historical ties to our community

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, or individuals who do not identify with any of the aforementioned groups (such as pan-sexual or gender-fluid)

Assessment

- Is there interest from the group in changing the name of the neighborhood?
- If not, does there need to be more information made available before making a decision?
- If so, what are the next steps?
 - Designate a group to learn more about the name changing process
 - Identify suggestions for names
 - Include input from former CNA members, current and former residents, local church congregations, business owners, employees, and students who have ties to Concordia