

OLD TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Old Town Neighborhood Association

General Meeting

Thursday, October 9, 2025

On October 9, 2025, Old Town Neighborhood Association held its general meeting at the Lakewood Center for the Arts, 368 State Street, Lake Oswego. Present were Chair Derrith Schmidt; Treasurer Laurie Carlson; Secretary Betsy Wosko; Director Jeannie McGuire; Director Bruce Glabau; and 20 to 22 others. Upon motion, duly seconded and unanimously approved, the meeting was called to order by Chair Derrith at 6:30 p.m.

Upon motion, duly seconded, the minutes from the October 10, 2024 board meeting were unanimously approved.

Chair Derrith introduced board members, noting that several have lived in Old Town for more than 30 years; welcomed the fire department members in attendance supporting the bond for a new South Shore station; welcomed City Manager Martha Bennett and Acting Parks chief Jeff Munro; and thanked Craig Stephens for his invaluable service to our community over many years as an effective, thoughtful, and consequential board member, as well as a wonderful neighbor. In his sidewalk poetry initiative, some of Craig's achievements for our community are literally chiseled in stone. Thank you, Craig! You are greatly missed and we hope you get well soon!

Chair Derrith summarized the purpose of this annual meeting as collaborating with the city to address pedestrian and cyclist safety and to improve livability for our neighborhood by managing parking such that Old Town is not an overflow parking lot for Geo. Rogers Park. Our concerns include over-programming by Parks & Rec.

Jim Perris noted Geo. Rogers Park is 26 acres and Old Town is 8 blocks. The park hosts many activities, including a children's play area; tennis courts; three picnic areas; athletic fields; soccer; baseball; softball; trails; and a beach. During the pandemic, park usage increased. Park Rangers have estimated that approximately 2/3 of park users are not Lake Oswego residents. Old Town has become the overflow parking lot for the park. In August, city staff and Old Town residents did a "walk about." The traffic and parking issue is a ticking time bomb [for an accident]. The park is a "mixed blessing." Something needs to change before May 2026.

Bruce Glabau discoursed on the history of the stop light at Wilbur and State Street. George Rogers nee Rodrigues, after whom the park was named, who contributed hugely to the development and maintenance of the park, and who was a well-loved city councilor, was struck by a car there. (Olivia Rossi, a Rogers family

relative, recalled for us he passed away one month after the accident). After he passed, a stop light was put there. We see similar concerns with safety today; and do not want a repetition of someone getting hit by a car before we implement common sense preventative measures.

Martha Bennett, City Manager, began by thanking Old Town residents for their solution-orientation. She noted Roehr, Foothills, and Geo. Rogers Parks all had increased usage during and after the pandemic. She opined the pathway project will help divert people away. She said a fire truck can get through on Furnace. The City will or may use "Pacer AI" to collect data on park usage. She expressed a lack of enthusiasm on bus use being a solution. She supported the wisdom of putting in air pumps for inflatables. (Note: this was Craig Stephens' idea. Thanks again, Craig!). She did not recommend a dedicated parking permitting system, as the city council is cold to this idea. Also, permitting would require two full-time employees and the costs would be too high to justify the benefit, if any. It might be better to increase enforcement where cars block fire hydrants, driveways, or garages.

Phil Sterling requested the report and drone footage of the fire department in its study of accessibility.

Jim Perris discussed several neighborhood safety issues including a high level of troubling vehicular and child interaction at the intersection of Ladd and Durham, where people drop off and pick up kids, and which has become a choke point where people park on both sides of the street. A guardrail should be placed on Furnace (where the City cut the vegetation and there is a drop off). There should be a stop sign at the top of Riverbend. He disagreed that the pathway will result in a reduction of traffic.

Michael Schmidt suggested no parking signs for owners to place on their property, citing signs alongside Foothills during concerts. Martha responded that for events, permits are issued for no parking signs. When permits are issued and signs placed, the police can enforce no parking regulations (including issuing citations). Permits, and accompanying no parking signs, can also be requested for events such as moving.

Chair Derrith suggested Parks manage programming to ensure adequate parking; that there be a drop off/pick up zone at Geo. Rogers; that the picnic areas be managed such that it staggers rentals so there isn't a glut of traffic when parties are leaving and coming at the same time; that the City promote parks that have more parking than Geo. Rogers; that the City not renew Alder creek for SUP rentals next year, especially with the pathway construction; that permits be required for parties of 12 or more; that the City correct its public listings on social media; that it improves pathway designs in Geo. Rogers to allow for better usage; and delivered a one-page sheet of suggestions as well as a one-page summary of concerns ("October 9, 2025 Old Town Neighborhood Priorities for the City of Lake Oswego to:" and "Neighborhood Concerns: Summary of Problems Identified") which documents are attached to these minutes and incorporated herein; and which documents were based on the board's exhaustive efforts

(talking to residents, knocking on doors, website communications, etc.) to gather input from all Old Town residents.

Jeff Munro responded that the topography of Geo. Rogers is challenging in providing cost-effective pathways.

Chair Derrith offered the car show and the Lake Oswego Festival of the Arts do an excellent job of traffic and parking management.

Martha said any work on the parking and traffic issue will need to be done incrementally.

The Reamers noted overflow parking is an issue for only 3 months of the year.

Riverbend expressed concerns about increased park and pathway usage especially with bicycles as the path will not be that wide.

Treasurer Laurie reported our bank account balance at \$424.91.

Secretary Betsy announced the November 1, 2025 Urban Forest Summit, sponsored by the Oswego Lake Watershed Council; and the Thursday, November 6, 2025 "From Gas to Grid: The Benefits of Electrification" event at the Lake Theater, sponsored by the Lake Oswego Sustainability Network.

A motion to elect the following slate of officers and directors was made, duly seconded, and approved by acclamation: Derrith Schmidt, Chair; Jim Perris, Vice Chair; Laurie Carlson, Treasurer; Betsy Wosko, Secretary; Jeannie McGuire, Director; Carrie Kaufman, Director; Bruce Glabau, Director; Michael Schmidt, Director; and Phil Sterling, Director.

Suzanna Kuo, our acclaimed resident historian, was acknowledged. Ann Garcia was acknowledged with congratulations and best wishes in her new home. John Wasielewski was acknowledged as a Democrat running for our Oregon House district #38.

The meeting was adjourned at about 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Wosko
Secretary

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October 9, 2025 Old Town Neighborhood Priorities for the City of Lake Oswego to:

- Prevent a pedestrian or cyclist tragedy
- Improve livability from congestion and parking on our streets which become the “overflow parking lot” for George Rogers Park in the summer.

We have gathered neighborhood and City team ideas on solutions and as a Board determined these are our top priorities for the City to address the objectives above *before May 2026*.

Keep doing	Important Priorities Quick Wins	Important Strategic Priorities
Police/CSO patrols in summer	Improve 1 way messaging on Furnace between the park and Ladd	Add park drop off/pick up zoned area on Ladd at Durham for kids safety
Police/CSO enforcing parking and traffic violations with fines	Add no parking signs on Furnace between Ladd and Wilbur where the “choke point” is for congestion	Add another guardrail all along Furnace Street by the steep drop off area
Increased presence and patrols by rangers in summer	Install stop sign and painted striping at top of hill of Riverbend Condos	Improve safety on Furnace Street. Get expert and neighbor feedback.
Funding for excellent GRP maintenance	Offer residents 2 official no parking signs OR allow cones to protect parking spaces during the summer	Neighborhood Meeting with Fire Dept to review emergency access assessment.
Excellent responsiveness of LO Fire & Paramedics	Manage programming of camps and events for the summer to align with available parking spots at GRP.	As is done for any new park, conduct a professional parking and traffic circulation assessment and plan before new River pathway construction.
	Manage lower picnic shelter rentals to reduce parking problems.	
	Promote other parks in LO with more parking. Stop promoting GRP.	
	Stop contract for kayak rentals during construction of path	
	Add compressed air stations at GRP	
	Require permits for groups of 12+ for events at the River and lower GRP	
	Correct public listings of GRP	

Neighborhood Concerns: Summary of Problems Identified

Core Problem: Too many visitors to George Rogers Park ("GRP") from May to August.

The park, which is 26 acres, is adjacent to a neighborhood of only eight square blocks.

What's driving park usage:

General recreation amenities: children's playground, tennis courts, (2) picnic areas with capacity for of 50 and 70 people, athletic fields (soccer and baseball), walking/biking trails, a large picnic area, and a beach.

Parks & Rec programming: camps, kayak/paddleboard rentals, special events, and private rentals of picnic shelters.

Heavy attraction to the "beach" area along the river, especially during hot weather. GRP is a regional park. Rangers estimate that $\frac{2}{3}$ of visitors are from outside LO.

Usage is going up rapidly against a fixed area for parking. To be clear, we see the opening of the river walkway increasing park utilization.



Impact on Old Town Residents:

Old Town has become the de facto overflow parking for GRP because existing parking at GRP cannot accommodate the high volume of visitors.

Increased congestion and traffic hazards have degraded pedestrians and cyclist safety.

What the neighborhood has done:

First and above all we are grateful for the responsiveness of the police department to our request for additional patrols. Increased patrols by officers and Community Service Officers moved the needle. People do less dumb stuff, like blocking fire hydrants and driveways.

The City raised the price of a parking ticket. It's now a disincentive to park illegally.

The City put no parking signs on several corners to clear visibility at turns.

In August we hosted a Neighborhood Walkabout with leaders from the City's **Fire** (JT Anoushiravani), **Police** (Sergeant Earl Hall), **Parks & Recreation** (Kyra Haggart and Robin Krakauer), **Traffic** (Will Farley), and **Park Rangers** (Ben and Indira) Departments to highlight problem areas and propose solutions.

We believe this is a preventable public safety crisis. The neighborhood is formally putting the City on notice. We believe a tragedy is close by and immediate action is needed before May 2026 and absolutely before the new river pathway opens, which will bring even more visitors.

For more information on the Old Town neighborhood, please see our blog:

<https://www.oldtownlakeoswego.org/post/old-town-and-city-leaders-collaborate-to-tackle-safety-and-parking-challenges-at-george-rogers-park>