



Hotel Dana

Address: 666 North State Street

Date: 1891

Architects: Patton and Fisher

Style: Queen Anne with Romanesque Details

**CHRS
Rating:** Orange

Threat:

Not only the city's oldest continually-operating hotel building, Hotel Dana is also one of the oldest hotel structures still standing in Chicago. Built in 1891 as the Erie Hotel, the Queen Anne-style flat building remains remarkably intact, the only of Chicago's early hotel buildings not to have undergone significant alteration. Furthermore, the five-and-one-half-story Hotel Dana is one of the few grandly-scaled Queen Anne structures left in Chicago, where once there were many.

With redevelopment on all sides, the Hotel Dana occupies a prime River North location. A surface parking lot occupies the site to the north, while a small Victorian house now used for commercial purposes – a likely tear-down – sits to the south. This combination puts incredible pressure on the Hotel Dana as a potential candidate for demolition.

Preservation Chicago has been engaged with government officials since 2001 concerning the fate of the Hotel Dana. Despite its Orange-rating, city officials have indicated that they would not be opposed to allowing the building to be demolished. Of further concern, only a few months ago, officials were approached by a developer who expressed interest in razing the structure.

Architecture:

Architecture: The Hotel Dana was designed by architects Normand S. Patton and Reynolds Fisher, a noted firm that was among the foremost of Chicago's Queen Anne designers. Patton and Fisher designed many excellent and creative buildings in the Queen Anne and Classical Revival styles, mostly in Chicago, but also throughout the Midwest. Their commissions include the Landmarked administration buildings at the Armour Institute (now the Illinois Institute of Technology), the Chicago Academy of Sciences in Lincoln Park, and numerous public schools throughout Chicago. Two houses by the firm are also official City Landmarks, in the Kenwood Landmark District.

The Hotel Dana is no exception to the high degree of sensitivity and architectural quality the firm brought to its designs. The symmetrical, tripartite composition of the façade begins with a base of heavy, rusticated limestone and dark, rough brick. A middle section, three stories in height, features signature Queen Anne pressed metal bays and decorative pressed red brick, giving the façade a pronounced verticality. The final floor of the composition terminates in a muted cornice with Romanesque patterned brick detailing above. Of special note is the highly figured limestone entry, augmented by elegant foliate carving, shown at right.

