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USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form, Multiple Property Listing
Historic Synagogues of Connecticut

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Bikur Cholim Synagogue

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Other Name/Site Number: Rodeph Sholom, First Christian Church (Christ's Disciples), South
Congregational Church Mission, Metamorphosis

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 1545 Iranistan Avenue Not for publication: NA

City/Town: Bridgeport Vicinity: NA

State: CT County: Fairfield Code: 001 Zip Code: 06505

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Category of Property

Private: x
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Building(s): x
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing
 1

 1

Noncontributing
 buildings
 sites
 structures
 objects
 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: NA

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Historic Synagogues of Connecticut

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

John W. Shanahan

10/12/95

Signature of Certifying Official Date
John W. Shanahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

Edson H. Beal

- Entered in the National Register
- Determined eligible for the National Register
- Determined not eligible for the National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain):

Entered in the National Register

11-27-95

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Bob

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: religious structure Sub: church, synagogue
Current: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: specialty store

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: LATE VICTORIAN
Shingle Style
Materials: Foundation: STONE
Walls: WOOD/shingle
Roof: ASPHALT
Other: _____

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Exterior

Bikur Cholim Synagogue is a one-story Shingle-style building located close to the street on the northwest corner of Iranistan and Maplewood avenues in Bridgeport. (Photograph 40) Houses in the densely built-up surrounding neighborhood are comparable in age and massing but in a variety of styles.

Running parallel with Iranistan Avenue, the synagogue is divided into two sections. The gable-roofed sanctuary, to the northwest, is the larger and higher mass. In front of the sanctuary, near the corner of Maplewood Avenue, are the transepts and polygonal apse. The end of the transept facing Iranistan Avenue is an open entrance porch supported by paired columns on shingled pedestals. The frieze above is embellished with triglyph-like motifs, except at the front where it is plain under a semi-elliptical space cut out of the gable end. All roofs flare at the eaves. The rectangular windows are filled with stained glass. Their sills extend to form a stringcourse. On the Iranistan Avenue side elevation there are a small central gable in the sanctuary roof and an added gabled brick entryway to the basement. The northwest end wall of the building is brick.

The steeple (no longer in place, see photo copy) was a square louvered feature at the end of the main gable, above the apse, with a tall bell-shaped roof. Rafter ends appeared under the eaves, adding an Arts-and-Crafts component to the Colonial Revival and Shingle styles already noted. In 1923 the steeple was surmounted by a Magen David.

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally:___ Statewide:___ Locally: x

Applicable National Register Criteria: A___ B___ C x D___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A x B___ C___ D___ E___ F___ G___

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>	<u>ca.1894 1945</u>	<u>ca.1894</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: NA

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Architectural Significance

Bikum Cholim Synagogue is significant architecturally because it is an ecclesiastical example of the Shingle style. The Shingle style was more commonly used in residential buildings, especially along the seashore, making its application in an urban house of worship somewhat unusual.

Historical Background

Bikur Cholim Synagogue is historically significant because of its association with a series of ecclesiastical owners, both Christian and Jewish congregations. While the early history is not clear, it appears that the edifice was constructed, ca.1894, as the Iranistan Avenue mission of the South Congregational Church. After serving this purpose to 1907, the church was acquired briefly by the First Christian Church (Christ's Disciples), a congregation formed in 1907 and disbanded in 1914. Congregation Rodeph

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreege of Property: less than one

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting Zone Northing Easting

A	<u>18</u>	<u>4560140</u>	<u>650430</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____
E	_____	_____	_____	F	_____	_____

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is described in the Bridgeport Land Records at volume 2515, page 36.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property encompasses land that has gone with the building since it was erected.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: David F. Ransom, Consultant, reviewed by John F.A. Herzan, National Register Coordinator

Org.: Connecticut Historical Commission

Date: September 21, 1994

Street/#: 59 South Prospect Street

City/Town: Hartford

State: CT

ZIP: 06106

Telephone: 203 566-3005

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

Interior

The interior space is mostly open. It is was used for several years as a specialty shop, but now is vacant. Ceilings are pressed tin, in a more elaborate pattern in the apse than in the auditorium. The stained-glass windows are shades of yellow and green in the auditorium, lavender in the apse, in non-representational designs. A recessed space under a high cornice with dentil course may be the former location of the ark. (Photograph 41) All religious iconography has been removed from the building. The basement, formerly used as a school, is now the premises for a business separate from the shop.

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

Sholom, Conservative, formed in 1909, occupied the premises from about 1923 to 1949, when it moved to 2385 Park Avenue (see separate registration form). The Orthodox Congregation Bikur Cholim became the next and long-time owner, remaining until 1989, when the building was converted to a shop.

Registration Requirements

Bikum Cholim Synagogue qualifies under Criterion C for inclusion in this multiple property listing as a building constructed to be a church or for other purpose and adapted to become a synagogue by meeting the following requirements:

- Functioned before 1945 as a Jewish house of worship
- Located in an urban neighborhood
- Exhibits integrity of design and workmanship representative of contemporary ecclesiastical architectural styles
- Constructed prior to 1945

Bikur Cholim Synagogue, Bridgeport, CT

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ethel M. Freedman, Archivist, Greater Bridgeport Jewish Historical Society, letter, August 9, 1991.

Edward Mohylowski, Historical and Architectural Resource Survey of Western Bridgeport, Statewide Historic Resource Inventory, Hartford: Connecticut Historical Commission, 1986, Inventory Form #190.

David F. Ransom, "1843*1943 - One Hundred Years of Jewish Congregations in Connecticut: An Architectural Survey - 5603*5703," Connecticut Jewish History, 2(Fall 1991)1.

Rodeph Sholom, Bridgeport, CT, 50th Anniversary, 1909-1959.

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: Specify Repository: _____

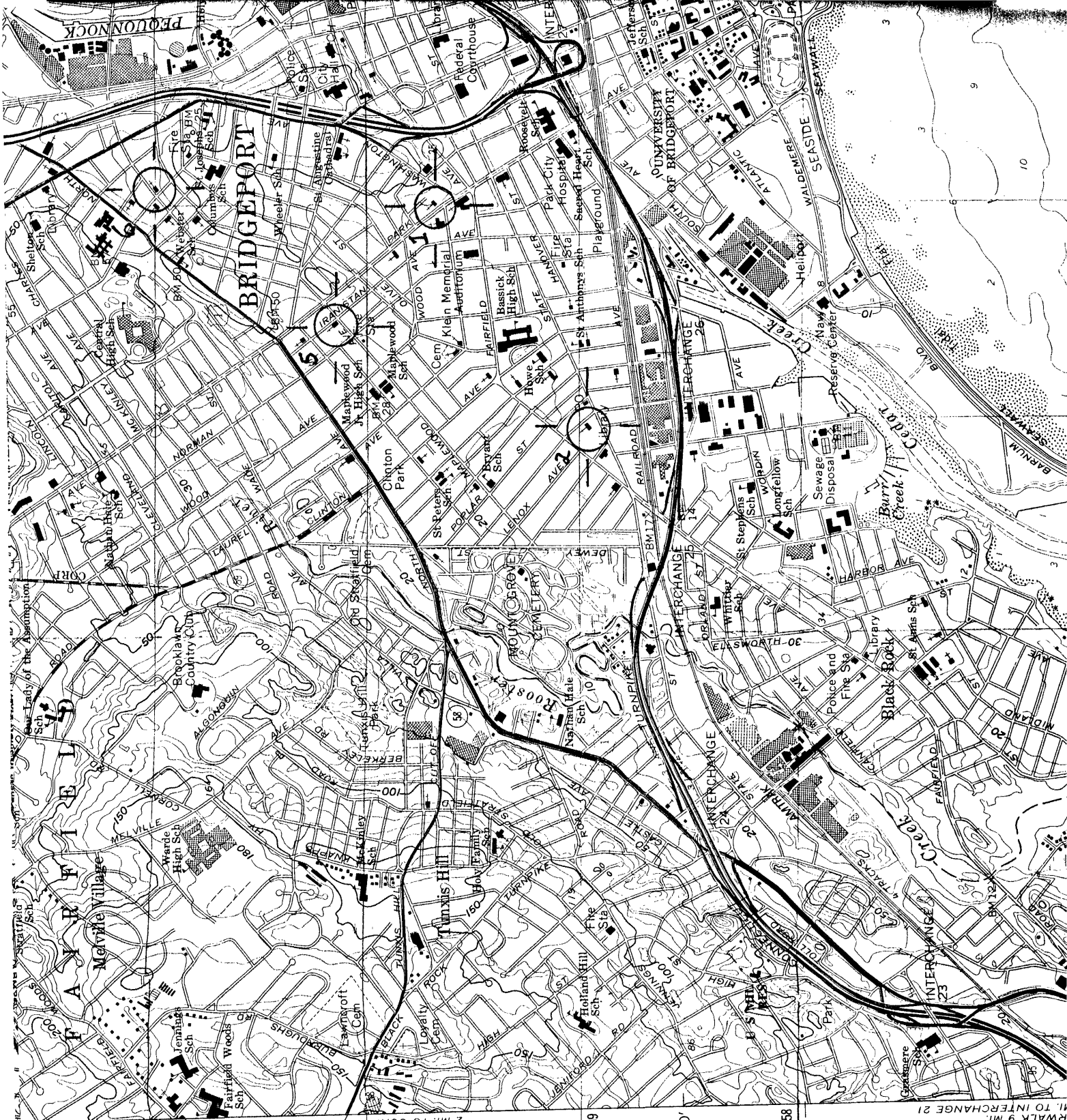
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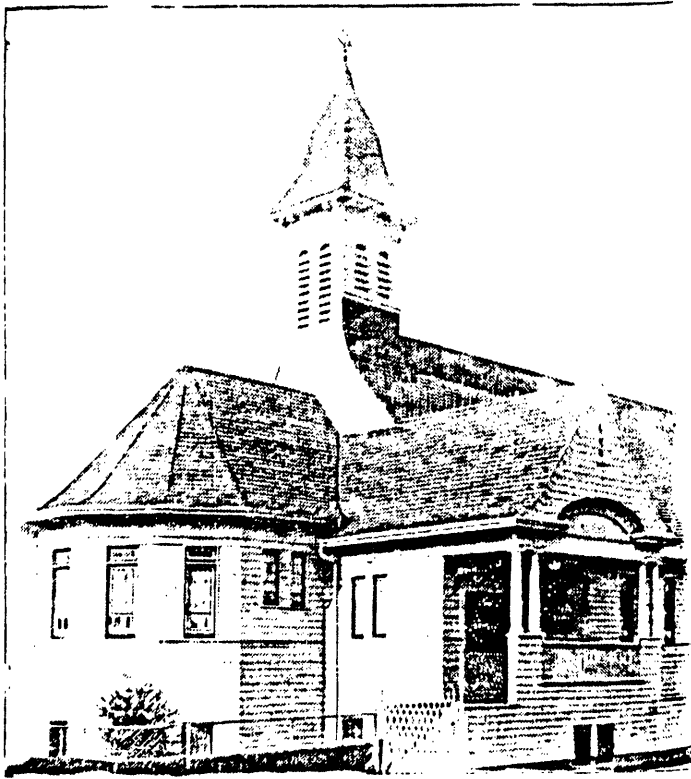
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18/4561000/651080

BRIDGEPORT, CT

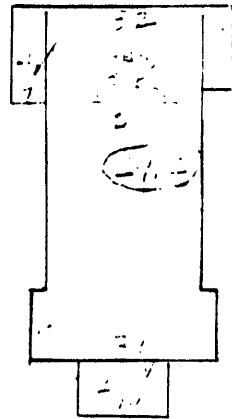
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B'NAI ISRAEL
18 651000 4559670

2
Achevaith Achim
18 649960 4558950



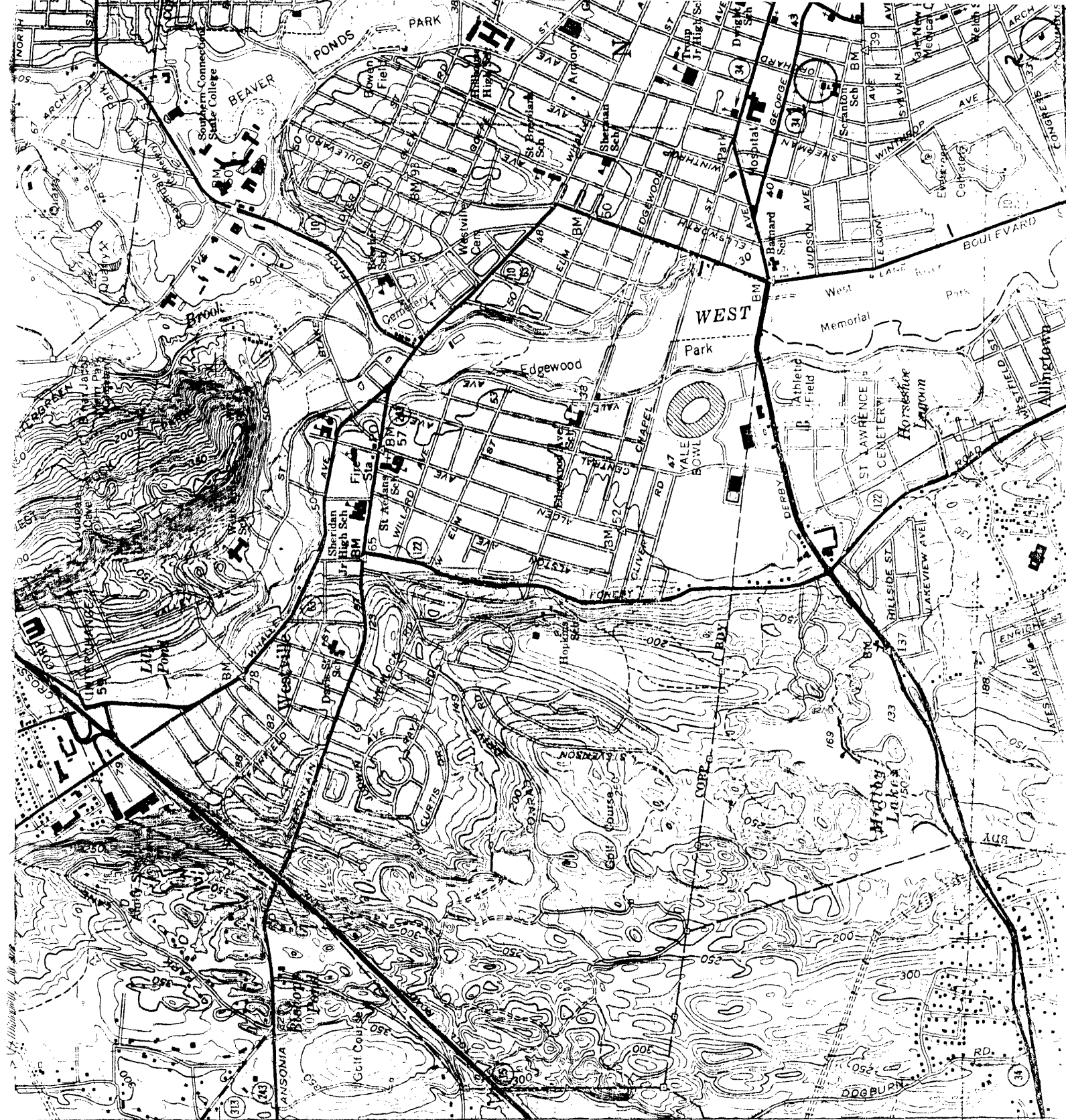


Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 1923, at Iranistan and Maplewood Avenues.



Source: "Rodeph Shalom, Bridgeport, CT
50th Anniversary, 1909-1959"

Bikur Cholim Synagogue
Bridgeport, CT



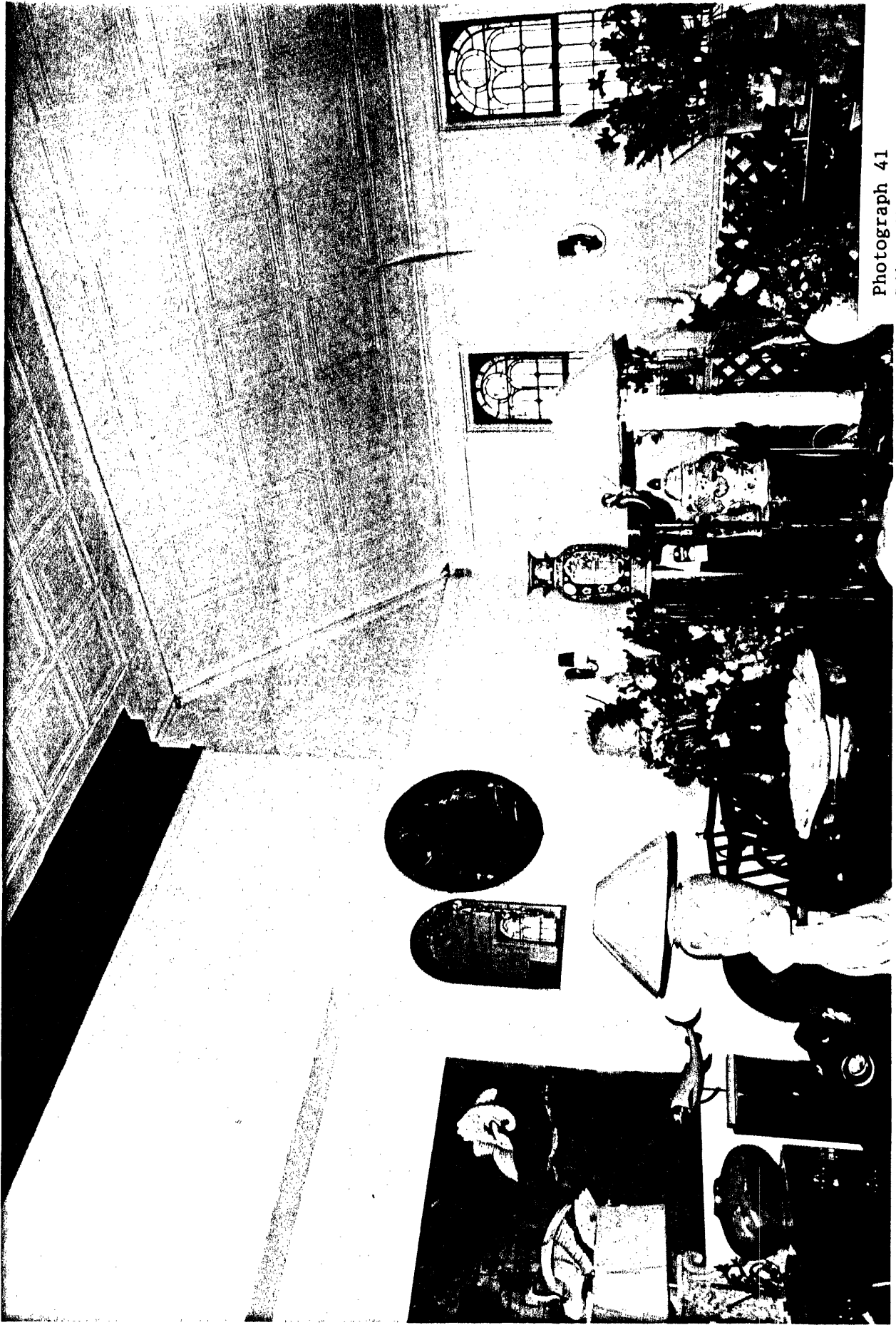
4578 20' BRIDGEPORT 14 MI (ANSONIA) 6366 1 SE 1.9 MI. TO MILBURN CROSS PARKWAY INTERCHANGE 57 & 59 (CONN. 30) 2 MI.

1 NEW HAVEN, CT
 BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE
 18/4574740/672200

2 ANAVAS SHOLEM SYNAGOGUE
 18/4573710/672450



Photograph 40
Bikur Cholim Synagogue
Bridgeport, CT
View northwest



Photograph 41
Bikur Cholim Synagogue
Bridgeport, CT
Interior