

I'll go ahead with some comments. So I reviewed both evaluations and the rebuttal and just kind of wanted to break down my thoughts about the three different criterion arguments.

So with Criterion 3, which means that the resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction: it is a great example of a New Formalism style building with its monumental massing, quality travertine, and the murals, of course. The other examples provided in Dudek's rebuttal are also really good examples of New Formalism architecture, but that doesn't mean that this building can't be eligible. And most buildings also don't perfectly fit within the style that they are prescribed; they're not going to have every single detail that's possible within that architectural style. So: in summary, I believe this building is eligible under Criterion 3 for its New Formalism architecture.

Under Criterion 4, which represents the notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect: the information provided in both evaluations and rebuttal seem to suggest that Millard Sheets Studio was the creative force behind the design of the building, and during the rebuttal the architect on record was identified as Frank Homolka and Associates. There is archival documentation showing that the two firms collaborated on the building. So the two are not separate from each other in this situation. Dudek's evaluation and rebuttal focus on Millard Sheets wasn't the architect and therefore it can't be eligible, but this criterion is designed to identify resources associated with designers—not necessarily architects—so that's an important little nuance to the Criterion that we have to keep in mind.

There does seem to be question over the level of involvement of Sheets and the design of the building, and there seems to be more of an opportunity to dig a little deeper into a few things with the research, including the architect on record—Frank Homolka, whether or not he or his firm could be considered a master architect. There is mention of it in the rebuttal evaluation, but there could be a little bit more done there. And then it would be great to determine the involvement of Sheets and Susan Hertel and Denis O'Connor to better outline the argument for the work of a notable designer. So I would recommend additional research into Frank Homolka & Associates, Susan Hertel and Denis O'Connor to determine if all of those people associated with the building are masters in their field to better outline the Criterion argument 4.

For Criterion 5, which is: possesses high artistic value. According to the city evaluation, the building includes Sacramento-specific public art as an integral part of the architectural design and that's located in a prominent lot with monumental size and park-like grounds, and these murals are included in the building's design to show respect for the city and its history. So when I read this, I understand it to mean that Millard Sheets Studio designed the building, art and landscaping for a purpose of creating a space with artistic value to enhance peoples experience within their community and within that property.

Transcription of comments from Vice Chair Nayyar

I reviewed the National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 15, which is something that architectural historians and cultural resources individuals use, in guidance for their evaluations into properties like these; and a property is eligible for a high artistic values if it fully articulates a particular concept of design; that it expresses an aesthetic ideal. So, based on that — in the information in the evaluations, I believe it can be successfully argued that this property articulates the Sheets Studio artistic concept of design for these bank buildings in general, and also this particular building because of its prominence and public art, and park-like grounds.

I also want to note that Dudek's rebuttal focuses on who is doing the designing — whether or not it's Frank Homolka — or Sheets — but that's not specifically important for this particular criterion. This criterion is focused on the value of the design not the designer. So based on the evaluation arguments and the artistic design of the building and its site, I believe that this building can be eligible under Criterion 5.

Regarding the exceptional significance argument: the city argues that its unique building for the Home Savings and Loan as a main branch building with special interest employed in its design and as a unique building in Sacramento. And the rebuttal focuses on that there are eight other locations in the Sacramento area and more across California and that it's not rare. However, only one of those eight is similar and design and public art and the others are either less monumental, don't have the public art, or maybe just a different style in general. So I support the exceptional significance argument by the city because it does appear to be an uncommon building type in Sacramento designed by Sheets Studio.

So, in conclusion, I support the ordinance listing the building in the Sacramento Register eligible under Criterion 3 and 5. I do recommend updating Criterion 4 to determine whether or not the building represents the work of a notable master designer with contributions from Sheets, Hertel, O'Connor, and Frank Homolka—or whatever the research may determine.