

UPTOWN, EDGEWATER, ROGERS PARK

## Rogers Park Residents Forced Out Of Affordable Housing After Developer Buys Building

Becovic, a Chicago-based real estate company, can't do repair work the building needs with people living there, a spokesperson said. Some tenants said the city's lack of affordable housing has left them without many options for a new apartment.



By Madison Savedra

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Mary Rogers, other tenants and housing activists asked Becovic for more time to stay in the apartment at a rally Thursday morning. The

company ultimately gave them an extra 15 days. Credit: Madison Savedra/Block Club Chicago

**ROGERS PARK** — Rogers Park tenants are being forced out of their affordable apartments after a prominent developer on the Far North Side bought the building and didn't offer lease renewals due to required repair work.

Becovic, a Chicago-based real estate company, bought a four-story building at 1546 W. Jonquil Terrace in March from housing nonprofit Good News Partners, according to city documents and [a Becovic news release](#). Soon after, tenants received news their leases wouldn't be renewed and they had until Aug. 31 before they had to leave, several tenants said.

In a statement, a Becovic spokesperson said its staff determined the property had "serious issues," calling it "uninhabitable."

"The work required to bring it up to safe housing standards was not possible to do with residents living in the building," the spokesperson said.

Building tenants confirmed the building has maintenance concerns, including holes in the ceiling, missing drywall and uneven flooring.

Thanks to organizing efforts with the nonprofit ONE Northside, the tenants negotiated with Becovic for extra time in the building and three months of rent forgiveness, tenants said and the company confirmed.

But some neighbors still don't have a place to live lined up in time because of a lack of affordable housing options in the neighborhood and across the city, they said.

After another extension of 15 days granted over the weekend, the new deadline for tenants to move out is Oct. 15, Becovic said.

Mary Rogers, a resident who's lived in the building since 2016, was initially approved for an apartment on the Far South Side — a move she didn't want to make, but it was the first one to accept her, she said.

"But it's still a waiting game," Rogers said, adding that she won't be able to immediately move into a new apartment after her current lease expires.

"We're being pushed out. We're being bullied.

Where are we going to go?"

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Rogers will likely be able to stay with her brother while she waits for her apartment, but that isn't the case for others in the building, she said. She's worried about where her daughter and grandson, who live with her, will go while they wait for a spot at an affordable building on the West Side, she said.

The neighbors at 1546 W. Jonquil Terrace aren't the only ones in Rogers Park facing these housing issues. The Far North Side neighborhood has struggled for years with displacement and gentrification driving up the cost of living.

The area including Rogers Park, Edgewater and Uptown saw a 12.5 percent decline in the number of apartments affordable for low-income renters between 2012 and 2021, according to a [2023 study](#) by the Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University. That is the third-biggest drop in affordable apartments of any area of the city during that period, trailing only Logan Square and Avondale (15.3 percent decrease in affordable apartments) and West Town/Near West Side (14.6 percent decrease).

The Far North Side neighborhoods also saw a 9.5 percent increase in the amount of low-income renters living in unaffordable apartments over the same period, one of the biggest jumps in number of rent-burdened residents of any neighborhood, according to the study.

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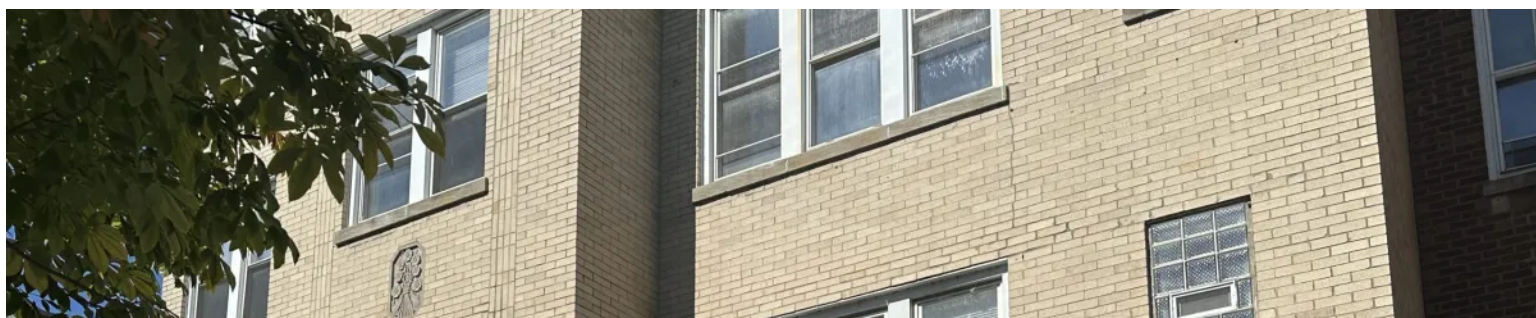
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Karen Foster, another resident of 1546 W. Jonquil Terrace, secured a studio apartment in Edgewater that she was able to move into directly after her lease expired, she said. But it's a jump in what she's used to paying in rent — \$1,230, up from \$700, she said.

"It's bittersweet," Foster said. She's familiar with Edgewater since it's nearby, but she's frustrated to have to leave the neighborhood where she's lived since she was a teen.

"Even if I stayed here [in Rogers Park], the community is changing," Foster said. "Either way, it sucks."





Carolyn, a tenant who asked to be identified by her first name, is still struggling to find an apartment. Affordable buildings she's looked at have months- or years-long waiting lists.

Carolyn's fixed income through Social Security isn't enough to be approved by some apartments she's looked at, and she doesn't have someone who could co-sign a lease, she said.

"I have enough money saved to move. I have enough money for a security deposit — apparently my income is just short of covering two times the monthly rent," she said.

Carolyn doesn't have anyone she could stay with if she still doesn't have housing lined up after Oct. 15, she said.

It's unclear what Becovic will charge for the apartments at 1546 W. Jonquil Terrace. One-bedroom apartments in another Becovic building on the same block are listed at \$1,625 and \$1,550, [according to its website](#).

Good News Partners advertises its housing at 15-30 percent below market-rate prices, [according to their website](#).

Good News partners didn't immediately respond to questions about the building's sale.

In its statement to Block Club, Becovic didn't address how these apartments would eventually be priced, but the spokesperson said, "We believe we have done everything we can to accommodate our remaining

residents.”

***Disclosure:** Block Club Chicago has received advertising support from Becovic Realty. Sponsorship, advertising and grant support do not impact Block Club’s editorial coverage.*

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