

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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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 an 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 Union Temple of Brooklyn

other names/site number Union Temple of Brooklyn Community House

2. Location

street & number 17 Eastern Parkway [] not for publication

city or town Brooklyn [] vicinity

state New York code NY county King code 047 zip code 11238

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 as 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.)

Ruth Purpant DSHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/30/15
Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

Jan Egan No Beall 5-18-15

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Kings County, New York

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVAL/

Neoclassical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls Brick & Limestone

roof Synthetic

other

Narrative Description

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

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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 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.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** a birthplace or 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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more 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 Building 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 repository: _____

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1926-1942

Significant Dates:

1926, 1929, 1942

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Arnold W. Brunner (Architect)

Vincent Maragliotti (Murals)

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10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property .19 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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Zone Easting Northing2 18 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |4 18 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared Byname/title William Moracheorganization Columbia University date August 2014street & number 189 Claremont Avenue telephone 603-489-8552city or town Manhattan state NY zip code 10027**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 locationA **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)name Union Temple of Brooklyn (Beatrice Hanks, president)street & number 17 Eastern Parkway telephone 718-638-7600city or town Brooklyn state NY zip code 11238**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.*)**Estimated Burden Statement:** public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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Narrative Description of Property

Constructed in 1926, The Union Temple of Brooklyn is located at 17 Eastern Parkway, just east of Grand Army Plaza. The building is a ten-story, beige-colored brick building with a limestone first story and limestone trim and ornamentation. The main facade on Eastern Parkway comes out directly to the lot line with an unbroken street wall for the entire width of the facade. This facade is divided into five vertical bays running for nine stories. There is an additional story that exists as a penthouse set back from the facade that is barely visible from any public way. To the west of the main facade is a hyphen that is a single bay wide and is slightly set back from the main facade. The hyphen was intended to connect the existing building to the sanctuary building that was never built. This hyphen is faced in limestone and is four stories tall with an additional three non-historic set back stories above, likely built in 2008 along with the neighboring building.

Setting

The Union Temple of Brooklyn is located in a largely residential neighborhood within the Prospect Heights area of the New York City borough of Brooklyn, Kings County, New York. The neighboring buildings on Eastern Parkway consist primarily of early twentieth-century apartment houses. On Eastern Parkway, immediately to the east is a six-story apartment house built in 1912. Immediately to the west is a fifteen-story apartment building built in 2006 on the site of the temple's former parking lot, which had been intended to be the location of the sanctuary building. Directly across the street on the south side of Eastern Parkway is the Art Deco main branch of the Brooklyn Public Library. Further west is Grand Army Plaza, an oval-shaped, landscaped intersection of eight streets centering on the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Arch, a triumphal arch designed by John Duncan with architectural embellishments by McKim, Mead & White. The arch stands at the gateway to Olmsted & Vaux's Prospect Park and is listed on the National Register as part of the Prospect Park listing. The building occupies most of its lot. There is a small courtyard to the west of the building behind the front hyphen and there is a small amount of space to the north and east of the building providing a small buffer from neighboring lots. Eastern Parkway itself, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, is a New York City Scenic Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. With the exception of the replacement of many of the original windows with aluminum sash, The Union Temple of Brooklyn building retains a high degree of integrity.

Principal Facade

The first floor of the main building consists of rusticated limestone masonry. It has five openings at the street level. The three central bays are entrances, each with large double doors. A few concrete stairs make the slight transition between the bottom of the doors and the sidewalk. Each half of each set of doors is divided into twelve staggered panels. The doors are made of wood and finished with a varnish. Above each door is a transom window divided into five lights with varnished turned wood mullions. Above each of the center doorways are three carved inscriptions reading from west to east: "Service," "Union Temple House," and "Religion." Above each of the three central doorways are three shallow balconies supported by foliated scrolled brackets. Each balcony is made of limestone and has decorative carvings. The westernmost balcony depicts a menorah flanked by a stag on either side. Under the menorah is Hebrew text that translates to "let there be light." The center balcony depicts two winged human figures kneeled around two Ten Commandment tablets

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inscribed with Hebrew characters that represent each of the commandments. The easternmost balcony depicts two griffins on either side of a scroll with Hebrew text that translates to “you shall love your fellows as yourself.” The posts on either side of each balcony have limestone acanthus leaf finials that appear like baskets of fruit. There are two decorative black iron light sconces between the three central doorways that are present in historic photographs. The easternmost bay is a single frame-and-panel varnished wood door. Above this bay is a recent awning shielding the doorway and serving as signage. The westernmost bay is a single window that is covered with a black iron security grate. There are several non-historic signs fastened to the first floor near the doorways.

The rusticated stonework of the first floor extends upward past the floorplate to the windowsills of the second floor. The first and second floors are separated by a half-round molded beltcourse. The top of the limestone base ends with a classically-styled molding that runs the width of the facade and also functions as the windowsills of the second floor windows. The three central windows that correspond to the balconies are divided into double casements of eight lights each with a five-light transom above. These windows are white painted wood. The easternmost of these three windows has had its casements replaced with glass block. These three window openings have rusticated limestone surrounds topped by dentil moldings and stylized broken scroll pediments. The outermost window openings of the second floor are original steel casement windows divided into sixteen lights.

The third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh floors are all identical with the central three bays consisting of paired, aluminum, one-over-one replacement windows and the outer bays consisting of some single, one-over-one, replacement windows and some original steel casement windows (In the eastern bay of the second, third, fourth and fifth floors and the western bay of the second and third floors). At either end of the building, limestone quoins extend upward from the second story to the roof cornice. A cornice between the seventh and eighth floors interrupts the quoining. This lower cornice consists of a narrow unornamented frieze, dentils and a cornice molding. Above the lower cornice is a smooth limestone wall covering that runs the entire width of the facade. This limestone wall cladding covers the height of the wall only between the cornice and the level of the windowsills of the eighth floor. This limestone cladding is topped by a limestone beltcourse that is contiguous with the windowsills of the eighth-floor windows. Below each eighth-floor window is a carved frame-and-panel style limestone spandrel panel. The center three windows are double height and connect with the windows on what would be the ninth floor. These windows are now stacked pairs of aluminum one-over-one windows. These windows have rusticated limestone surrounds similar to those around the second floor windows; each has a scrolled keystone and no pediment. The outer eighth-floor windows have single-pane, double-hung sash with rusticated limestone surrounds each topped with a cornice and scrolled pediment. The outer ninth-floor openings are octagonal windows, divided into square lights, with limestone surrounds. Above the ninth floor is a half-round molded beltcourse. Above this beltcourse is a decorative brickwork frieze topped by another half-round beltcourse. There are three limestone panels with carved foliage in the center three bays of the frieze. Above the frieze is a Classical cornice with modillions and a simple brick parapet with limestone coping.

The hyphen bay is clad in rusticated limestone from the first to fourth floors, with smooth limestone above. The first floor of this bay has a doorway with a varnished wood paneled door divided into twelve staggered panels.

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The windows in this bay alternate from each side of the bay going vertically, representing the stairway inside. Some of these openings are filled with original steel-framed windows. At the fourth floor is a simple limestone cornice with two square windows above. Above the windows is a simple limestone frieze with a cornice. The upper brick setback portions of this bay were added with the 2005-2009 construction of the adjacent apartment building. The hyphen connects to the neighboring building on several floors. A portion of the altered and enlarged hyphen will provide a new accessible entrance and enhanced elevator access to upper floors of the community house (the interior of the hyphen was still under construction and not yet complete, summer 2014).

The visible portions of the upper stories of the western elevation are the first two windows from the front on the seventh floor and the first three window bays on the eighth and ninth floors. These windows and wall ornamentation are identical to the upper stories on the façade. The visible portion of the eastern facade shows only a simple brick wall with smooth limestone trim that is flush with the wall plane. There are no windows toward the front of this elevation. The northern portion of this face sets back from the neighboring building and extends rearward at a slight angle. Several double-height, steel-framed windows are visible on this rear portion of the building.

Interior

The three central doors of the ground floor open into a lobby that leads to the auditorium. This rectangular lobby has a diamond-pattern black and white terrazzo floor. There is a beige marble wainscoting and marble architraves that surround the interior openings of the three front doors, the two auditorium doors and two small side doors leading to secondary spaces. The walls above the wainscoting are plaster that has been textured to resemble travertine ashlar. Between the exterior doors below the marble wainscoting rail are brass grates that have a scale pattern. At the upper portions of the lobby wall is a cornice of modillions topped by a molding of acanthus leaves now painted a gold color. The ceiling has two simple moldings that form a rectangular frame on the ceilings surface. The space has two chandeliers that are likely original to the space. The auditorium doors are two sets of double lacquered brass doors with ten panels in each door. Above the doorways is a scroll-like plaque that reads "One Law, One Humanity."

The auditorium is a large double height space with gradually sloping seating facing a stage opposite the entry doors. There is a second seating area in a balcony accessed on the second floor. While the auditorium has been used for services since its construction, it was converted in 1942 to the primary worship space after plans for the neighboring temple were abandoned. The steel seating appears to be the original dating from 1926 (but possibly reupholstered in vinyl) and has been slightly rearranged to lower seating density and create an additional aisle in the center. The stage has carved wooden paneling on the back wall surrounding a central ark. There are two wooden podiums on either side of the stage. The balcony has a painted wooden front with alternating octagonal and square panels. The auditorium has the original iron chandeliers that held electric candles but have since been retrofitted for large electric light bulbs. The ceiling mural is painted directly onto the concrete and has an elaborate polychrome decorative scheme. The ceiling is arranged in an intricate beam pattern. Two large beams run the length of the auditorium and support slightly smaller and more numerous beams spaced about ten feet apart that run the width of the ceiling. Both the primary and secondary beams are painted with religious figures, scenes from scripture, animals and other religious symbolism. The secondary beams support even smaller joists

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spaced roughly three feet apart. These joists are painted with geometric and floral patterns. The flat ceiling surface between the joists is painted in geometric patterns that suggest more beams and alternate between a pattern of straight lines perpendicular to the joists and an "x" pattern. The ceiling has water damage but retains integrity to a very high degree.

The third floor ballroom is a single and double height space. The ballroom ceiling above the central dance floor is double height. The walls of the ballroom above the dance floor consist of windows that opened to the fourth floor, but have since have been covered up from the other side by an opaque partition. The walls of this recess are decorated with gold and white painted paneling embellished with swags, cartouches and medallions. This woodwork extends upward and frames strained-glass windows consisting of polychrome hexagonal lights. These windows are arranged in groups of six sash that open in an accordion fashion. These groupings are separated by turned half-posts that are painted gold. The entablature above the windows contains a frieze with gold-painted foliation, griffins and stars of David. The cornice above has dentils and a gold-painted molding of acanthus leaves where the sides meet the ceiling. The ceiling has a gold painted circular ceiling medallion from which hangs a large crystal chandelier. This medallion is inscribed in a ring of swags and a circle of alternating stars of David and crescent moons.

The utilitarian fourth floor has been divided into classrooms for a school program. The utilitarian fifth and sixth floors are used for offices and administrative space for the health club. A swimming pool is located on the seventh floor. The pool and surrounding area is decorated with white and blue tiles. The tiles are in various square geometric patterns and tiles also form numbers indicating distance for swimmers. All the tile work for the pool appears to be in its original historic configuration. The eight and ninth floors are part of the former gymnasium space, which has been altered. The penthouse once housed a racquetball court but now is a storage area.

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Statement of Significance:

The Congregation of Union Temple was established 1921 following the merger of two nineteenth century congregations – Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, which was established in 1848 and is widely recognized as the oldest Jewish congregation in Brooklyn, and Temple Israel, which was established in 1860. The newly formed Union Temple called for the construction of a community house, with plans for an adjacent temple to be built subsequently. Completed between 1926 and 1929, the Neoclassical style community house is one of the final designs by preeminent Jewish-American architect, Arnold W. Brunner. In addition to Brunner's design, the Union Temple's auditorium ceiling was painted by the noted muralist Vincent Maragliotti. Plans to construct the adjacent temple stalled during the Great Depression and in 1942, the congregation officially converted space in the community house for worship.

The Union Temple of Brooklyn is significant under National Register criteria A and C in areas of social history and architecture. As a building type, the Union Temple is an excellent example of a Jewish synagogue center, an architectural movement which began in the 1920s and sought to modernize the Jewish faith by providing congregants with a place that merged religious, social and educational practices. The designs by architect Arnold Brunner and muralist Vincent Maragliotti are remarkably intact. As a congregation with roots tied to the early establishment New York City Judaism, the Union Temple of Brooklyn is a representation of the development and growth of Jewish life in Brooklyn. A period of significance for the Temple has been established at 1926, the date of construction, to 1942, when the congregation official moved their worship space into the building.

Union Temple of Brooklyn

The Union Temple of Brooklyn was founded in 1848 and is the oldest Jewish Congregation in Brooklyn. German and Alsatian Jewish residents in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn established the congregation. The first synagogue was at the home of a member of the congregation and was called Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim. While the Jewish population in Brooklyn continued to rise, another congregation called Temple Israel was founded in 1869. Temple Israel came out of the Jewish Reform movement that was introduced to the United States by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise. In the 1870's K. K. Beth Elohim adopted as its official prayer book a text by Wise and became part of the Reform movement.

In 1921 Temple Israel and K. K. Beth Elohim merged into a single Reform congregation and incorporated into the Union Temple of Brooklyn. The congregation planned a temple and community house at a prominent location at 17 Eastern Parkway. The community house, with an auditorium that was used for services, was dedicated in 1929 however the stock market crash in the same year prevented the construction of the neighboring temple. This neighboring site became a temple parking lot and the auditorium in the community house officially became the sanctuary in 1942.

Jewish Center Movement

This community house is an essential part of the synagogue-center movement of the 1920s. The synagogue-center is broadly an institution that seeks to merge the religious, educational and social aspects of the Jewish

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community into a single “center.” A term for this movement that describes a common aspect of the movement was “Shul with a pool,” as it combined religious worship and social facilities including, theatres, health clubs and swimming pools.¹ The movement has been attributed to a combination of factors including increasing population as well as an overall increase in the prosperity of the Jewish community. In the years following the First World War, Jewish people were having success in real estate, business, medicine and law. The emergence of a generation of Jewish donors, developers, builders and architects meant that the Jewish community had the ability to self-finance and construct buildings for religious and social functions. The synagogue-center was a form of reconciliation of the Jewish religion and community with a developing Jewish-American lifestyle. The concept behind incorporating community functions into the congregational spaces was to unify the Jewish community socially as well as through worship. The theatre and ballroom spaces were meant to appeal to younger members of the Jewish community so they could live fulfilling modern American social lives while still socializing and meeting future spouses within their congregation. This proliferation of Jewish centers was taking place not only in New York City, but also in Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore and other communities around the country.

With its roots tied to the construction of the Jewish Center on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, Brooklyn, New York quickly became the epicenter of Jewish Center construction in the early twentieth century. This Manhattan Jewish Center was the model for the Brooklyn Jewish Center, which was founded in 1918 to serve the Brooklyn Jewish community. This center was built in 1920 to serve the Jewish Community of Crown Heights and was located at 667 Eastern Parkway. When K. K. Beth Elohim and Temple Israel merged in 1921 and sought a location for Union Temple, it was sited at the very western end of Eastern Parkway in direct competition with the Orthodox-leaning, conservative-affiliated congregation of the Brooklyn Jewish Center on Eastern Parkway. The importance of Union Temple within the Jewish community of Brooklyn is best described in a description written in *American Hebrew*:

Union Temple, long one of the strongest spiritual factors in the borough, exercises through its new center an immense influence communally, socially and culturally... The Temple house has every facility for community purposes. It contains, under one roof, a religious school, a club for Temple members, a community center, a theatre with a stage as modern as any on Broadway, a gymnasium, pool-room and swimming pool, hand-ball courts and all the appurtenances for up-to-date physical culture as well as religious and social development... The new home of the Union Temple marks the last word in the modern policy of combining all forms of social activity with religious worship.²

The Jewish community of crowded New York had a tradition of repurposing residential buildings for worship spaces. Tenement synagogues in the Lower East Side and East Village were tenement buildings used as worship spaces. The Jewish Center in Manhattan’s Upper West side was built with a residential style in mind and was designed in a similar style to that of the grand apartment houses of the neighborhood. The Jewish Center on the

¹ David Kaufman. *Shul With A Pool: The “Synagogue-Center” in American Jewish History*. (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999).

² “Are You Well Centered? (A Roster of New Communal Institutions),” *American Hebrew* 121 (May 20, 1927): 53.

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Upper West Side was built in 1917 and designed by Louis A. Abramson. The design of Union Temple House is similar in its apartment house appearance. Since the synagogue center was intended literally as a community house, a residential form was fitting for the Union Temple building. Unlike the Eastern Parkway and Upper West Side Jewish Centers, Union Temple was unique in that the existing structure was designed without worship space inside and was truly a building for the Jewish community in everyday life.

Arnold W. Brunner (1857-1925), Architect

The Union Temple of Brooklyn was designed by preeminent Jewish architect Arnold W. Brunner. Brunner was born in New York and studied architecture under William R. Ware at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He began working for the firm of George Post before traveling to Europe and then starting his own firm with MIT classmate Thomas Tryon. Brunner can be considered the first widely successful American-born Jewish architect. His most notable contribution to synagogue design was the rejection of Moorish and Romanesque styles in favor of classicism. Brunner wrote extensively on his extensive research on ancient and contemporary Jewish architecture which led him to champion the idea that Classicism was the best style for Jewish buildings. Brunner explained his rationale for using the Classical style for synagogues in *The Brickbuilder*:

the Romaneque practically disappeared and the choice for ecclesiastical buildings now, broadly speaking, lies between the two great styles – Gothic and classical. I am unhesitatingly of the opinion that the latter is the one that is fit and proper for the synagogue in America. With the sanction of antiquity it perpetuates the best traditions of Jewish art and takes up the thread, which was broken by circumstances, of a vigorous and once healthy style.³

Brunner argues that the Classical style has historic precedent as a suitable mode for synagogues in the architecture of the Greek and Roman Empires around the holy land. Also because of its stylish popularity at the time, the modern Classical style represents both the traditional and modern aspects of the Jewish community in America. Some of the images and drawings of the Union Temple community house include the firm of Gehron, Ross, Pennell & Alley in addition to Arnold Brunner Associates. Gehron was the architect of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Their involvement is sparsely references and likely were involved in finishing the building under Arnold Brunner Associates or in overseeing the project after Brunner's death.

Brunner designed numerous notable buildings in New York and around the country including, Lewisohn Stadium at the City College of New York, Mount Sinai Hospital, the student's building at Barnard College (NR listed), the unbuilt State Department Building in Washington, D.C., the United States Post Office, Customs House and Courthouse in Cleveland, Ohio among numerous other buildings. In 1897 he designed Shearith Israel synagogue (NR listed) on Central Park West, which pioneered the use of the Classical style for Jewish structures. Brunner was considered the preferred architect for the wealthy Jewish New Yorkers commissioning institutional buildings. The modern Classical style of the Union Temple of Brooklyn was an updated

³ Arnold W. Brunner. "Synagogue Architecture." *The Brickbuilder* 16 no. 3 (March 1907): 1.

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interpretation of Jewish architecture. Its refined design and classical features represented tradition as well as modern fashion. The building is one of Brunner final designs before his death in 1925.

At the time of construction in 1926, the complex, as designed by Brunner, was extensively published in the architectural press. It was featured in 1926 in *The American Architect* and in the same year *Pencil Points* published a pastel sketch of the entrance to the community center. The newly completed community center building was photographed and published in *The Architect* in May 1927. *Architecture and Building* also published photographs of the ballroom and auditorium in 1927. *Architectural Record* published a colored rendering showing the auditorium interior and polychrome ceiling.⁴

Vincent Maragliotti (1888-1978), Murals

The elaborate decoration of the Union Temple's auditorium focuses on the remarkable concrete frescoed ceiling that was painted by Vincent Maragliotti (1888-1978). Maragliotti came to the United States in 1905 from Italy at the age of seventeen. He studied architecture at Cooper Union and spent an additional three years studying and specializing in mural painting at the National Academy of Design. He is noted for his murals at the Strand Theatre in New York (demolished) and the main ballroom areas of the Waldorf-Astoria, Sherry-Netherland, Lexington, and Park Lane (demolished) hotels. Maragliotti created *The Vision of William Penn*, a mural for the Pennsylvania State Capitol.⁵ The frescoed ceiling of the Union Temple auditorium is arranged in a perpendicular pattern of main beams, secondary beams and joists. These beams are painted with Biblical scenes, religious figures, Jewish symbols and floral and geometric patterns. The ceiling itself, between the beams, is also painted with a geometric pattern, leaving no ceiling surface undecorated. This interior frescoed ceiling in the auditorium remains intact but is in need of conservation.

Summary

The Union Temple of Brooklyn is significant for its historical place within the history of the Jewish community in Brooklyn and for its architecture. It represents the rise in status of the Jewish American and the community's embrace of modern ideals to strengthen its faith and social connections. The building is a highpoint in the American Jewish experience, where heritage and community meet modern American amenities. The building itself was designed at the end of a remarkable architectural career of preeminent Jewish-American architect Arnold W. Brunner. Its refined exterior and colorful and elaborate interiors were both highlighted by the architectural press and they survive with a high degree of integrity.

⁴ "Office sketches of two buildings by Arnold W. Brunner Associates, architects: Cadet hospital, West Point and Community House, Union Temple, Brooklyn, N.Y." *American Architect* 128 no. 2475 (July 1925): 11-12.; "Pastel Rendering of Entrance to Union Temple House, Brooklyn, N.Y." *Pencil Points* 8 (April 1927): 239.; "Assembly Hall, Union Temple House, Brooklyn, N.Y." *Architect* 8 (New York: May 1927): 207.; "Union Temple, New York." *Architecture and Building* 59 (January 1927): 5.; "The Temple House of the Union Temple, Brooklyn N.Y." *Architectural Record* 61 (April 1927).

⁵ Regina Soria. *American Artists of Italian Heritage, 1776-1945: A Biographical Dictionary*. (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson, 1993).

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Continuation Sheet

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

Kings County, New York

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National Park Service**

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

Kings County, New York

County and State

Verbal Boundary Description

The Union Temple of Brooklyn is located at 17 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY. It is located on a rectilinear parcel that faces south towards Prospect Park and is to the east of Grand Army Plaza.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to include the historic lands associated with the building's 1926 date of construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

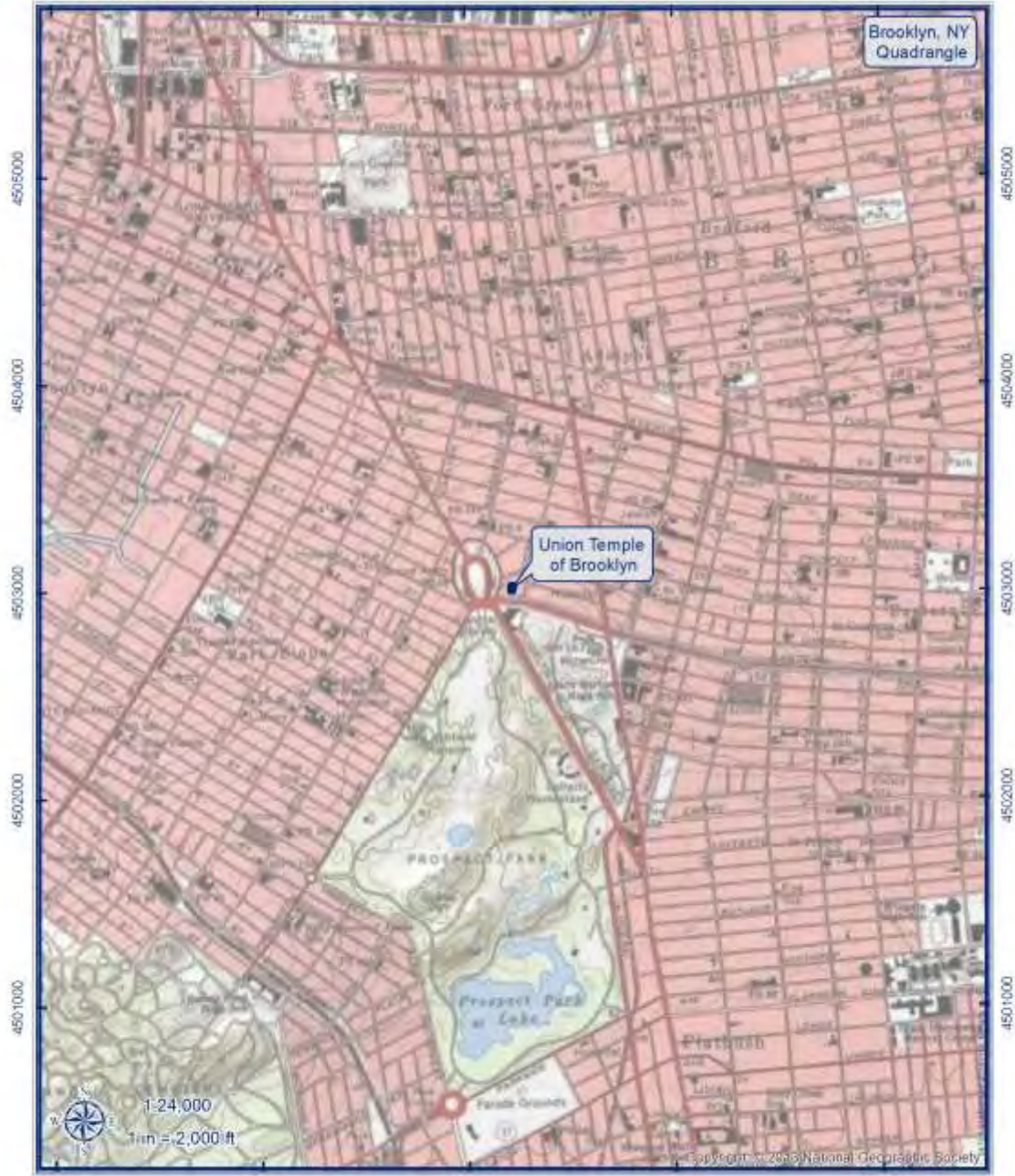
Kings County, New York

County and State

Section 10 Page 2

Union Temple of Brooklyn
Brooklyn, Kings Co., NY

17 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11238



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section 10 Page 3

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

Kings County, New York

County and State

Union Temple of Brooklyn
Brooklyn, Kings Co., NY

17 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11238



587000
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 Union Temple of Brooklyn

Tax Parcel Data
NYC OAS/SNYC
gis.nyc.gov



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

Kings County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 1

Photographs

Name of Property: Union Temple of Brooklyn

City or Vicinity: New York City

County: Kings County

State: NY

Name of Photographer: William Morache

Date of Photographs: February 2014

Location of Original Digital Files: 189 Claremont Avenue, New York, NY 10027

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0001

South façade, camera facing northeast.

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0002

South façade, lower floors, camera facing north.

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0003

South façade, lower floors, balcony.

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0004

Interior, vestibule

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0005

Interior, first floor auditorium

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0006

Interior, first floor auditorium, ceiling detail

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0007

Interior, first floor auditorium, bimah

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0008

Interior, first floor auditorium

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0009

Interior, first floor auditorium, stained glass

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0010

Interior, seventh floor pool, camera facing northwest.

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0011

Interior, third floor ballroom, camera facing north.

NY_Kings County_Union Temple of Brooklyn_0012

Interior, third floor ballroom, pendant

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Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

Kings County, New York

County and State



Community house & unconstructed temple sketch.



1929 Rendering, courtesy of the Brooklyn Public Library

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Union Temple of Brooklyn
Name of Property
Kings County, New York
County and State



Auditorium – Architectural Record, 1927



Auditorium – Architectural Record, 1927

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section 11 Page 4

Union Temple of Brooklyn

Name of Property

Kings County, New York

County and State



Bimah – Date unknown - courtesy of the Brooklyn Public Library



UNION TEMPLE of BROOKLYN
A Reform Jewish Congregation Estab. 1848

NO STANDING
Anytime

FREE
FREE
FREE
FREE
FREE
FREE



1925 - 5686

Union Temple of Brooklyn
A Reform Jewish Congregation
RABBI: DR. LINDA HENRY GOODMAN
Shabbat & Holiday Services • Adult Education
Preschool • Religious School • Youth Group
Fun-Filled Programs for Children
718-638-7600
uniontemple@uniontemple.org
TEMPLE ENTRANCE

EASTERN ATHLETIC EASTERN ATHLETIC

UNION TEMPLE OF BROOKLYN
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Preschool • Religious School • Youth Group
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RELIGION



PLEASE
DO NOT
LEAVE
STROLLERS
IN THIS
AREA

PLEASE
PARK
YOUR
STROLLERS
HERE
▼







תורת יחודה תמימה משינת נפש



הל לפני מי צתה עמו









9 FEET DEEP

AED

DEFIBRILLATOR

No Diving Allowed

9 Feet Deep

No Diving Allowed





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Union Temple of Brooklyn
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Kings

DATE RECEIVED: 4/03/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/24/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/11/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/19/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000232

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 5.18.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



**New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor
Rose Harvey
Commissioner

31 March 2015

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following eight nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Canajoharie Historic District, Montgomery County
Waccabuc Historic District, Westchester County
Skinny House, Westchester County
Crown Point Green Historic District
Barkin House, Nassau County
Murphy Grist Mill, Dutchess County
Williamsbridge Oval Park, Bronx County
Union Temple of Brooklyn, Kings County

I wish to call your attention to the map for the Waccabuc Historic District. On the tax map, you can see that a tiny sliver of land has been excluded that is connected to a much larger non-historic parcel west of the district (the intent was to exclude the larger parcel). However, the sliver is so small that on the USGS and ortho maps it cannot be seen. It just looks like an unnecessary solid line. We were not sure how else to indicate this. Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office