



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

National Register Nomination Case Report

HEARING DATE: JUNE 19, 2011

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

Date: June 13, 2013
Case No.: 2013.0570U
Project Address: 630 Sansome Street (U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station)
Zoning: C-2 (Community Business)
65-A Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0197/002
Project Sponsor: General Services Administration
Beth L. Savage, Federal Preservation Officer
Office of the Chief Architect, Public Buildings Service
1800 F Street, NW, Room 3341
Washington, DC 20405
Staff Contact: Jonathan Lammers – (415) 575-9093
jonathan.lammers@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Timothy Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org
Recommendation: **Send resolution of findings recommending that, subject to revisions, OHP approve nomination of the subject property to the National Register**

BACKGROUND

In its capacity as a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City and County of San Francisco is given the opportunity to comment on nominations to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). Listing on the National Register of Historic Places provides recognition by the federal government of a building's or district's architectural and historical significance. The nomination materials for the individual listing of the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station at 630 Sansome Street was prepared by Portia Lee, architectural historian, and David Greenwood, photographer, of ICF Jones & Stokes at the request of the property owner, the U.S. General Services Administration.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is located in San Francisco's Financial District on the east side of Sansome Street between Jackson and Washington Streets. The building is a sixteen-story Federal government facility designed by the architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood and completed in 1944 under the aegis of the Public Works Administration. The building is designed in the Art Moderne style and located immediately west of the U.S. Customs House, constructed in 1911. The building is in good condition.

not significant as an example of its type or style. The nomination does discuss various alterations, completed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill between 1985 and 1988, but fails to evaluate these changes in relation to the building's overall historic integrity. It is the opinion of the Department that, depending on the methods and level of intervention associated with the 1985-1988 alterations, the building may retain sufficient integrity to be significant for its design.

The discussion of the building's significance under Criterion C will likewise benefit from greater clarification of Louis A. Simon's evolution as an architect, as well as a clearer exploration of evolving trends in federal architecture. Currently, the nomination states that under Simon's direction, Federal architecture of the 1930s favored Colonial Revival or restrained Classical Revival style designs. However, the nomination also discusses Simon's important role in the Association of Federal Architects (AFA), an association that was clearly interested in modern architecture. Overall, the evaluation of the building's significance under Criterion C will be greatly enhanced through the addition of historic photographs, which would not only document the building's appearance as constructed, but also provide a comparative basis for assessing integrity.

It appears that the nomination could be improved by additional research related to the building's significance under Criterion A. While the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station building was clearly important for its dual roles, there is scant discussion of important issues such as the type and quantity of goods that were processed there, nor is detail provided for how goods were inspected, tested and stored. Similarly, additional documentation should be provided as to the number and nationalities of the immigrants who passed through the building over time. This information could help illustrate changing trends in immigration, as well as provide a comparative basis for understanding the role of this facility as compared to other U.S. immigration stations. In particular, the nomination should provide at least some exploration of the impacts of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which dramatically increased immigration from Latin America, Asia and Africa and resulted in local demographic shifts. Such information could point to a longer period of significance for the building.

Other, more minor improvements include expanding the architectural description to provide further detail about the nature of spaces including the loft, upper penthouse and mezzanine. The nomination should also include at least one photo of the Fourth Floor Courtroom, which is described as being one of the more historically intact spaces within the building.

ACTION REQUESTED

- Review the completed National Register of Historic Places Registration Form;
- Provide comments on whether the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station meets the criteria of significance of the National Register; and
- Recommend or not recommend the nomination of the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station for listing on the National Register.

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The property is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Event) and may be eligible under Criterion C (Architecture).

RECOMMENDATION: Send resolution of findings recommending that, subject to revisions, SHPO should approve nomination of the property to the National Register

Attachments:

Draft Resolution

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Letter from Beth L. Savage, Federal Preservation Officer, GSA



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Motion No.

HEARING DATE: JUNE 19, 2011

Date: June 11, 2013
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Zoning: C-2 (Community Business)
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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER THAT 630 SANSOME STREET (U.S. APPRAISERS STORES AND IMMIGRATION STATION), LOT 002 IN ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 0197, BE NOMINATED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES AND THAT, SUBJECT TO REVISIONS, THE OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROCESS THE NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION.

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, On April 29, 2013, Beth L. Savage, Federal Preservation Officer, General Services Administration, forwarded a request to the San Francisco Planning Department (hereinafter "Department") for review and comment on the nomination of 630 Sansome Street, also known as the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, on Lot 002 in Assessor's Block 0197, to the National Register of Historic Places (hereinafter "National Register").

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the Certified Local Government Agreement between the Office of Historic Preservation (hereinafter "OHP") and the City and County of San Francisco, the Historic Preservation Commission (hereinafter "Commission") is provided with a forty-five (45) day review and comment period to provide written comments to the OHP before the State Historical Resources Commission takes action on the above-stated National Register nomination.

WHEREAS, The National Register is the official list of the Nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. The National Register's criteria for evaluating the significance of properties were designed to recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have made a contribution to the Nation's heritage in the areas of Events, Persons, Design/Construction, and Information Potential. The four National Register criteria are designed to guide state and local governments, federal agencies and others in evaluating potential entries into the National Register.

WHEREAS, At its hearing on June 19, 2011, the Commission, acting in its capacity as San Francisco's Certified Local Government Commission, reviewed the nomination of 630 Sansome Street, the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, to the National Register.

WHEREAS, In reviewing the nomination, the Commission has had available for its review and consideration reports, photographs, and other materials pertaining to the nomination contained in the Department's case file, and has reviewed and heard testimony and received materials from interested parties during the public hearing on the Project.

WHEREAS, According to the nomination's summary, 630 Sansome Street, the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, is significant at the local level for the National Register under Criterion A for its association with U.S. customs and immigration operations.

WHEREAS, The Commission agrees that the property is locally significant under Criteria A; however, the Commission also recognizes that the nomination would benefit from additional documentation regarding U.S. Customs procedures and the types and quantities of goods processed at the facility, as well as a summary analysis of the nationalities and numbers of persons receiving immigration services at the building.

WHEREAS, The Commission agrees that the property appears to be a good example of Public Works Administration (PWA) Art Moderne style architecture and may also be significant under Criterion C for its design and construction.

WHEREAS, Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are automatically included in the California Register of Historical Resources and afforded consideration in accordance with state and local environmental review procedures.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby **recommends** that the nomination for 630 Sansome Street, U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, be revised with additional information regarding U.S. Customs operations at the building, as well as additional information regarding the nature and numbers of persons processed through immigration. The Commission **further recommends** that the nomination be revised to include an evaluation of the building's potential for listing under Criterion C as a good example of Public Works Administration Art Moderne style architecture, including an evaluation of the building's historic integrity as supported by historic photographs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, subject to these revisions, the Historic Preservation Commission hereby **recommends** that the property located at 630 Sansome Street, also known as the U.S. Appraisers

Stores and Immigration Station, located on Lot 002 in Assessor's Block 0197, be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, and that the Office of Historic Preservation process the National Register nomination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Motion, and other pertinent materials in the case file 2013.0570U to the State Historic Preservation Officer.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Motion was **Adopted** by the Historic Preservation Commission on June 19, 2013.

Jonas P. Ionin
Acting Commission Secretary

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: June 19, 2011



April 29, 2013

Timothy Frye
Preservation Coordinator
Certified Local Government
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Frye:

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to submit for your review and comment the enclosed National Register of Historic Places registration package for the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station (current name: Appraisers Building) located at 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, California. The California State Historic Preservation Office has also received a copy and will be reviewing the nomination concurrently.

The sixteen story U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, now known as the Appraisers Building, was designed in 1939 by architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood acting as consultant to the Public Buildings Administration (PBA) of the Federal Works Agency and was completed in 1944. The building's exterior composition is an austere example of the Public Works Administration (PWA) Art Moderne building style favored for public structures in the 1930s; the main building entrance and elevator lobbies exhibit the influence of the Art Moderne style. The building has maintained both appraisal and immigration functions from its construction to the present time, playing a significant role in international and Pacific Coast commerce and serving as a primary gateway for Asian entrants to the United States.

In accordance with National Register federal program regulations (36 CFR Part 60.9 (c)), we are notifying the local elected officials of the political jurisdiction within which the property is located, of our intent to nominate the above referenced property to the National Register of Historic Places. Should you have any comments, please respond within 45 days of receipt of this letter.

The enclosed copy of the nomination is provided for your records. Following receipt of all comments or the completion of the 45-day period, we will forward the original archival package to the National Park Service for approval. Upon listing, a final copy of the nomination will be available through the National Register of Historic Places.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the nomination package, please contact Beth Hannold at (202) 501-2863.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Beth L. Savage".

Beth L. Savage
Federal Preservation Officer
Director, Center for Historic Buildings

Enclosure
cc: Jane Lehman, Regional Historic Preservation Officer

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
Other names/site number U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Building, Appraisers Building

2. Location

Street & Number 630 Sansome Street Not for Publication N/A
City or Town San Francisco Vicinity N/A
State California Code CA County San Francisco Code 075
Zip Code 94111

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
<u> </u> entered in the National Register <u> </u> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<u> </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u> </u> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<u> </u> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<u> </u> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<u> </u> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>Immigration Station</u>
<u> </u>	<u>Government Office</u>
<u> </u>	<u>Custom house</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>Government Office</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Moderne: Art Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof CONCRETE/ASPHALT

walls CONCRETE

walls STONE: Granite

other METAL: Aluminum (windows)

METAL: Bronze/brass/copper (decorative details)

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 7 Continuation Sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- C
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
Politics/Government

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Period of Significance
1944-1960

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Dates
1944

Architect/Builder
Gilbert Stanley Underwood

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 8 Continuation Sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see Section 9 Continuation Sheets.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: G.S.A. Regional Office 450 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property Approximately 2.2 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	552697	4183378	3		
2				4		

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The site occupies the western portion of the block bounded by Sansome, Battery, Washington and Jackson streets; The primary (west) elevation fronts on Sansome Street; the secondary elevations front on Washington (South) and Jackson streets (North) and the rear elevation fronts on Custom House Place, a government-owned alley separating the Appraisers Building from the United States Customs House.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The boundary was selected because it is consistent with the historical limits of the parcel.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title	<u>Portia Lee, Architectural Historian, and David Greenwood, photographer</u>	
Organization	<u>ICF Jones & Stokes</u>	Date <u>April 3, 2007, rev. August 18, 2009, rev. March 2013</u>
Street & Number	<u>811 W. 7th Street, Suite 800</u>	Telephone <u>213-627-5376</u>
City or Town	<u>Los Angeles</u>	State <u>CA</u> Zip Code <u>90017</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

Photographs

Representative photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name	<u>U.S. General Services Administration,</u>	
Organization	<u>Region 9</u>	Telephone <u>(415) 522-3001</u>
Street & Number	<u>450 Golden Gate Avenue</u>	
City or Town	<u>San Francisco</u>	State <u>CA</u> Zip Code <u>94102</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

*U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

Description

Summary Description

The sixteen story U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, now known as the Appraisers Building, is a structural steel and reinforced concrete structure clad in concrete panels above a granite base that extends around three sides of the building. Located at 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, California, the building occupies the western half of the block bounded by Washington, Jackson, Sansome and Battery streets. The primary (west) elevation fronts on Sansome Street; the secondary elevations are on Washington and Jackson streets and the rear (east) elevation is situated on Custom House Place, a government-owned alley that separates the Appraiser's and Immigration Building from the adjoining U.S. Customs House (1911). Rising in steps as it ascends, the building presents a rectangular shape for Floors 1-4 and 15-16, varied by a C shape design for floors 5-14. Multiple roofs are flat with parapet walls.

Designed in 1939 by architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood acting as consultant to the Public Buildings Administration (PBA) of the Federal Works Agency, the building had designated tenants by 1940, but wartime shortages of material and manpower delayed its completion until 1944. The building's exterior composition is an austere and restrained example of the Public Works Administration (PWA) Art Moderne building style favored for public structures in the 1930s; the main building entrance and elevator lobbies exhibit the influence of the Art Moderne style.

The Appraisers Stores and Immigration Building was purpose-built for two government operations: storage and appraisal for customs evaluation, and temporary housing for new immigrant arrivals awaiting entry processing. The first four floors were allotted to the appraisal and valuations process; floors ten through thirteen, sixteen and seventeen, together with roof areas, housed the activities of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. Floors between these areas were allotted to other government offices.

Original interior features of the building include main lobby ornamentation of Montana travertine; elevator lobbies faced with cream-colored ceramic tile and terrazzo floors in public spaces. The wood paneled fourth floor immigration court room and judge's chambers remain intact as does the corridor configuration. This space was recently rehabilitated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. On the exterior, the original granite surround and American eagle carved in granite remain in place at the main entrance. Original loading docks on the east side of the building are still in place. Steel double hung sash windows and porcelain enamel spandrel panels above the first floor are also original.

Alterations to the building include the replacement of the building's original terra cotta panels and granite base due to extensive water damage behind the cladding. Beginning in 1986, a modernization plan was undertaken that narrowed the corridors to increase assignable tenant space. The main entrance was modified for handicapped access, which eliminated the original vestibule. Parapets were originally pierced with ceramic grilles for views to the outside. In 1986, these were replaced with precast elements approximating the same design, cast and installed along with the new exterior wall panels in 1987-1988. Window frames at the first floor were changed at the same time from steel to aluminum.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

*U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

Exterior

Design Plan

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is rectangular in plan, 275 x 125 feet, with floors one through four occupying the entire site at the base. Massing on the upper floors is an architectural composition of three setbacks: the fifth through twelfth floors are an elongated 'C'-shaped mass with a light court facing Custom House Place; the twelfth through fourteen floors are also 'C'-shaped in massing with the wings shorter than those of the floors below and re-entrant angles occurring at the intersection of the corridor legs; the fifteenth and sixteenth floors are rectangular in plan, set back on the east, north and south. The corner setbacks above the twelfth floor and the setbacks above the thirteenth and fourteenth floors emphasize the geometric modeling of the upper section of the structure.

Floors are served from a bank of six passenger elevators in the lobby adjacent to the main entrance, which occurs at the midpoint of the building's Sansome Street elevation. Offices and other spaces are accessed from central, double-loaded corridors leading from the elevator lobby on each floor. Stairways are located at both ends of the main north-south section of the corridor

Elevations

A one story high base creates a strong horizontal division at the ground floor level, extending around the three street frontages (Washington, Jackson, and Sansome), turning the corners at the rear façade and ending at the rear elevation (Custom House Place). In contrast, on the main elevations vertical bands of window bays alternate with formed spandrels to emphasize the height of the building. The central section of the Sansome Street elevation presents nine bays with two windows in each bay. This section is flanked by bays which contain a single window and are set one foot back from the central section. The Washington and Jackson Street elevations are similar, although the central section has three bays with two windows per bay. Above the first floor level, double hung sash windows and spandrel panels on the building are original porcelain enamel on steel. First floor replacement windows are aluminum dating from 1988.

At the east, Custom House Place, elevation, loading and receiving docks occupy almost the entire length of the first floor base. They are surmounted by a long metal canopy and four story high glass and metal screen wall that originally enclosed warehouse space. The screen wall alternates steel awning windows and metal panels similar to other windows and transoms of the building. The existing roof of the fourth floor is an empty surface, a space accessed through a window-door and steel stairs from the fifth floor elevator lobby that was originally an exercise yard for detainees. The elevation recedes at the sixth floor level to make the light court.

Ornament

The absence of applied exterior ornament on the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is in harmony with the austere design of architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood and the principles of simplified classicism that characterize the Art Moderne style. The single applied exterior decoration consisted of small ceramic grilles embossed in a stylized geometric pattern. The ceramic grilles, which were replaced with precast recreations, appear at the top of the building just below the roof parapet walls. Underwood is quoted in an article in *Architect and Engineer* in November 1936 commenting on the architectural style of the structure: "The design follows the straightforward lines

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

*U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

of contemporary architecture in which the building relies on a subtle effect of voids and solids, pure ornament being held at a minimum."¹

Original Cladding

Original cladding on the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station was a ceramic veneer, described by the manufacturer Gladding McBean & Company as a "modernization of hand-made terra cotta." The material, essentially extruded terra cotta blocks glazed in a "Granitex" finish, colored to match the granite surface of the neighboring United States Custom House, faced the entire U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station from the first story to a coping at the top of the building. Blocks were anchored to vertical rods approximately 1 inch from the wall by means of tail-on-loop dowels imbedded in the concrete of the wall. Pieces varied in size, reaching a maximum of 47 inches in length to a maximum of 30 inches in height.²

Alterations

Cladding

At the time of construction, the cladding was considered to be as durable as stone facing, and original drawings called for the material to be waterproofed. However, leakage began within a decade of construction and became progressively worse over time. In the early 1980s, the U.S. General Services Administration commissioned the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, San Francisco, to assess the performance of the exterior wall and present a variety of replacement strategies. The alteration proposed substituting pre-cast concrete panels with a larger unit size to replace the original terra cotta, with care taken to score the new material to resemble the divisions of the original blocks. The design of the base of the building, which had been a ceramic veneer over a low granite base, was proposed as alternating bands of honed and polished granite for the full height of the base. This redesign program was carried out. The ornamental ceramic grilles were replaced in their original positions and designs with precast replacements after the re-cladding. The work began in 1985 and was finished in 1988.³

Entrance

The main entrance to the building pierces the Sansome Street facade about midway along the frontage. Originally characterized by a wide, grey granite surround with polished black granite jambs, a carved eagle by architectural sculptors Lombard and Ludwig and an interior vestibule, the entryway was reconfigured for emergency and handicapped access, widening the entry opening. As originally built, entry doors led directly into a vestibule with its own set of doors leading into the lobby. In the 1988 renovation, a new entrance was constructed, eliminating the original interior vestibule and two large adjacent closets.⁴ At the present time, two sets of doors are used to create a high ceiling space inside the entry doors which exhibits the original salmon-colored terrazzo floor area with brass division strips, travertine wall cladding, marble baseboards and two wall-mounted building directories. A second set of doors leads into the lobby with a lowered ceiling at the elevators. The eagle was remounted above the exterior

¹ Frederick Calvin David, "Appraisers Building Faced with Ceramic Veneer," *Architect and Engineer*, November, 1936, 32.

² Ibid.

³ J. Gordon Turnbull, AIA, "U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station," Draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form found in: Page and Turnbull, *Supporting Material for Determination of Eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station* (San Francisco: U.S. General Services Administration, 1993).

⁴ Page and Turnbull, *Supporting Material*, 7-2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

*U. S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

doors which retain the original granite surround. A band of salmon terrazzo is visible on the floor within the inset entrance into the building.

Interior

Plan

The building is organized around a central elevator core, containing six passenger elevators that open into public elevator lobbies at all floors except the service areas. On the ground floor, the elevator lobby is located on axis with the main entrance, which is oriented perpendicular to the main leg of the 'C'-shaped first floor corridor. Stair wells are located at the intersections of the legs of the 'C'-shaped corridors. The interior spatial organization of the upper floors of the building corresponds to the structure's exterior geometric design plan.

First Floor Lobby

The building's entry lobby has retained a high degree of architectural integrity. Located at the first floor, directly off Sansome Street, it is the most important public interior space, exhibiting the style and materials of the Art Moderne and the late 1930s of the structure's design. When the building entrance was reconfigured, two lobby areas were created: a high ceiling space directly within the entry doors and an inner lobby with a lowered ceiling at the elevators. The spaces are divided from one another by two broad columns and a circulation path that cuts across the lobby to the elevators.

Distinctive features of the lobby are Montana travertine walls and salmon-colored terrazzo floors. Bronze elements include elevator doors with fretwork details, wall edge trim and grilles, a cove light trough and wall bulletin boards. A continuous back-lit bronze louvered band around the inner lobby above the elevator doors was the original light source for the lobby space which left the flat plaster ceiling uninterrupted. Recessed can lights are now installed on the restored plaster ceiling throughout the space to augment the back-lit louvered band.

Fourth Floor Courtroom

With the exception of changes in lighting, the U.S. Customs court on the fourth floor is substantially intact, conveying its original significance and judicial use. Windows set into deep recesses light the space from the west and doors open into it from the corridor and the adjacent judge's chamber. A small room measuring 22 feet x 36.5 feet, the courtroom features floor-to-ceiling book-matched walnut paneled walls with bronze separator strips. Detailing on the flat acoustical plaster ceiling includes a ribbed plaster band at the perimeter in the Moderne style.

Two elliptical coves are recessed into the ceiling at each end of the room which also has a ribbed plaster perimeter molding. Concealed perimeter fixtures originally threw indirect light onto the coves. However, the ceiling was altered to accommodate fluorescent lights with lenses set flush to the adjacent flat ceiling area. The original fixed judge's bench had a full height recessed wall section with curved bronze edge jambs behind it. It was subsequently altered by the placement of a travertine panel over the wood. A similar wall recess at the back of the courtroom retains the original bronze clock hands and numerals superimposed on the wood wall. This space was recently restored to its original condition in accordance with Secretary of the Interior Standards.

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Elevator Lobbies and Corridors

With the exception of alterations on floors twelve and thirteen, elevator lobbies of the U.S Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station are largely intact and typical on all other floors. Centrally located in the building, elevator lobbies are open to the north-south corridors that pass alongside their west ends. Lobbies below the fifth floor are contained within the building volume. At the fifth floor and above, the lobbies have windows facing east. All original elevator doors are hollow metal with a painted finish. Each of the original lobbies is finished with cream-colored ceramic panels that curve on walls as they turn into corridors. Floors of both the lobbies and corridors are a red-toned terrazzo with aluminum separator strips dividing the floors into a rectangular grid. A continuous flat plaster ceiling also extends from the lobbies into and throughout the corridors. Ceiling mounted fluorescent fixtures are now used instead of the original incandescent dome-shaped ceiling fixtures.

Corridors of the building have been substantially altered through their narrowing as part of the process of renovating the interior spaces, leaving only corridors one, four, and fourteen substantially unchanged. Alterations have also occurred to the office doors and walls on floors five, six, eight, ten, twelve, and thirteen. Original doors were typically half-panel with upper lights and brass knobs. Floors two and seven have had many of these doors recently replaced but have not undergone the corridor narrowing as present upon the above-mentioned floors. Original materials retained on floors two and seven include the terrazzo floors and the ceramic wall panels.

The twelfth floor elevator lobby and corridor and thirteenth floor corridor have renovated walls and floors. On the twelfth floor, new wall covering with wood trim and rubber base have replaced the ceramic with a terrazzo base that is characteristic of the original lobbies. The thirteenth floor corridor has been altered with similar wall covering, trim, and base. Floor areas have been covered with carpeting and the original ceiling is hidden by a suspended acoustical tile ceiling.

Tenant Spaces

Offices occupy the majority of building space in the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station. Some office locations are original, but most have been altered to accommodate changes in tenancy. Areas allotted to the building's original purposes, such as the Immigration Department dormitory and residential facilities located on floors eleven, twelve and fifteen, have been converted to office space. Original customs facilities, such as testing laboratories located on floors thirteen through fifteen, have also been removed and altered for office use.

Other tenant use areas are the interior receiving and loading areas on the first floor, and warehousing, holding and related general use areas on floors two through four. Situated within the original general warehousing area at the east side of the building, these areas are directly adjacent to the portion of the building enclosed by the glass and metal screen wall. All spaces are rough-finished utility areas not intended for use by the general public.

Toilet rooms of the building are situated off the corridors on each end of the public floors, typically one to the north and one to the south of each elevator lobby. Most have been altered by a modification of layout, removal or replacement of marble stall partitions, and changes in doors, walls, floors and fixtures. Some rooms have been modified for handicapped access. Original material can be found in some locations, but no toilet room appears completely intact. Generally toilet rooms are finished with ceramic tile, with floors exhibiting a 1" square mosaic tile with tile or marble wainscoting. Above the wainscot, walls are flat plaster. Many original porcelain ceramic fixtures remain in use.

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Building Service Areas

The basement, loft, upper penthouse, mezzanine and a portion of the sixteenth floor each contain custodial storage and mechanical spaces. As originally built, the building shared many of its mechanical systems with the neighboring U.S. Custom House, its neighbor on the east side of Custom House Place.

Four large freight elevators service the basement through fourth floors, originally designed for the U.S. Customs Service to transport freight to warehousing areas on each of these floors. Two smaller service areas located at the north ends of the building's corridors occur on all floors. Mechanical shafts and risers, as well as electrical and telephone equipment, are provided at each floor.

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Statement of Significance

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is eligible under Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for its association with events that have made an important contribution to the broad patterns of American history. Appraisal functions of the federal government have been maintained on the site since 1874 and the subject building has maintained both appraisal and immigration functions from its construction, between 1939–1944, to the present time. While the immigrant detention facilities, which were built into the structure's design, are no longer in use, the continuity of historic customs and appraisal functions from 1944 to 1960, together with the continuity of immigration functions from the building's completion to the present time, constitute the building's historic importance in international and Pacific Coast commerce. Its service as a primary gateway for Asian entrants to the United States, as the successor to the Angel Island Immigration Station, documents historic demographic and legislative changes in United States immigration policy from the late 1930s to the 1960s.

Building History

Appraisers Stores⁵

With the rise of American influence following the Gold Rush and the Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo, the early Spanish settlement, Yerba Buena, grew into the city of San Francisco, an important commercial center and transfer point between international and local freight. In 1876, the first Appraisers Stores Building, a four-story brick warehouse designed by Alfred B. Mullet, Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury Department, was constructed at the edge of Yerba Buena Cove to inspect and store goods in conjunction with a neighboring U.S. Customs House. Construction of the sea wall of 1877 and the subsequent infill of the Bay moved the water's edge away from the building, but the appraisal and storage use of the buildings had become fixed at that location, particularly after a new federal Customs Building, erected in 1911, replaced the earlier structure.

Planning and construction of the present U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station began in 1939 in an era when most freight and goods were still shipped by sea. The new building continued to serve most of the historic uses for appraisal, storage and testing, just as truck transport was becoming an important means of domestic transportation. To accommodate this new development, the east side of the subject building was designed with loading docks.

After World War II, transportation changes continued to impact the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station. The development of the Oakland Naval Supply Depot across San Francisco Bay accelerated the expansion of the Port of Oakland, drawing freight commerce away from San Francisco. By 1950 air freight had also impacted freight tonnage at sea. These developments required inspection and investigation at other ports of entry, reducing the need for warehousing, appraisal, and laboratory testing at the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station in San Francisco.⁶

⁵ Page and Turnbull, *Supporting Material*, 8-2.

⁶ Ibid.

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Immigration and Naturalization

One of the major reasons leading to the replacement of the earlier appraisers Building was the closure of Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. Since 1892 Angel Island had been the primary site for detention and quarantine of immigrants, pending approval of their entry into the United States. By 1941 the Island facilities had become too expensive to maintain for a small number of detainees. In addition, it appeared more efficient to hold immigrants at the same location as their subsequent examination and hearings.

Accordingly, a new building was proposed to be built for both uses. Architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood, acting as consultant to the Public Buildings Administration of the Federal Works Agency, was chosen as the architect of record. Underwood's design for the upper floors of the building included complete facilities for immigrant detainees. Private rooms, dormitories, day rooms, outdoor rooftop terraces, and multiple kitchens provided for the individuals' needs. The new structure was renamed the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station. Detained immigrants were held and processed at the subject building from 1945 to 1960.

Changing modes of transportation also brought about the obsolescence of facilities at the subject building. When the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station was constructed, most immigrants arrived by ship. However, in the 1960s, legislation by the United States Congress made it possible for a much larger group of immigrants, particularly those from Asian nations, to enter the United States, and a large number arrived by air on immigrant visas. Immigration facilities at the subject building's site were too small to serve as a detention center and those functions shifted to other facilities. The original detainee housing was converted to offices for a regional administrative center, serving day visitors needing to process citizenship papers, obtain green cards, and attend immigration and naturalization hearings.⁷

The Federal Architecture Context

Federal Building Design, 1931-1939

With the onset of the Great Depression, the architectural profession and construction trades were extremely hard hit by unemployment. On May 31, 1930, the U.S. Congress amended the Public Buildings Act of 1926, with increased funding and further authorized the Secretary of the Treasury Department to contract with private firms and individuals.⁸ To meet spatial requirements of the U.S. government, the Hoover administration and the U.S. Congress increased funding for the federal building program in 1928, 1930, and 1931, for a total of \$700 million.⁹ The Federal Employment Stabilization Act of 1931 directed federal construction agencies to prepare six-year building plans and increased appropriations for that year by \$100 million. As a result, 133 architectural firms were commissioned to design federal Buildings in 1931, and this number increased to 301 by 1934.¹⁰ This practice of

⁷ Page and Turnbull, *Supporting Material*, 7-2, 7-3. .

⁸ Emily Harris, *History of Post Office Construction, 1900-1940* (Washington, DC: U.S. Postal Service, 1982), 17.

⁹ Lois Craig, ed., and the staff of the Federal Architecture Project, *The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics and Symbols in United States*

Government Building (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1978), 280.

¹⁰ Harris, *History of Post Office Construction*, 15, 17, 19.

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commissioning private architects largely ended, however, on June 29, 1934, with an order that the Office of the Supervising Architect within the Department of the Treasury design all remaining federal buildings.¹¹ However, a limited number of private architects were retained as consulting architects for large projects.

The Public Works Administration (PWA) was established in 1933 to oversee the planning and construction of public works projects, both federal and non-federal, with the aim of stimulating the economy and expanding employment. "In 1933, many of the properties of the federal government were in poor shape. In a number of cities, post offices were in disrepair, federal justice was being dispensed in buildings with sagging floors and leaky roofs, and in scattered courthouses along our far-flung borders, U.S. Customs Service men in some instances had to work in poorly heated and equipped buildings. Federal prisons failed to live up to the standards set by the federal government's own penologists. There was a shortage of post offices, prisons, veteran's hospitals, and other federal facilities."¹² As of February 28, 1939, PWA federal building construction projects totaled 3,167 buildings at \$303,581,146, including 30 courthouses and city halls with an allotment of \$1,312,012 and 406 post offices with an allotment of \$43,607,814.¹³ Large numbers of federal buildings were constructed in the 1930s under the aegis of the PWA and while the agency emphasized economy and efficiency, it also sought to ensure a lasting legacy through quality construction.

Louis A. Simon was Supervising Architect of the Treasury from 1933-1939, but had been with the office continually since 1896. Simon had effectively directed the office during Judge James Wetmore's tenure (1915-1933) as Acting Supervising Architect, because Wetmore had no formal training in architecture.¹⁴ Under the PWA and Simon's direction, federal architecture in the 1930s was designed in the Colonial Revival style or a simplified Classical Revival style, which often featured murals or sculptures.¹⁵

Classical architecture had become the dominant style conveying the federal presence across the nation. However, the need to provide federal government space but save the cost of unnecessary ornament during the 1930s fit well with the principles of Modern architecture then being introduced, stressing functionality, open plans with interchangeable work areas, and exterior surfaces in uninterrupted simple planes and volumes. The government's architects were not unaware of the Modern movement. The Association of Federal Architects (AFA) was organized late in 1927 with Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect of the Treasury, as its first president. The AFA held dinners with prominent Modernist speakers such as Wright, Eliel Saarinen, and Richard Neutra, and published a quarterly magazine from 1930 to 1946, which largely approved of the government's designs.¹⁶

Yet the Supervising Architect's Office did not wholly adopt the modernist vocabulary on the exterior, but held steadfast to references to the Classical style to convey the underlying role of the government. What resulted was a restrained classicism, denoted as much by white masonry and the rhythm of wall and window as by vestigial columns.

¹¹ Beth M. Boland, *National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 13: How to Apply National Register Criteria to Post Offices* (Washington,

DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1994), 3.

¹² United States Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (PWA), *America Builds: The Record of the PWA* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), 106.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 290.

¹⁴ Craig, et al., *The Federal Presence*, 328.

¹⁵ Harris, *History of Post Office Construction*, 20, 25.

¹⁶ Craig, et al., *The Federal Presence*, 298.

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Today, it is this style of classicism, rather than the correct Roman form as advocated by Jefferson, the Greek temples of Robert Mills, or the ebullient Beaux-Arts style of the early 1900s, that most Americans know as federal architecture. The Potter Stewart U. S. Courthouse in Cincinnati, Ohio, designed by architects with the Office of the Supervising Architect, under the direction of Louis A. Simon, and dedicated in 1939, is a representative example of the federal architecture of the period. Other buildings and structures constructed during the PWA era that convey this restrained classicism, also known as the PWA Moderne style, include: Hoover Dam (1933, by Gordon B. Kaufmann); U.S. Mint, San Francisco (1937, also by Gilbert Stanley Underwood); and U.S. Post Offices in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Waterbury, Connecticut; Norfolk, Virginia; and, Manchester, New Hampshire.¹⁷

Federal Works Agency Design, 1939-1948.

The Reorganization Act of April 3, 1939, created the Public Buildings Administration as part of the Federal Works Agency (FWA), removing control of federal architecture from the Treasury Department. Although the Office of Supervising Architect survived in the new agency, its role in the design of federal buildings was further circumscribed. According to National Register Bulletin 13, under FWA, "[a]lthough some variations to facades were allowed, standardized interior plans were well established by this time, and outlined in a publication entitled 'Instructions to Private Architects Engaged on Public Buildings Work under the Jurisdictions of the Treasury Department.'¹⁸ Federal building design and construction slowed during the Second World War years.

In 1949, the new U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) was established and absorbed the design function of the Federal Works Agency. The Public Buildings Act of 1949 again allowed the Office of the Supervising Architect to rely on private architecture firms to carry out public building designs. However, when the Office employed its standard designs, the result was extremely utilitarian with the emphasis on bare modern design, functionality, and automobile access.

Architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood

Gilbert Stanley Underwood received a Master's Degree in architecture from Harvard University in 1923 and in that year moved to Los Angeles to open a private practice. In the following decade, his practice specialized in work for the railroads and the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service. He is well known for his designs of rustic visitor's lodges in Bryce and Zion National Parks, constructed in the 1920s, the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park, constructed in 1925, and for the Art Deco Union Pacific Station in Omaha, Nebraska, constructed in 1931. The Zion Lodge burned in 1966 but the other buildings remain and all are listed in the National Register.

In 1933 Underwood moved his practice to Washington, D.C. and became a consulting architect for the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury. Consulting architects were primarily responsible for the design of larger federal buildings assigned to the Office of the Supervising Architect. Projects designed by Underwood during the period when he acted as consulting architect include twenty post offices; the William Kenzo Nakamura U.S. Courthouse in Seattle, constructed in 1940 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980; the U.S. Courthouse and Post Office in Los Angeles, constructed in 1940 and listed in the National Register in 2006; the

¹⁷ Craig, et al., *The Federal Presence*, 280-287.

¹⁸ Boland, *National Register Bulletin 13*, 3.

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United States Mint in San Francisco, constructed in 1937; and, the Harry S. Truman Federal Building (U.S. State Department) in Washington, D.C., constructed in 1941. During World War II, as consulting architect, he was responsible for the design of numerous wartime public building projects.¹⁹ In 1944, Underwood became the Supervising Architect within the Federal Works Agency's Public Buildings Administration.²⁰

Architectural Style

PWA Art Moderne style denotes a design program following the tripartite classical column form of the Art Moderne style – base, shaft, and capital – while emphasizing an intricate plan of design elements to provide a pleasing aesthetic effect. Like the Art Moderne style, PWA Moderne abstracted classical design elements and emphasized verticality, utilizing flat roofs with parapet walls, smooth wall surfaces, and simplified or streamlined ornament. Cladding frequently featured horizontal grooves or lines in walls. Window treatment was generally horizontal, but vertical rows were often used to affect a decorative contrast. This program proved particularly suitable for government structures because it subtly referenced the appearance of traditional classical courthouses, post offices, and other public buildings.

The architectural style of the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is important in the context of progressive influences in architecture beginning at the end of the 1920s and continuing through 1940. Beginning in 1927, a group of government architects in Washington D.C. founded the Association of Federal Architects (AFA) in order to foster an exchange of ideas among the various federal agencies concerned with architecture and building construction. Louis A Simon, then Chief of the Architectural Division of the Supervising Architect's Office, served as the organization's first president.²¹ In July, 1930 the AFA began to publish a quarterly, *The Federal Architect*. Its pages mirrored the growing divide between architects who favored traditional designs with express classical elements and those with the urge to formulate a new style for public buildings. Simon's tenure as president ended in 1933, the year that the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station's architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood began working for the Supervising Architect's Office. Federal architectural design remained split until World War II when attention shifted to wartime housing and emergency public works while World's Fair spectacles such as the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress Exhibition and the 1939 San Francisco and New York World's Fairs presented futuristic visions and promises of a new architectural style in a post-war world.²²

For the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, Underwood's PWA Moderne composition employed a simple geometry of interlocking volumes, slightly offset, to animate a building without external ornament. Surface planes rise through the height of the building, and then reveal themselves as volumes terminating at different heights, creating a simple yet powerful emphasis on the roofline. The corner setbacks above the twelfth floor and the setbacks above the thirteenth and fourteenth floors complete the dramatic modeling of the upper section of the structure, effectively elaborating the architectural geometry characteristic of the Moderne style of the late 1930s. The bold rhythmic variation of the upper floor geometry heightens the visual drama of the building. The

¹⁹ "P.B.A. Residence Halls for Women," *Architectural Record*, July 1942, 40-43.

²⁰ Personnel Records for Gilbert Stanley Underwood, Center for Historic Buildings, Office of the Chief Architect, U.S. General Services Administration, Washington, DC.

²¹ Craig, et al., *The Federal Presence*, 219-220.

²² *Ibid.*, 404-405.

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absence of a cornice expresses a horizontal rather than a vertical relationship to the sky, referencing the work of emerging European modernists and the tenets of early progressive architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright

Previous Determinations of Eligibility

In the early 1980s, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) commissioned a study by San Francisco architects Skidmore, Owings and Merrill to assess the performance of the exterior walls. At that time, the State Office of Historic Preservation was asked to comment on the proposed change in the cladding. GSA records indicate that in 1984 a determination of "no effect" was issued by SHPO staff member Lucinda Woodward in 1984, stating that the determination did not reflect on the property's National Register eligibility, but rather on the fact that the building was not yet 50 years old. Nine years later, GSA commissioned the architectural firm of Page and Turnbull, San Francisco, to prepare a report titled, "Supporting Material for a Determination of Eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places." This report found the building eligible under Criterion A for its association with a wide range of immigration functions from 1944 until 1960, as a vital point of international commerce for San Francisco and the West Coast, and as a primary gateway for immigrants from Asian-Pacific nations.

Criterion A

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is significant under Criterion A as a building associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of United States customs and immigration history. The site has been in continuous use as an appraisers stores facility since 1876 when the first Appraisers Stores Building - a four story freight warehouse - was constructed on the site. The present U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station, constructed in 1939 on the same site, continued the previous operation. In addition, the building was equipped with truck docks along Custom House Place to meet the continuing need for appraisal, storage, and testing. The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station has had an enduring association with the commercial history of the city of San Francisco and the development of international freight and water commerce coming into the city at a time when the Port of San Francisco dominated the region and operated as the Pacific Coast transfer point between international and domestic shipping.

The U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station is also significant under Criterion A for its association with the history and development of immigration to the West Coast, primarily from countries in Asia. As built, the building designated specific floors and floor areas for dormitories, kitchens, day rooms, and roof exercise facilities to accommodate immigrants who required quarantine and detention prior to hearings that determined eligibility for entry to the United States. As the successor to the Angel Island Immigration Station, which had become too small and expensive to maintain, the U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station facilities were the primary focus of immigration control and detention from the end of World War II until the 1960s when congressional legislative changes allowed an exponential rise in the admittance of foreigners to the United States. U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station in turn became too small to process the influx effectively, and the building became the regional administrative center for the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Under Criterion A, the building is significant at the local level; the period of significance is 1944-1960 from its opening for appraisal and immigration functions until 1960. Appraisal functions ceased in 1960. The building now serves as immigration headquarters for the region.

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Additional Documentation

Hard copy USGS Map submitted to NPS



SOURCE: USGS 7.5 Quad, California: San Francisco North

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Additional Documentation

Aerial Map



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PHOTOGRAPHS

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes.

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Upper floors of Jackson Street (north) elevation and Sansome Street (west) elevation looking south

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation1.tiff



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U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: South elevation showing replaced granite base
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation2.tiff



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U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Building entrance: 630 Sansome Street, facing east.

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation3.tiff



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U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Detail, carved granite eagle above Sansome Street entrance, facing east.

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation4.tiff



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U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Upper floors of south and east elevations looking northwest from Custom House Place

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation5.tiff



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U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
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Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Detail, cornice of west elevation showing grill detail

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation6.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

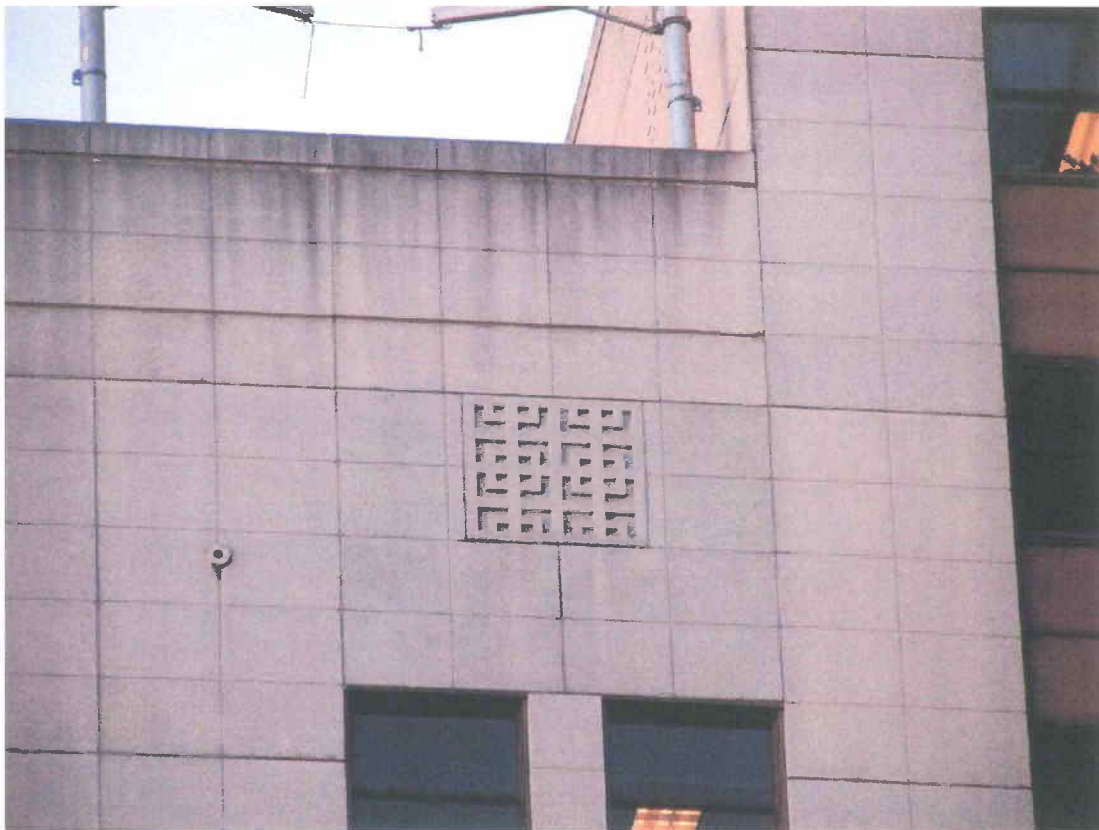
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Custom House Place elevation showing decorative grill detail

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation7.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Loading dock along Custom House Place looking south from Jackson Street

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation8.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Alley (Custom House Place) between Appraisers /Immigration Station and United States Custom House: looking north from Washington Street

Photo Number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation9.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: Basement entrance from Custom House Place
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation10.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes

Date of photograph: November 30, 2006

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Lobby entry looking out onto Sansome Street, facing west.

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation11.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: Detail, brass directory, ground floor
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation12.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: Ground floor lobby, security station
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation13.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California

Photographer: GSA

Date of photograph: April 2013

Negative: GSA Headquarters

Description of view: Ground floor elevator lobby

Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation14.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: Detail, brass mail box, ground floor lobby
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation15.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: Ground floor lobby, between entry doors
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation16.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: Detail, brass elevator doors, ground floor lobby
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation17.tiff



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*United States Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California*

U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station
San Francisco County, California
Photographer: David Greenwood, Jones & Stokes
Date of photograph: November 30, 2006
Negative: GSA Headquarters
Description of view: 9th floor lobby, original wall cladding
Photo number: CA_SanFranciscoCounty_ImmigrationStation18.tiff

