

ORDINANCE

Erie Street Row

161 E. Erie Street

WHEREAS, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-620 through -690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the Erie Street Row (the "Building"), located at 161 E. Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois, as more fully described in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein, satisfies three criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (3) and (4) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building was built around 1877 when the Near North Side was being rebuilt as a desirable residential neighborhood after it was devastated by the Great Chicago Fire of 1871; and

WHEREAS, from the 1870s to the 1910s, the families of successful merchants and professionals lived in the Erie Street Row, reflecting the social fabric of the Near North Side; and

WHEREAS, the Erie Street Row is a visually distinctive group of row houses, a building type of importance to Chicago architectural history. Built around 1877, this set of row houses is a particularly early, surviving group; and

WHEREAS, the building is distinctive in its fine use of the Italianate architectural style, a style of importance to Chicago architecture in the 1850s through early 1880s; and

WHEREAS, the Building exhibits fine detailing and craftsmanship in Joliet limestone, a historically significant building material in the context of Chicago architecture and the most popular building stone used for Chicago buildings from the 1830s until the 1880s; and

WHEREAS, the development of North Michigan Avenue as a commercial boulevard in the 1920s transformed the Near North Side from a residential to commercial district. During this time the Erie Street Row was converted to offices for small creative businesses like advertising, publishing, architecture and commercial and fine arts; and

WHEREAS, alterations to the building, including added bay windows and the consolidated entrance at grade reflect its transition from residential to commercial use in 1920 and these changes are significant in their own right; and

WHEREAS, the Building is significant for its association with Johnson O'Connor and Eleanor Manning O'Connor, husband and wife, who in 1952 opened the Chicago branch of the Human Engineering Laboratory of the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation, a nonprofit educational and scientific organization; and

WHEREAS, trained as an engineer, Johnson O'Connor developed a testing program for the General Electric Company in 1922 that proved successful in placing employees in the positions that matched their inherent aptitudes; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, O'Connor expanded his testing program to the general public, opening branches across the country to help young people and adults make informed decision about their education and career; and

WHEREAS, Eleanor Manning O'Connor was a pioneering woman architect who specialized in historic preservation, public housing and urban planning; and

WHEREAS, beginning in the 1930s, Eleanor Manning O'Connor influenced Johnson O'Connor to publish his research on women's aptitude that encouraged women to pursue careers in architecture, engineering and the sciences; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

SECTION 3. For purposes of Sections 2-120-740 and 2-120-770 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building.

The three-story common brick boiler house addition and one-story common brick garage at the rear (south) elevation of the Building are devoid of architectural treatment. The Commission may approve demolition of these additions to support new uses of the Building. The foregoing is not intended to limit the Commission's discretion to approve other changes.

For the purposes of Section 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the following additional guidelines shall also apply:

In recognition of the Building's location in the urban core with some of the city's highest building density including high-rises adjacent and within close proximity of the Building, the Commission may approve visible additions to the Building. The Commission's review of proposed work should ensure that the historic features and form of the Building are preserved long-term while allowing reasonable change and flexibility to meet continuing and new needs, whether related to the continued current uses of the Building or accommodating future uses.

Visible additions may be approved that are substantially set back from the front facade so that the historic Building retains sufficient depth to read as a whole structure. Any visible addition should appear distinct from the historic building when viewed from a pedestrian perspective along the public way. The overall setback, height and mass of any proposed addition shall be evaluated based on its visibility and resulting impact on the historic structure.

SECTION 4. The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

SECTION 5. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.