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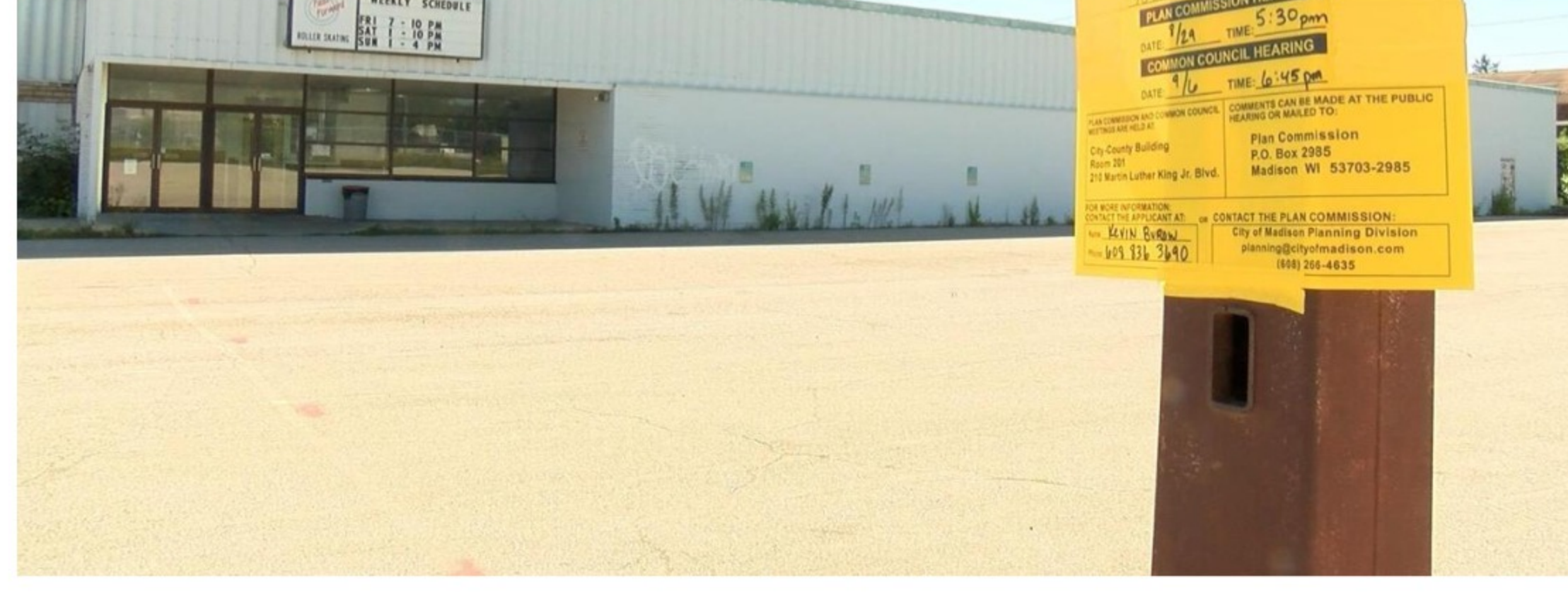
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Fast Forward Skate Center slated to be demolished for proposed affordable housing development

Rhonda Foxx Aug 4, 2022 Updated Aug 4, 2022



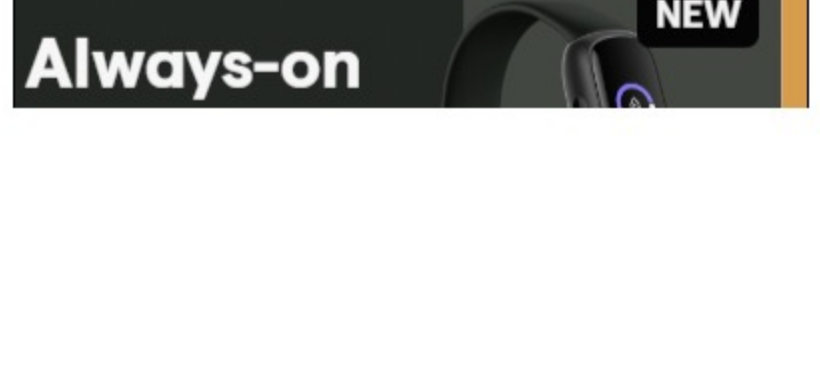
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MADISON (WKOW)-- There's a proposal on the table to tear down the Fast Forward Skating Center, and even those opposed to its demolition are torn because -- even though they love the center -- something important will be built in its stead: affordable housing.

"It is a community staple is something that Madison needs," said Justin Alling, Operations Manager for Fast Forward Skating Center.

After nearly 70 years on the southwest side of Madison, the Fast Forward Skating Center building is slated to be demolished. This is crushing news for Alling, who says he feels fear, rage and disappointment over the possibility.



"This place is my whole world," Alling said.

Justin basically grew up at the skating center.

"I started playing in a hockey league at eight, started working here at 14, started managing at 17, took over operations at 22," Alling said.

"We would take our kids up there to go skating during the summer after school," said Michael Johnson, CEO of *Boys & Girls Clubs* of Dane County.

He's also sad to see the skating center go.

"I believe that place is going to be missed," he said.

This skating center has been a source of family-friendly entertainment for decades, but some say this property could do even more for the community.

"The plan is to build 70 units of high-quality, affordable housing," said Kevin McDonald, Lincoln Avenue Capital's Regional Project Partner and Vice President.

Lincoln Avenue Capital was awarded \$1,310,000 to develop a 70-unit apartment complex called Summit Ridge Apartments. If approved, 59 of the 70 units would be income-restricted.

The project will include 16 one-bedroom, 36 two-bedroom and 18 three-bedroom units. 14 units will be affordable to households at 30% CMI, 28 units affordable to households at 50% CMI, 17 units affordable to households at 60% CMI. The remaining 11 units will be offered at the market rate.

"New affordable housing can really make a significant difference on not only the surrounding businesses but the local residents who are really having a hard time finding any housing that they can really afford," said Kevin McDonald, Lincoln Avenue Capital's Regional Project Partner and Vice President.

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This project is one of several stemming from an \$8.2 million Dane County urban housing development projects.

The developers plan to add a community feature that gives back: a community service facility.

They're partnering with the Latino Academy, which will provide on-site education and work training for residents.

While this skating center may soon be gone, the memories live on.

"A lot of great friendships, but there's an end date to everything, unfortunately," Alling said.

Madison's Planning Commission will hold a public hearing for this project on August 29.

Alling said he hopes to open his own skating center if the housing plan is approved.

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