

HOLLYWOOD HOME SAVINGS AND LOAN

1500-1518 North Vine Street

CHC-2021-10737-HCM

ENV-2021-10738-CE

FINDINGS

- Hollywood Home Savings and Loan “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as an excellent and intact example of New Formalist architecture and “represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age” as an example of a building and mosaic by noted artist and designer Millard Sheets.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Hollywood Home Savings and Loan meets one of the Historic-Cultural monument criteria: it “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as an excellent and intact example of New Formalist architecture and “represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age” as an example of a building and mosaic by noted artist and designer Millard Sheets.

The subject property is an excellent example of a commercial building designed in the New Formalist architectural style. Beginning in the 1950s, architects began to incorporate stripped-down or stylized classical features such as columns, cornices, and arched openings into buildings with modernist forms. The resulting style, known as New Formalism, is characterized by rich surface ornamentation, geometric massing, and monumental scale. The union of classical and modern design made New Formalism popular for institutional and commercial uses, particularly banks. The subject property’s symmetrical composition, rectilinear forms, flat roof, marble cladding, and use of ornament are all representative of the New Formalist architectural style.

Other notable features include mosaics, a large stained-glass window, tile accents, and a patterned bronze band along the roofline. Though the property has experienced some interior alterations, it retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance.

The subject property is also a notable work by artist and designer Millard Sheets, who created the exterior mosaics and an interior mural in addition to the design of the building itself. It was one of many Home Savings and Loan branch offices designed by Sheets for owner Howard Ahmanson, who gave him carte blanche to create opulent and striking works that would draw attention to the company and become a part of its brand. The result is a display of Sheets’s mastery of multiple media—mosaic, murals, and architecture. The property’s decorative features include mosaics and stained glass that portray the history of film as well as an interior mural that depicts the filming on the site of *The Squaw Man* (1914), Hollywood’s first feature-length motion picture. These artworks reflect Sheets’s tendency to incorporate a community’s history and culture into the design of his Home Savings and Loan projects. Sheets’s overall design and artworks remain highly intact; though the property’s interior has experienced some alterations.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (“CEQA”) FINDINGS

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 “*consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.*”

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 “*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*”

The designation of Hollywood Home Savings and Loan as an Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code (“LAAC”) will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to a Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31, and none of the exceptions to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2021-10738-CE was prepared on May 13, 2022.