

VIA EMAIL

Stephen J. Sass

October 4, 2017

Richard Barron, President  
Cultural Heritage Commission  
Office of Historic Resources  
[200 N. Spring Street, Room 559](#)  
[Los Angeles, CA 90012](#)  
Attention: Melissa Jones ([melissa.jones@lacity.org](mailto:melissa.jones@lacity.org))

Re: Beneficial Plaza and Liberty Park, [3700-3732 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA](#) - CHC-2017-3695-HCM

Dear President Barron and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, which since 1952 has worked to preserve the Jewish heritage of this region, I am writing to express our support for the nomination of the above property as a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. Unfortunately, we are unable to be present at tomorrow's hearing to make these remarks in person due to the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, which begins this evening at sundown.

In addition to the well-documented case for nominating the property on architectural grounds, the property also strongly merits nomination for its association with Edward and Joseph Mitchell and Oscar Pattiz, prominent members and leaders of the Los Angeles Jewish community.

Not only did the Mitchells and Pattiz demonstrate great business acumen in building Beneficial Standard Life Insurance Co. into one of the most successful firms in the insurance and financial services industry, it is all the more remarkable given the almost total exclusion of Jews and other minorities from those fields at that time due to widespread, institutionalized prejudice.

In turn, the Mitchells, Pattiz and their families used their great success to give back to their beloved City (and beyond) in countless ways. This is signified most notably by the very design of Beneficial Plaza and their determination to live their values and develop incredibly valuable Wilshire Boulevard frontage not for personal gain but as Liberty Park, much needed open space dedicated to the public.

In addition, their gifts of leadership and resources are indelibly intertwined with such lifesaving and lifegiving charitable organizations as American Red Cross, Assistance League, Brandeis-Bardin Institute, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Cerebral Palsy, Jewish Community Foundation, Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Joint Distribution Committee, KCET, L.A. Psychiatric Service, Music Center of Los Angeles County, National Conference of Christians and Jews (now National Conference for Community and Justice), State of Israel Bonds, Temple Israel of Hollywood, UCLA, United Jewish Appeal, United Way, Vista del Mar Child Care Service, Weizmann Institute for Science and Wilshire Boulevard Temple.

For all of the above reasons, Beneficial Plaza and Liberty Park deserve your Commission's nomination as a Historic-Cultural Monument.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephen J. Sass  
President  
Jewish Historical Society

cc: Save Liberty Park