

#23



Lytton Savings, inset photo by renowned Los Angeles artist Ed Ruscha in 1966. From the May 2015 issue of Los Angeles Magazine.

# LYTTON SAVINGS

RECEIVED  
DEC 13 2016

Historic-Cultural Monument nomination

File No. 16-1074 CD 4 CF-16-1074



Lytton Savings is a Mid-Century Modern bank building at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Crescent Heights, noted for its dramatic, folded plate concrete zig-zag roof and glass-walled banking floor.

Designed by master architect Kurt W. Meyer in 1960, it's an eclectic example of California Mid-Century Modern and Googie architecture.

Kurt Meyer was born in Switzerland and moved to Los Angeles in 1949. He dedicated much of his life to making Los Angeles a vibrant city, both with his professional work as an architect and in his service to many city and civic committees and agencies.

Lytton Savings qualifies for two of the HCM criteria:

It "reflects the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community" as an early example of the transformative shift in postwar-era bank design, with the rise of the savings & loan industry.

It also "embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type specimen, inherently valuable for study of a period, style or method of construction" as an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern architecture.

The New York Times called the building "...breathtaking architecture dedicated to the financial services of Mr. Lytton..." in a 1965 article.



## The HCM nomination of this Landmark Building is supported by:

- CD4 Councilperson David Ryu, whose district it is located in, vigorously supports the designation
- Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC)- unanimously voted in support of the HCM
- Office of Historic Resources (OHR) recommended to declare the property a HCM
- SurveyLA as eligible for historic listing on the National, State and Local levels— Lytton Savings is featured on the cover of the report
- Lytton Savings has strong support from the L.A. Conservancy, Modern Committee, Hollywood Heritage, West Hollywood Preservation Alliance
- Historic Resources Assessment in the EIR for 8150 Sunset Blvd
- Alan Hess, expert on mid century modern architecture, architect, lecturer, and author of 19 books on modern architecture

*"This (HCM) goes into the realm of a no brainer."*

*Barry Milofsky— CHC Commissioner*

Please join in supporting this landmark building as a HCM when it comes before the city council.

Steven Luftman, Keith Nakata  
-applicants

FRIENDS OF  
**LYTTON**  
SAVINGS

# Overwhelming support from the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC)

## Quotes from the CHC Commissioners before their unanimous vote in favor of the Lytton HCM

Richard Barron— President

“We got a very long presentation from an attorney showing every little nickel and dime thing that had been changed on the building.

In my mind this building has maintained its integrity to be worthy of being supported as a monument. I think it's a really interesting building.

(Kurt Meyer) was a talented architect, I think that this was maybe one of his best examples of his work...

He was a very passionate and creative guy and was really involved with our city and he did a lot of contributions to our city.

I'm totally in support of this as a monument.”

Barry Milofsky— Commissioner

“Well I was in support of this until I read the attorney's letter and noticed the landscaping has gotten overgrown in the last 60 years.

I agree (In support of this as a monument), one of the things we typically look at is character defining features and this building has probably 90% of the character defining features intact. And as a symbol too—within the city and to the layperson without an architectural background, it probably has 110% [of its features] intact. So I'm in favor of it.”

Jeremy Irvine— Commissioner

“I'm in favor of it too. I mean anyone that was saying that this building has diminished significance, or diminished character, would be grasping at straws. It's in excellent condition. And in the frenzy over single family residences from this period, I find it shocking and sad that a commercial building like this, which was so groundbreaking, would be threatened. So I'm in MAJOR favor of it.”

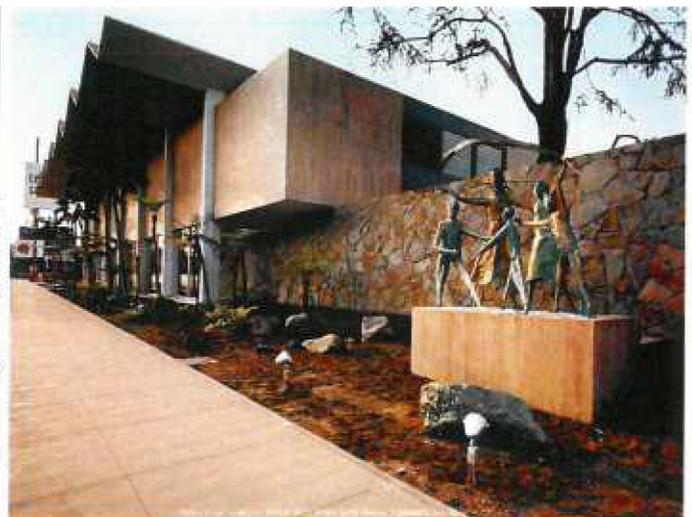
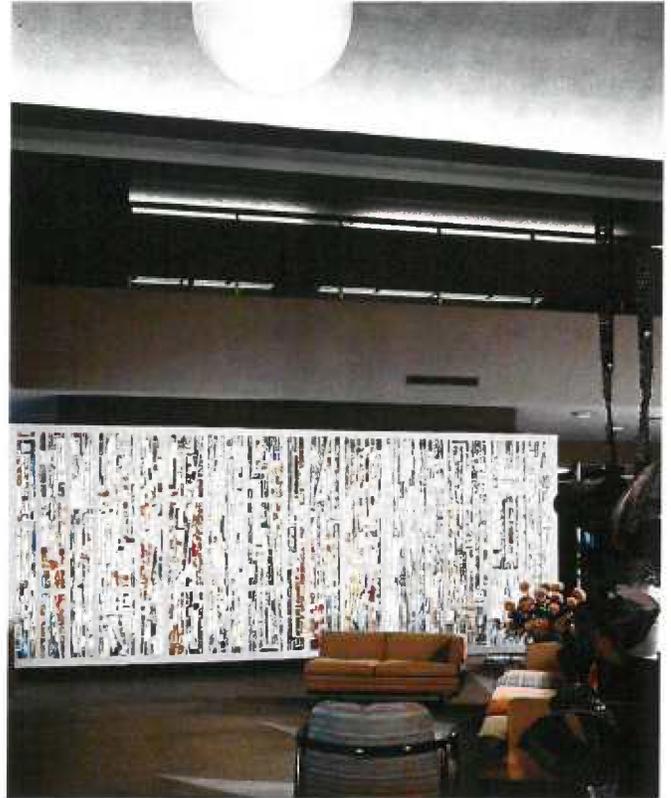
Gail Kennard—Vice President

“I had the privilege of touring the bank. When you walk in you just have this amazing sense of being in this space that I think is really emblematic of mid century modern architecture.

I commend the applicants “Friends of Lytton Savings.” Thank you very much for your work on this, I wholeheartedly support the nomination.”

Richard Barron— President

“This building is under threat because of a development. Hopefully the powers that be will be enlightened by our recommendation and make this a monument, and the architect who is planning to develop this site will be able to incorporate it into his project, which I think he can.”



# Kurt W. Meyer AIA 1922-2014

## Career highlights:

- 1949 Arrives in Los Angeles
- 1957 opened architectural practice
- **1959 Lytton Savings building, his first major commission**
- 1967 developed plan to save the Dodge House, Irving Gill's masterpiece
- 1968-1971 Director—Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA)
- 1973 Named a Fellow of the AIA
- 1973 appointed by Mayor Bradley to the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
- 1976 -1978 Named chairman of the CRA
  - Brought about Japanese Village Plaza
  - Retained Broadway as an ethnic shopping street
  - Saved Central Library from demolition
  - Kept the Jewelry District downtown
  - Created elderly and market rate housing on Bunker Hill, the largest senior affordable housing community in the US
  - Developed housing in Watts and Pico-Union
  - Developed Downtown Los Angeles Plan
- 1975 Huntington Beach Civic Center
- 1982 Plaza de la Raza Cultural Center

*Meyer told the L.A. Times in 1983, "I don't believe that it comes down to a choice of serving the community or running a successful practice... it is possible to do both."*

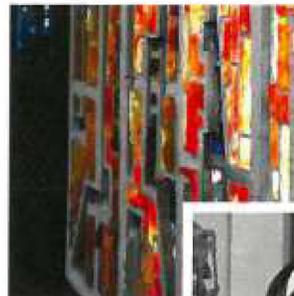
- 1983 Exxon's western headquarters
- 1985 San Bernardino County Government Center
- 1986-1992 Chairman of the board of Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc)
  - Started working group to revitalize the Los Angeles River (1990)
- 1987-1992 Urban Design Advisory Coalition- president
  - Saved the Central Library for a second time
- 1988 Jet Propulsion Laboratory Master Plan
- 1989 CalTech Master Plan, Pasadena
- 1990 300 Medical Plaza at UCLA
- 1992 South Coast AQMD Headquarters
- 1992 University of Redlands Master Plan
- 1992 LA Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2013 Received a Modern Masters award from the Los Angeles Conservancy

*"I find it shocking and sad that a commercial building like this, which was so groundbreaking, would be threatened."*

*Jeremy Irvine— CHC Commissioner*



*Kurt Meyer and Bart Lytton breaking ground in 1966.*



*Martin Luther King with Lytton Center's curator, Josine Lanco Starrels Kline.*

*The linked Lytton Center featured groundbreaking gallery shows, it was one of the earliest corporate art programs in the country.*





DAVID E. RYU  
COUNCILMEMBER, FOURTH DISTRICT

October 20, 2016

Councilmember Jose Huizar  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Huizar,

On August 21, 2014 Townscape Partners submitted applications for their proposed project at 8150 Sunset. From the moment those applications were filed, my constituents have expressed serious concerns. I am pleased to see that you have agreed to the following conditions:

- Increase affordability overall, with additional workforce housing units. Local low-income residents, those who are building and working in this project all must be included in the application process for these units through extensive and targeted outreach.

- The Lytton Savings Bank was evaluated as being possibly historically significant in the Environmental Impact Report. Subsequently, the Cultural Heritage Commission unanimously recommended that the bank be deemed a Historical Cultural Monument. I vigorously support the designation. I also suggest that the Committee discuss the alternatives within the EIR that factor into preservation.
- Increased parking to restore the parking spaces to those originally proposed by the developer of 494 spaces.
- Increased pedestrian access with 15 foot sidewalk widths on Sunset Blvd and relocating the current bus stop at the triangle to the west on the 8150 site rather than pushing it further to the east to an area without sufficient pedestrian access or safety.
- Traffic improvements and funding to make a safer, smarter intersection and follow the Bureau of Engineering and LADOT recommendations in terms of both process and implementation on this important city and neighborhood element of traffic infrastructure.

