

Dear Ms. Heath,

I am writing in support of Case 14-02, the proposed listing of the Washington, DC Municipal Center, now the Henry P. Daly Building, on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, in order to protect it from disfiguring alteration or demolition.

Hildreth Meière (1892-1961) was a mural painter and architectural decorator, nationally recognized for 100 major commissions across the United States. Her eighty-one foot glazed terra cotta frieze, *Health and Welfare*, is in the east courtyard of the Municipal Center. Forty-seven stylized figures in ten glazed terra cotta polychromatic panels, depict public services available to residents of the District of Columbia in 1940.

The Municipal Center was designed by architects Albert Harris and Nathan C. Wyeth. They hired Hildreth Meière, Lee Lawrie, Waylande Gregory, and other noted artists to create the architectural art that adorns the building and graphically represents the benefits and services provided within. The Municipal Center is an important example of the Classical Moderne style, often chosen for New Deal era civic structures.

Meière's other commissions in Washington, DC can be seen in the Great Hall of the National Academy of Sciences (1924) and in the half-dome of the apse in the Resurrection Chapel of the Washington National Cathedral (1951). In 2013, two marble mosaic mural panels from the Prudential Center in Newark, NJ (1960) were conserved and reinstalled at Harvard University's Center for Hellenic Studies. Meière's papers, which the family donated to the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, include 16mm films, one of which is *The Municipal Center Frieze, Washington, DC*, documenting *Health and Welfare*, by Meière and *Public Safety*, by Waylande Gregory.

I am a supporter of the International Hildreth Meière Association (IHMA). A non-profit organization, its mission is to conduct activities, through education and preservation, to promote and perpetuate the legacy of Hildreth Meière. The IHMA organizes exhibitions, publications and lectures, and undertakes conservation projects. *Walls Speak: The Narrative Art of Hildreth Meière* was on exhibit at the National Building Museum in 2011. *The Art Deco Murals of Hildreth Meière*, a comprehensive study, was published in 2014. The newly-expanded website [www.HildrethMeiere.org](http://www.HildrethMeiere.org) launched in December 2017.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge you to approve the proposal of the DC Preservation League to include the Municipal Center and its New Deal master works in the Inventory of Historic Sites.

Sincerely,