



**Landmarks Illinois Statement
to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks
Regarding Preliminary Landmark Designation for the Erie Street Row,
161 E Erie Street
Frank Butterfield, COO
October 3, 2024**

Good afternoon, Commissioners. On behalf of Landmarks Illinois, I ask the Commission to support preliminary landmark designation for the Erie Street Row at 161 E Erie Street.

Most likely constructed during the 1870s, the Erie Street Row is an outstanding example of Italianate architecture built at an enormously significant time in Chicago's history—the rebuilding of the city after the Great Chicago Fire. As is commonly known, almost nothing in this area of the city survived that event. The buildings that were constructed in the aftermath of the fire are therefore our most tangible links to that history, and essential to understand how Chicago refashioned itself.

Many, if not most, Chicagoans are familiar with some of the lore surrounding the Chicago Fire, but probably fewer realize that pieces of this history are still to be found in our built environment, visible to anyone who walks by. Sadly, fewer and fewer of these places remain. Streeterville today is dominated by glass and steel high-rises. Earlier this year, two other buildings of this time period at 207 W. Superior and 720 N. Wells came under the wrecking ball.

The Commission has an opportunity before them today to protect one of our remaining post-fire resources for the benefit of Chicago's collective story. We ask that you please take it. Thank you.