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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

**Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service**

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 West Side Unitarian Church - Congregation Ramath Orah

other names/site number West Side Meeting House

2. Location

street & number 550 West 110th Street [] not for publication

city or town New York [] vicinity

state New York code NY county New York code 061 zip code 10025

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.)

Rush D. Peurport DSHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/14/15
Date

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

[Signature]
Edson H. Ball
9.17.15

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/ church/ synagogue

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/ church/ synagogue

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th & EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVAL/

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Rubble Stone & Mortar

walls Brick

roof Rolled Asphalt

other Granite Base, Limestone

Narrative Description

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

Name of Property

County and State

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)

Architecture _____

Social History _____

Ethnic Heritage: Jewish _____

Period of Significance:

1921- 1965 _____

Significant Dates:

1921 – 1922, 1942 _____

Significant Person:

Dr. Robert Serebrenik _____

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A _____

Architect/Builder:

Hoppin & Koen _____

A.D.R. Sullivant _____

West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .11 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 | 587212 | 4517476
Zone Easting Northing

3 18 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

2 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 By

name/title Michael Anthony Middleton (edited Daniel McEneny – NYSHPO)

organization Columbia University date 4-14-15

street & number 417 Riverside Drive , Apt 1B telephone 973-356-5961

city or town New York state NY zip code 10025

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

A **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 Congregation Ramath Orah

street & number 550 West 110th Street telephone _____

city or town New York state NY zip code 10025

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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West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah

Section 7 Page 1

Name of Property

New York County, New York

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West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah: Description

Constructed in 1921 and 1922, Congregation Ramath Orah, formerly known as the West Side Congregational Church, is located at 550 West 110th Street on the south side of the street between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue in New York County, New York. The building is located within a residential area of the Morningside Heights section of New York City, with mainly apartment buildings running along the streets and stores, restaurants, apartment buildings, religious buildings, and academic institutions located along both Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue. At three and half stories, synagogue occupies one hundred percent of its 75' x 70'-11" lot and the building itself retains a high degree of architectural integrity. The building is a rectilinear classically inspired composition divided between a single-story base and a two-story top, designed in the Colonial Revival style. The base of the building is composed of rusticated limestone, while the upper two levels are executed in an English-bond brick pattern of alternating coursings of headers and stretchers accented with limestone classicizing elements.

The building is an atypical example of the Colonial Revival style as it does not conform to strict rational symmetry, though the total composition is balanced. This is due to the plan for the building not being fully realized. As originally designed, the building was more than twice the size, with a central tower bay flanked by two wings. This was to contain the sanctuary and the community house. The sanctuary wing, which is the building seen today, was constructed; however, the congregation abandoned the larger plan due to dwindling finances.

The overall rhythm of the building adheres to a classical "A-B-A" configuration defined by a one-bay, three-bay, one-bay, layout with the main entry located within the central bay of the building on the ground level. Aesthetically, the building's rhythm is further defined by a central projecting three-bay pavilion flanked on both sides by a single bay. Horizontally, this composition is divided into four sections, the completely rusticated base level with its arched doorways at each bay, followed by the second level with five rectilinear windows with the two at either end of the building recessed within blind brick arches, followed by the third level with three smaller central rectilinear windows flanked to the right by an identical window and to the left by the congregation's name plaque, all topped by the parapet level with a simple center which is flanked to the right by a small rectilinear brick in-filled window and a semi-circular brick in-filled window to the left.

The central projecting pavilion is defined by a Greek temple-front motif composed of four Corinthian limestone pilasters, which support an entablature decorated with rosettes and fluting as well as a pediment with dentil detailing and a simple stone frieze, placed upon the single-story rusticated base with three arched doorways, one in each bay. The primary entrance to the synagogue is located within the central bay of this projecting pavilion atop three granite steps and is recessed within an archway of the limestone base. The main entry has been further distinguished through the later additions of a sign in Hebraic characters displaying the name of the congregation atop the archway and through the addition of a blue canvas canopy with white lettering extending from this doorway to the curb of West 110th Street. Each of the five original arched doorways consists of two, three-paneled wooden doors with a simple fanlight, though currently access to the building is only gained through the central doorway described above. Historically, the three wooden arched

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doorways of the central pavilion below the Greek temple-front would have served as the means of entrance into the main sanctuary while the doors located at the end bays of the building would have led directly into corner staircases allowing access to the second floor balconies. The lower base of the building into which these doorways are set is composed of a two-foot granite front water-table beneath the rusticated limestone base. A decorative string course runs at the level of the spring-line of the entrance arches.

The second, third, and parapet levels of the building are composed mainly of red-brick and have applied limestone classicizing elements. At the base of the second story is a flat limestone band with a modest projecting cornice, which, in the central pavilion, takes on the form of a classical pedestal under the four Corinthian pilasters. Each of the five windows of the second story is encased within a simple limestone surround and placed above a decorative balustrade set within the limestone band. The windows in the central three bays within the Greek temple-front on the second level are metal double-hung, one-over-one, decorative stained-glass windows that replaced the original metal double-hung, twelve-over-twelve transparent glass windows, sometime in the 1940s or early 1950s. Between the second and third floor windows on the central pavilion are un-ornamented rectilinear limestone panels. The third level of the building's façade continues in a similar rhythm to that of the second level with the exception of the limestone panel located at the easternmost bay. Again there are three central windows located within the central pavilion, though these windows are shorter than those found below. These openings are filled with metal double-hung, eight-over-eight stained-glass windows also installed probably sometime in the 1940s or 1950s. Each of these windows has a decorative limestone sill and a decorative brick flat-arch header, using brick for the voussoirs and limestone for the keystone, which extends from the top of the window frame to the underside of the decorative limestone entablature above.

It is within the two single bays that flank this central projecting pavilion that the unusual nature of the design occurs breaking the symmetry in Neoclassical design. On the second floor, the single windows to either side of the Greek temple-front have similar limestone treatments to those previously described, though these openings have original metal double-hung, twelve-over-twelve, transparent glass windows set within the center of a blind brick arch cut into the façade approximately four inches or the width of a single standard brick on the second level. Meanwhile, on the third level, the window of the westernmost bay, an original metal double-hung, eight-over-eight, transparent glass window, is not mirrored on the easternmost bay but instead is complemented by a rectilinear limestone panel, which originally displayed the name of the West Side Meeting House and now has a new inset panel, reading "Synagogue Ramath Orah Founded 1942" in English and the corresponding year of the Hebrew calendar in Hebraic characters. The crowning element of the building's façade, a decorative eight-foot parapet on which the pediment of the Greek temple-front is located, also adds to the asymmetry of the façade. The parapet runs the entire length of the façade and has a short limestone base which extends from the limestone entablature below; the parapet is capped by an un-ornamented limestone cornice. The central section, which includes the pediment, is projected forward approximately eight inches or the width of two bricks and is accented at either end with a stepped brick pilaster, which recedes back into the plane of the main façade. The limestone pediment itself is enframed by a dentil molding. Lastly, the eight-foot decorative parapet has two blind window openings at either end flanking the central pediment. The westernmost bay has a small rectilinear opening with a simple limestone sill, while the easternmost bay has a semi-circular recessed blind opening in

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the shape of a Neoclassical Diocletian window with a simple limestone sill and a brick surround with a limestone keystone.

The most significant interior space is the main sanctuary, which still retains its original Neoclassical detailing. The sanctuary is a double-height space with four balconies, one at each end of the main central space, three of which, those on the north, east, and west sides, are reached by the two staircases off of the main entry vestibule, while the balcony to the south of the sanctuary, which houses the keyboard for the organ, can only be accessed from a staircase behind the altar in a service area of the synagogue. The sanctuary is accessed from three sets of double wooden doors which run parallel with the three central exterior arched doorways of the building's façade. The overall spatial composition of the sanctuary is essentially a simplified "Greek Cross" with four thick chamfered piers at each corner of the central square of the cross and from which the white, plaster-vaulted ceiling springs to a height of forty-two feet. The main seating area of the sanctuary is on the lower level with two rows of ten pews in the center and two rows of five pews each on the east and west arms of the space. The second through fourth rows have been shortened in length to allow for the placement of the central *Bimah*, or the platform from which the Torah is read during services. The balcony levels on both the east and west sides have an additional eleven pews, arranged in two groupings of four and one group of three pews while the shallower north balcony consists of two groups of two long pews each. Each arm of the cross is created through a barrel vault extrusion from the central square, giving the sanctuary the overall dimensions of seventy-five feet from north to south, by sixty-three feet from east to west. The overall space is rather restrained in its ornamentation, having plain white plaster walls on the north, west, and east sides of the sanctuary. The only ornamentation on these sides is a wooden panel serving as the handrail for the balconies. The one unifying decorative element of the space is a dentil molding that wraps around the entire space.

The south side of the space has a considerable amount of detail, as this is the area that originally housed the altar of the church and now houses the ark for the Torah scrolls and a pulpit. Above the ark the upper balcony was where the choir originally sang and the organ (no longer functioning, as Orthodox Judaism does not require the use of organs) would have been played. The south wall, like the building's façade, is also segmented into a classical "A-B-A" rhythm with the "A" bays projecting forward and the "B" bay recessed to the rear exterior wall. Again, the first level of this double height composition serves as a classical base from which the wooden elliptical-shaped altar projects from the central "B" bay. The "A" bays at either side of the altar are adorned with a central three paneled door around which are traditional pedimented surrounds. Above this base level is a three-foot pedestal, which is ornamented with a classical swag motif over the doorways below and a decorative balustrade over the altar area. This balustrade is broken into five even sections containing nine balusters, each separated by flat unadorned vertical elements; the central section has a Ten Commandments tablet. Above the classical swag motifs on each side of this balustrade is an opening, with a projecting sill and end brackets below, from which the pipes for the organ project from within the wall. An additional set of seventeen pipes for the organ is arranged on the south wall of both the east and west balconies. The eastern and western projecting walls of the south balcony are decorated with Tuscan pilasters at their corners and are constructed of a wooden lattice executed in a Roman crossed-screen motif. Above each Tuscan pilaster is a Neoclassical urn, each set atop a short base. Finally, the rear wall has three metal round-arched stained-glass windows, displaying Jewish symbols and the names of patrons. Atop the central arched window

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and roughly six inches above the decorative dentil cornice molding is a recessed, circular, metal, double hung, ten-over-ten, colored-glass window.

Secondary spaces include the sanctuary's vestibule and a basement banquet hall and classroom. The basement and classroom retain no historic fabric as the result of a 1992 renovation. The narrow vestibule runs the length of the building. The ceiling is gently vaulted, with cutouts corresponding to the transoms above the three entries. These allow light to fill the space. The flooring is contemporary tile. Access to the basement and balconies is at each end of the vestibule. Three sets of doors into the sanctuary date to the synagogue conversion. They lack paneling and contain portholes similar to those of the late Art Moderne style.

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West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah

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The West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramth Orah, is significant under National Register criterion A in the area of social history for its association with two religious organizations historically located in the Manhattan neighborhood of Morningside Heights: the Unity Congregational Society of the City of New York, a branch of Unitarianism, and the Congregation Ramath Orah, a Modern Orthodox Jewish congregation. The building was constructed in 1921/1922 as the West Side Unitarian Church (or West Side Meeting House) for the Unity Congressional Society. This was the third site of worship for the society, which was founded in 1886 after a schism with the Unity Chapel Congregation. Due to dwindling membership, the West Side Unitarian Church merged with another Unitarian church in 1932. Largely due to the Great Depression, the building remained for sale until 1942, when it was purchase by Congregation Ramath Orah, whose membership was largely composed of recent immigrants who fled Luxembourg to New York City during World War II. The two religious organization share a history associated with the patterns of immigration in New York and the establishment of the city's Upper West Side houses of worship.

Under National Register criterion B, the building is significant in the area of Jewish ethnic heritage for its association with Dr. Robert Serebrenik, the congregation's rabbi from 1942 until his death in 1965. The noted Vienna-born scholar rose to prominence following his appointment as the Grand Rabbi of Luxemburg in 1929. His position accorded him some influence with the Nazis, and after the outbreak of WWII and the subsequent Nazi invasion of Luxembourg in 1940, Serebrenik was able to use that influence to help the county's Jewish population escape Nazi persecution. Throughout 1940 and 1941, Serebrenik and other members of the Jewish Consistoire helped to negotiate the legal transportation of Jews to Portugal and Spain, as well as assist in the furtive escapes of other Jews across the border into Vichy France and Belgium. After enduring a severe physical beating from the Nazis and witnessing the destruction of Luxembourg city's Grand Synagogue, he secured an exit through Portugal and then to New York City. It is estimated that of the one thousand Jews that remained in Luxembourg at the time of the occupation, two hundred and fifty escaped due to Serebrenik's position of influence. Upon arrival in New York, Serebrenik established Congregation Ramth Orah, which consisted largely of the Luxembourg natives with whom he had escaped. He remained with this congregation until his death. During his role as rabbi at the synagogue, he rose to international prominence, serving on the World Jewish Congress from 1945 to 1960 and testifying at the trail of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961. Serebrenik's congregation remains at the building today. The synagogue is the resource that is most closely associated with his life in America, articulating his role and influence in the context of Jewish-American history.

In addition, the West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramth Orah Synagogue is significant under criterion C in the area of architecture as a building expressing the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, popular in the United States in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The building is additionally significant in this area as being one of the last completed commissions by the acclaimed New York City based architectural firm of Hoppin and Koen. The firm's most notable works include the Mount, the country estate of writer Edith Wharton in Lenox Massachusetts, and the 1915 additions and remodeling of Hyde Park under Sara Delano Roosevelt. The nominated resource is only one of two ecclesiastic buildings designed by the firm. A period of significance has been established from the 1921 construction date to 1965, the date of Rabbi Serebrenik's death.

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Unity Congregational Society

Built in 1921/1922, as the West Side Unitarian Church, the building was the third home of the Unity Congregational Society of the City of New York, which was founded in 1886 after a schism with the Unity Chapel Congregation.¹ The formative Unity Chapel Congregation was established nineteen years previously, in 1867, by Thomas Wilson, who placed advertisements in several New York City newspapers with the intent of assembling a small liberal-minded Unitarian congregation. Wilson was successful and for the next few years his Harlem based congregation met and worshiped out of his drawing room until funds were procured for the construction of a small chapel in 1869.² Their new edifice, the Unity Chapel (now demolished), was never assigned a resident pastor as Wilson and some of the congregation opted for the less expensive alternative of having visiting ministers officiate for short periods of time.³ By 1885, a portion of the congregation believed it was time to hire a permanent minister. This notion was not supported by the church leaders, resulting in the secession of twenty-nine members the following year. Subsequently, the Unity Congregational Society was formed.

It took the newly formed Unity Congregation Society another year of interviewing possible candidates before it decided to name Merle St. Croix Wright as its official minister on December 27, 1887. Wright, an erudite scholar, graduated at the top of his class at Harvard College in 1881 before entering the Harvard Divinity School for his post-graduate studies, graduating in 1886. At the time, Wright was considered among the most prominent and progressive minds of the Unitarian Church, which was evident by the numerous job offers presented to him throughout his career from Unitarian congregations much larger and more prominent than the Unity Congregational Society.⁴ For the next two years, the congregation, under Wright, alternated between the homes of the original twenty-nine members and the shared use of the Unity Chapel before securing a lot on the northwest corner of 121st Street and Lenox Avenue for its permanent house of worship. Architect Charles B. Atwood, famed for his later work on the World Columbian Exposition of 1893, was hired to design a small but beautiful church, executed in an eclectic mix of Romanesque and Gothic Revival styles, which was constructed between 1889 and 1891 (NR listed in the Mt. Morris Park Historic District). Being a great proponent of social outreach and education, Wright had the church designed with an auditorium capable of seating five hundred, a music parlor suite, large classrooms for Sunday school instruction, a conference room, and a communal kitchen, all in order to assist the community members in their cultural, intellectual and spiritual growth.⁵ Renamed the Lenox Avenue Congregation upon moving into this church, the congregation retained Wright as its pastor for the next twenty-eight years; he delivered his last sermon on November 9, 1919 before officially retiring.

The Harlem site of the congregation changed dramatically in the ensuing years. The demographics of the neighborhood shifted as an increasing numbers of African Americans and Jews began to settle in the area. Many of the parishioners left for other New York City neighborhoods or for the suburbs, leaving no one to fill

¹ "New Unitarian Society," *New York Times*, March 30, 1886, 2.

² "Church Dedication at Harlem," *New York Times*, November 5, 1869, 4.

³ Jesse Voigt, "Tribute to Dr. Wright's Brilliant Ministry: For a Generation He Nurtured the Spiritual Life of His People by Great Preaching and Good Works," *The Christian Register*, 99 No. 1, January 1, 1920, 457.

⁴ "Installing a Pastor, Unity Congregational Society's New Head," *New York Times*, December 28th 1887, 3.

⁵ Voigt, "Tribute to Dr. Wright," 457.

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their spots in the church or in the Sunday school. Under its new pastor, Dr. Rev. Charles Francis Potter, a lack of financial resources necessitated that the Lenox Avenue Congregation sell the church for \$70,000 to the Jewish congregation Chebra Ukadisha B'nai Israel Mikalwarie, a congregation of largely poor Orthodox immigrants from Eastern Europe, at the end of 1919.⁶ Potter, a prolific religious author, sought to revive the Unitarian congregation, asking what remained of the dwindling Unitarians in Harlem to follow him to the Upper West Side, where he believed their church would be able to attract new followers, particularly among liberal-minded students and professors. From the sale of their church until 1921, the former Lenox Avenue congregation met in Earl Hall at Columbia University before their pastor was able to raise \$125,000 for the purchase of five consecutive lots on West 110th Street on March 29, 1921.⁷ Potter, wishing to continue the charitable legacy of his predecessor through social outreach, envisioned not just a church with spaces for social amenities, but a single large “meeting house,” akin to those of the colonial period, where the congregation could convene to partake in recreation, education, and spiritual worship. Potter would entrust the design for his vision of the new meeting house to the prominent New York City architectural firm of Hoppin and Koen, believing that the realized design would become the third and final home for the former Lenox Avenue Congregation.

West Side Unitarian Church (West Side Meeting House)

The original proposed design for the West Side Unitarian Church by Hoppin and Koen was commensurate with the ambition that was desired and expressed by Dr. Rev. Potter for the new home of what was to become the West Side Congregation. Planned at a cost of \$400,000, the meeting house was to occupy a 125-foot-wide parcel of land on West 110th Street, with the initial design segmented into two seventy-five-foot wide portions, the western portion to be the church building and the eastern portion to be the parish house. The sections were virtually identical, featuring Greek temple-fronts composed of Corinthian pilasters. The choice to render both in an identical manner suggests the attitude of the congregation that both spiritual and cultural advancement were of equal standing. The composition was unified through the use of a dignified Colonial Revival façade and by a central three-tiered cupola tower, which helped to anchor the rectilinear massing below and accent the programmatic divisions within. Hoppin and Koen’s design was lauded in *The Christian Register*, a Unitarian publication, which described the programmatic divisions of the two portions, indicating the wide range of uses and programs that Potter sought to provide for his congregation:

The church auditorium will be on the street level, and with the galleries will seat six hundred people, all of whom will have an unimpeded view of the chancel. The seating capacity can be increased to one thousand by opening doors to another hall on the first floor of the parish house. Below the church auditorium there will be a large hall with adequate facilities for the social life of the church.

The parish-house section will contain complete equipment for the church school, with a large assembly-room and separate class-rooms. There will be a chapter-room for the Laymen’s League,

⁶ The New York City Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, “West Side Unitarian Church.”
<http://www.nycago.org/Organs/NYC/html/WestSideUnitarian.html>.

⁷ Frtiz Nathan, *Appraisal Report of the Church of the Unity Congregation Society of New York City 550 West 110th Street New York, NY, for the Congregation Ramath Orah* (New York City: 19 East 53rd Street, 1944) 3.

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the Women's Alliance, and the Unity Club. A complete gymnasium including bowling alleys is planned. Modern offices for the minister and assistants are to be located on the first floor, accessible from both the church and the parish-house⁸

The monumental meeting house planned by Potter never came to total fruition, as presumably financial difficulties forced the congregation to only construct the church portion of the design. It is apparent that the meeting house was always intended to be constructed in two phases, since in 1921 the congregation was small and could not raise the \$400,000 in capital the total project would require.⁹ The cornerstone for the West Side Meeting House was laid on October 28, 1921 by the widow of Thomas Wilson, chosen because she was instrumental in assisting her husband in founding and organizing the Unity Congregational Society of the City of New York some forty years earlier and as the oldest living member of the congregation.¹⁰ The first phase of the West Side Unitarian Church initiated by Mrs. Wilson was constructed at an estimated cost of \$125,000 and was completed July 26, 1922. It included only the western seventy-five feet of the design, the church portion, while the parish-house and the cupola were to be completed at a later time.¹¹

The first sermon was given by Potter on June 11, 1922, a month before the completion of the church, during which he preached on "religion and the modern church," an appropriate topic since the West Side Congregation's new church was exemplary for both his congregants and Unitarians across the nation. Potter remained the pastor for the West Side Congregational Church for the next three years, resigning his position in 1925 in order to go on a two-year sabbatical. Potter began to lose interest in preaching starting in 1923, when he participated in a series of radio debates held at Carnegie Hall with the Reverend John Roach Straton of the Calvary Baptist Church in Manhattan; these were later published in a four part book series that brought both men to national attention.¹² After these debates Potter began to feel his service at the West Side Congregation Church was too limited, and his desire to have a national impact led to his decision to resign two years later.

With the resignation of Potter, the West Side Unitarian Church lost its champion and the congregation had to come to terms with its poor financial state. In 1926, the dream of a larger West Side Meeting House was extinguished by the sale of congregation's two remaining vacant lots to a real estate developer for the price of \$65,000. It was hoped that the sale of these two lots would provide a nest egg and additional funds to help support the small congregation for several years to come, which was the case until 1931.¹³ On September 25, 1931, with this nest egg rapidly drying up and with the onset of the Great Depression, the West Side Congregational Church's board of trustees voted overwhelmingly in favor of merging with the larger Community Church, located at Park Avenue and Thirty-Fourth Street, under Pastor John Haynes Holmes. One

⁸ "Building for Service," *Christian Register*, 101 June 16, 1921, 570-571.

⁹ "Unitarians Open New Church, West Side Meeting House to be a Civic and Religious Centre," *New York Times*, June 11, 1922, 33.

¹⁰ "86, She Lays Cornerstone: West Side Unitarian's Oldest Living Member Starts New Building," *New York Times*, October 29, 1921, 8.

¹¹ Nathan, *Appraisal Report*, 4.

¹² Conducted between 1923 and 1924 the radio debates between Potter and Straton were published in four volumes entitled *The Battle Over the Bible, Evolution versus Creation, The Virgin Birth—Fact or Fiction?* and *Was Christ Both Man and God?*

¹³ Fritz Nathan, *Appraisal Report*, 2-3.

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of the only conditions of the merger, which was to occur on January 1, 1932, was the sale of the West Side Congregational Church building, preferably by November of 1931.¹⁴ Finding a buyer for the building would take considerably longer than the two months anticipated by the congregation. It was not until 1942 that a small Jewish congregation, Ramath Orah, under the leadership of Rabbi Dr. Robert Serebrenik, purchased the property for \$80,000.¹⁵

Dr. Robert Serebrenik and the Congregation Ramath Orah

Translating to roughly “Mountain of Light” in Hebrew, Congregation Ramath Orah was named after the nation of Luxembourg, which itself translates from German to “Mountain of Light” and from where the sixty-one original members of the congregation were born. The congregation’s rabbi, Dr. Robert Serebrenik, who held a doctorate in political science from the University of Vienna (Universität Wien), was born in Vienna in 1902. In 1929, Serebrenik was appointed the Grand Rabbi of Luxembourg at the age of twenty-eight.¹⁶ Serebrenik then moved to Luxembourg City to take his post at the Grand Synagogue of Luxembourg as the head spiritual leader of roughly twenty five hundred Jews from across the tiny nation. As head rabbi, Serebrenik was also the director of the Jewish community’s *Consistoire* (Religious Council), which was charged with the tasks of collecting taxes, selling seats in the nation’s synagogues, paying the salaries of rabbis and cantors, and distributing funds to community organizations. Following the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and his anti-Semitic Nazi Party in 1933, Jewish refugees began to flee to Luxembourg, prompting Serebrenik and the Consistoire to undertake the task of distributing funds to several Jewish welfare organizations to help settle and support the often destitute émigrés. It is estimated that somewhere between one thousand and fifteen hundred Jewish refugees left Germany for Luxembourg before the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.¹⁷

The Jews of Luxembourg remained safe until the Nazi invasion of the nation on May 10, 1940. Fearing for their lives, approximately one thousand Jews fled Luxembourg that same day for either France or Belgium, before further fleeing onward to the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁸ Almost immediately, the Germans set up a provisional government under a former Luxembourgian minister, Albert Wherer, who called for no anti-Jewish decrees. The plight of Luxembourg’s remaining Jews was to change in August 1940, when a new Nazi-appointed civilian government (Gau) was established under Gustav Simon, who advocated the total annexation of Luxembourg into the Third Reich and the full implementation of its racial laws and policies.¹⁹ Simon ordered that all civil jobs held by Jews were to be turned turn over to suitable Aryan replacements, which included the post of grand rabbi. As no Aryan was a suitable replacement for the position, Serebrenik was allowed to retain his post and even collected a salary from the Nazi Government.²⁰ Shortly afterwards, Simon established a

¹⁴ “Community Church Agrees on Merger, Holmes Congregation Votes to Absorb West Side Unitarian, Long Under Financial Stress,” *New York Times*, October 24, 1931, 13.

¹⁵ Fritz Nathan, *Appraisal Report*, 8-9.

¹⁶ Ari Goldman, *Living a Year of Kaddish: A Memoir* (New York City: Schocken, Reprint May 9, 2006) 41.

¹⁷ Ruth Zariz, and Hannah Lasch, *The Jews of Luxembourg during the Second World War*, *Holocaust Genocide Studies*, 1993: 7, 51-52.

¹⁸ Victor, “Luxembourg Heritage,” Congregation Ramath Orah. <http://www.ramathorah.org/our-history.html>

¹⁹ Zaziz and Lasch, “The Jews of Luxembourg,” 53.

²⁰ “119 Children Arrive from Lisbon: Largest Contingent to Arrive Since December is Among 721 on Liner Mouzinho,” *New York Times*, June 22, 1941, 19.

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special office of Jewish Affairs under the *Gauinspektor* (district inspector) Joseph Ackermann, who was tasked with completing a total removal of the Jewish population to ghettos or work camps in Eastern Europe to be completed by Yom Kippur of 1940.

Rabbi Serebrenik was to act as the liaison between this special Office of Jewish Affairs and the Jewish population, ensuring that all orders given by the office were faithfully executed. Using this position to his advantage and through the retention of good relations with German officials in Luxembourg, Serebrenik was eventually able to have the plan for deportation rescinded, though he was unable to stop the application and execution of the Nuremberg Laws, which went into effect in Luxembourg on September 5, 1941.²¹ Serebrenik himself made several trips to Portugal and Germany in order to intercede between the Jewish community of Luxemburg and the officials of those nations to ensure legal and smooth transportation. The efforts of Serebrenik eventually caught the attention of Adolf Eichmann, lead officer of Jewish emigration and one of the architects of Nazi Germany's Final Solution, who summoned the rabbi to Berlin in May of 1941. Eichmann demanded that Serebrenik reveal his intentions for the Jewish community of Luxembourg and to present a plan for their transportation to Portugal. Astonishingly, Eichmann approved Serebrenik's plan to obtain transportation visas to Portugal but gave him only eleven days to return to Luxembourg and carry out the transportation, after which all European immigration routes out of German territory were to be closed.

Of the remaining one thousand Jews in Luxembourg, Serebrenik and the Consistoire were able to acquire two hundred and fifty visas before the borders were officially closed on March 20th, 1941. Serebrenik left Luxembourg on May 27, 1941 after being beaten nearly to death by the Nazis and after seeing the destruction of the city's Grand Synagogue. Presumably using his connections with German officials, Serebrenik was able to secure visas and arrange transportation for himself and his wife, Julia Herzog, to Lisbon, Portugal, leaving behind roughly seven hundred and fifty Jews in Luxembourg.²² The Serebreniks remained in Portugal until June 10, 1941, when they, along with sixty-one other Jews from Luxembourg and one hundred and nineteen orphaned Jewish children from across Nazi occupied Europe, boarded the Portuguese Liner *Mouzinho* bound for New York City. On June 21, 1941 the *Mouzinho* arrived in New York Harbor, officially marking America as the new home of the Luxembourgian Jewish Community under the leadership of Rabbi Serebrenik.²³

Serebrenik and the Jewish passengers of the *Mouzinho* were among some one hundred and fifty thousand Jewish refugees who fled Europe between the years of 1933 and 1945 seeking refuge in the United States. Approximately seventy five thousand of these refugees settled in New York City, with twenty five

²¹ Zaziz and Lasch, "The Jews of Luxembourg" 54. The Nuremberg Laws were anti-Jewish statutes enacted by Germany on September 15, 1935, marking a major step in clarifying racial policy and removing Jewish influences from Aryan society

²² Daniel Victor, "Luxembourg Heritage"

²³ The dates of arrival and departures were determined from the following sources:

"New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957," digital image, The National Archives (www.ancestry.com), Manifest SS Mouzinho, arrival in New York, NY, List 1, Line 29, Robert Serebrenik age 39. New York, New York.
&"119 Children Arrive from Lisbon"

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thousand settling on Manhattan's Upper West Side.²⁴ With the greatest number of Jewish immigrants arriving between 1938 and 1940, this population of approximately twenty five thousand in Upper Manhattan accounted for the largest single settlement of refugees from Nazi Germany in the United States, which earned this area of German-speaking Jews the nickname of "Das Vierte Reich" or "The Fourth Reich." Manhattan's Upper West Side appealed to the new Jewish immigrants due to its surfeit of inexpensive and under-occupied apartment buildings and its pre-existing large Jewish community.²⁵ Despite the desire to live in an area with a pre-existing Jewish community, the German-Jewish émigrés who flocked to the Upper West Side often preferred to remain socially separated from American Jews. Very few German-Jewish immigrants chose to worship in existing synagogues or congregations alongside American Jews. Thus thirty new congregations, including Ramath Orah, were founded between 1933 and 1950. One of the major points of contention was the desire to speak and hold services in German, rather than in English or Yiddish, as was the preference with the American Jewish community. This practice was upheld in the newly founded synagogues well into the 1960s.²⁶ Likewise, the German-Jewish population which had arrived on the Upper West Side showed a stronger connection to religious life, attending services more frequently and identifying themselves mostly as Orthodox or Conservative rather than Reformed. Desiring their own spaces for religious and social functions, the new Jewish community often moved into pre-existing houses of worship or social halls, as the vast majority of Upper Wide Side immigrant Jews still had relatively low incomes and capital before the 1950s.²⁷ In the case of the Modern Orthodox Congregation Ramath Orah, the West Side Unitarian Church was particularly appealing due to its rather inexpensive price tag, its central hall for worship, and its basement theater, which could be used for social events, obviating the need to buy a separate building as other congregations had to do.

The official dedication ceremony of Congregation Ramath Orah was held on February 11, 1945, at which Manhattan borough president Edgar L. Nathan and several other New York City rabbis spoke in addition to Dr. Serebrenik, who would remain the rabbi of the synagogue for the next twenty years, spiritually guiding over two hundred congregates until his death on February 11th, 1965.²⁸ Ramath Orah was at its apogee in the 1950s and 1960s, with high service attendance, numerous volunteer organizations, a Hebrew School, and a professional staff of four. During the period, Serebrenik served on the World Jewish Congress from 1945 to 1960 and testified at the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961, both of which brought the rabbi and his congregation international attention.²⁹ Following the rabbi's death, Ramath Orah began to fall on hard times as the neighborhood of Morningside Heights began to change, the youth started moving away, and the founding members started to pass away. Membership dwindled throughout the 1990s to fewer than eighty-five congregates, many of whom could not afford to pay the annual \$350 dues, which placed great financial strains on the synagogue. It would not be until 1996 that Ramath Orah was able to hire a full time rabbi, Jeffrey Kobrin, for the congregation, coinciding with the rejuvenation of Morningside Heights. Establishing

²⁴ Ernest Stock, "From the American Scene: Washington Height's 'Fourth Reich'," *Commentary (Pre-1986)*, 1951 Vol 06, 582.

²⁵ Steven M. Lowenstein, "The German-Jewish Community of Washington Heights," *American Jewish History* 4 (1996): 246-247

²⁶ Michael N. Dobkowski, "'The Fourth Reich' - German-Jewish Religious Life in America Today," *Judaism* Winter (1978): 85-86.

²⁷ Steven Lowenstein "The German-Jewish Community of Washington Height," in *Frankfurt on the Hudson: the German-Jewish Community of Washington Heights, Its structure and Culture*. (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1989) 249-250.

²⁸ "Synagogue to be Dedicated," *New York Times*, February 10, 1945, 9.

²⁹ "Robert Serebrenik, Rabbi, Is Dead at 62," *New York Times*, February 12, 1965, 29.

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connections with Jewish students at Yeshiva and Columbia Universities, Kobrin was able to attract many new members to the congregation, making Ramath Orah an amalgam of students, young families, and older congregates from the Serebrenik decades.³⁰

Hoppin & Koen, architects

The architectural practice of Hoppin and Koen was established in 1894 when Francis Laurens Vinton Hoppin (1866-1941) and Terence A. Koen (1858-1923), two former draftsmen at McKim, Mead, and White, the nation's preeminent architectural office, went off on their own, considering themselves "graduates" from the best classical training in the United States. Hoppin was born in Providence, Rhode Island, the son of a wealthy physician and amateur caricature artist. After attending primary school in Providence, Hoppin was enrolled at Trinity Military Institute in Washington, Pennsylvania, to prepare for an appointment to the West Point Military Academy upon his graduation. Although a spot was offered to Hoppin, he chose to decline the appointment, electing to attend Brown University for his undergraduate studies. He furthered his education and his love of the arts by studying architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the nation's first school of architecture. Hoppin also studied architecture at the renowned École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris for a period of time, although it is uncertain if he did so during his time at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology or after his graduation. Like most Americans who studied at the prestigious French school, Hoppin never received a degree.³¹ Hoppin's first job was at the architectural firm of Hoppin & Ely, located in Providence, Rhode Island, where his older brother Howard was a partner.³² Here, he received his first experience designing homes for wealthy clients, which set the pace for the rest of his career. After working in the employ of his brother for a short while, Hoppin entered the firm of McKim, Mead, and White, as a draftsman and worked as a designer on several projects alongside Terence A. Koen. Hoppin was noted as having an eye for design, while Koen excelled in all technical aspects of construction.

It was in these respective roles, Hoppin as designer and Koen as builder, that the firm operated from its inception until its eventual closure twenty-eight years later in 1922. The early work of the firm in the last decade of the nineteenth century was largely defined by the design of urban Beaux Arts style townhouses for New York City's wealthy. Many wanted high quality designs but did not wish to pay the fees of McKim, Mead, and White. An excellent example of a townhouse designed by Hoppin & Koen is the James F.D. and Harriet Lanier House (1901-1903) at 123 East 35th Street (National Register listed).

Around 1896, Hoppin and Koen began to employ Robert Palmer Huntington (1869-1949), an amateur architect, who was well-connected in the social circles of New York. Hoppin and Huntington shared a connection among New York City's upper echelon. Hoppin, who married the daughter of the wealthy John A. Weekes, a partner in the New York based law firm of Weekes Brothers, together with Huntington, whose own daughter married Vincent Astor, used their places in society to secure numerous commissions for grand country estates, ranging from Massachusetts to Florida, and to make a name for themselves as among America's leading

³⁰ Goldman, *Living a Year of Kaddish*, 41-45.

³¹ "Col.Hoppin, 74, Architect and Painter; Dead," *The New York Herald-Tribune*, September 10, 1941, 24.

³² Augustus Mayhew, "The Ecole de Beaux Palm Beach," *The New York Social Diary*, 2013,

<http://www.newyorksocialdiary.com/node/997834#nysdtop>

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residential architects.³³ The dynamics of the office began to change in 1898 with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, which prompted Hoppin to enlist in the 12th Regiment of New York's National Guard - serving a total of nine months. In his absence Huntington took over as the lead designer of the firm. Hoppin, who rose to the rank of colonel by 1918, continued to serve in the military over the next twenty years, first at the Mexican border and then as the military secretary to Governor Charles S. Whitman, practicing architecture in his spare time and supervising the designs of Huntington and Koen.³⁴

The social connections of Hoppin and Huntington landed the firm its most famous commission, The Mount, the country estate of writer Edith Wharton in Lenox, Massachusetts, completed in 1902 (National Register Listed). Wharton, a champion of the use of historic American architectural styles such as Georgian and Federal, desired that the design of her home and grounds resemble the estates of America's founding fathers and early landed gentry. It is clear that Hoppin developed a close relationship with Wharton and sought the country lifestyle for himself, as he purchased Wharton's former residence, Pencraig Cottage in Newport, Rhode Island, which he renamed Auton House, in addition to maintaining a winter residence in Palm Beach, Florida.³⁵ From the completion of the Mount onwards the work of Hoppin and Koen developed two characteristic trends, the use of Georgian and Federal forms for country estates, such as the remodeling and additions to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's home at Hyde Park in 1915 (National Register Listed), and the use of mostly Beaux Arts Classicism for urban commissions such as the former New York City Police Headquarters located at 250 Centre Street, built between 1904 and 1905 (National Register Listed). Huntington retired from the firm in 1908, though Hoppin and Koen would continue receiving notable commissions, both in New York and elsewhere in the country, right until it closed its doors in 1922. Shortly before the office closed, Hoppin and Koen took on A.D.R. Sullivant as a partner, who would be able to assist the sickly Koen in the technical aspects of the firm's design.³⁶ Though little is known about Sullivant, it is his signature that appears on the original architectural drawings for the building designating him as the main draftsman for the Unity Congregation's West Side meeting house, one of the last designs produced by Hoppin and Koen.

While the firm of Hoppin and Koen is best remembered for its opulent country estates, its urban buildings attained an equal level of sophistication and beauty. These include the West Side Unitarian Church, one of only two religious buildings designed by the firm. Atypical of the firm's preference for the Beaux Arts in urban settings, both the West Side Meeting House and Christ Congregation Church, built in 1910 and located at the northeast corner of East 175th Street and the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, were designed in the Colonial Revival style.³⁷ Starting with the nation's centennial in 1876 but not becoming fully matured until the first third

³³ "Hoppin-Weekes" *New York Times*, June 4, 1893, 4.

Chlotilde R. Martin, "Gravel Hill, R.P. Huntington Home, Retired Architect Fashions Hampton County House After His Summer Dwelling in Adirondack Mountains—Prefers Grounds of Clean White Sand." *News and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), April 5, 1931.

³⁴ "Col.Hoppin, 74."

³⁵ "Col. Francis L.V. Hoppin Buys Cottage at Newport," *The New York Herald-Tribune*, November 19, 1929, 27.

³⁶ After Hoppin and Koen chose to close the firm due to the latter's poor health, Hoppin devoted his retirement to traveling and water color painting, exhibiting at public galleries in New York and at private parties at his vacation residences.

"Francis L.V. Hoppin Shows His Pictures," *New York Times*, April 6, 1925, 19.

³⁷ Originally built as the Christ Congregation Church it is currently the home of the Pilgram United Church of Christ.

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of the twentieth century, the Colonial Revival style reflects the prodigious interest in the use and revival of early American architectural forms for all building typologies. Since both the Unitarians and the Congregationalists traced their founding back to Colonial New England, they believed that a Georgian or Federal style was an appropriate expressions for their church buildings, although the use of these forms was widespread and often employed by other religious groups as well.

Conclusion

The West Side Unitarian Church, the building that houses Congregation Ramath Orah, has undergone very few alterations over the years, helping to preserve the architectural integrity of the original design by Hoppin and Koen. The building's primary façade has been altered only through the replacement of the central second- and third-floor transparent glass windows with stained-glass windows. The original rectilinear plaque in the easternmost bay of the building, which once read, "The West Side Meeting House," has been covered with a new plaque displaying the name of the current congregation. Likewise, the main sanctuary retains its integrity, though the five rows of pews nearest to the altar have been reduced in length in order to make room for the central *Bimah*, the platform from which the Torah is read, allowing the space to be usable for Jewish services. In addition, the three arched windows above the organ balcony and the circular window on the rear façade have had transparent glass windows replaced with stained-glass windows. The only space that has undergone significant alterations is the basement theater, which was converted to a banquet hall and an adjoining classroom sometime after 1992. Despite these alterations, the building still retains its architectural and historical integrity to a very high degree.

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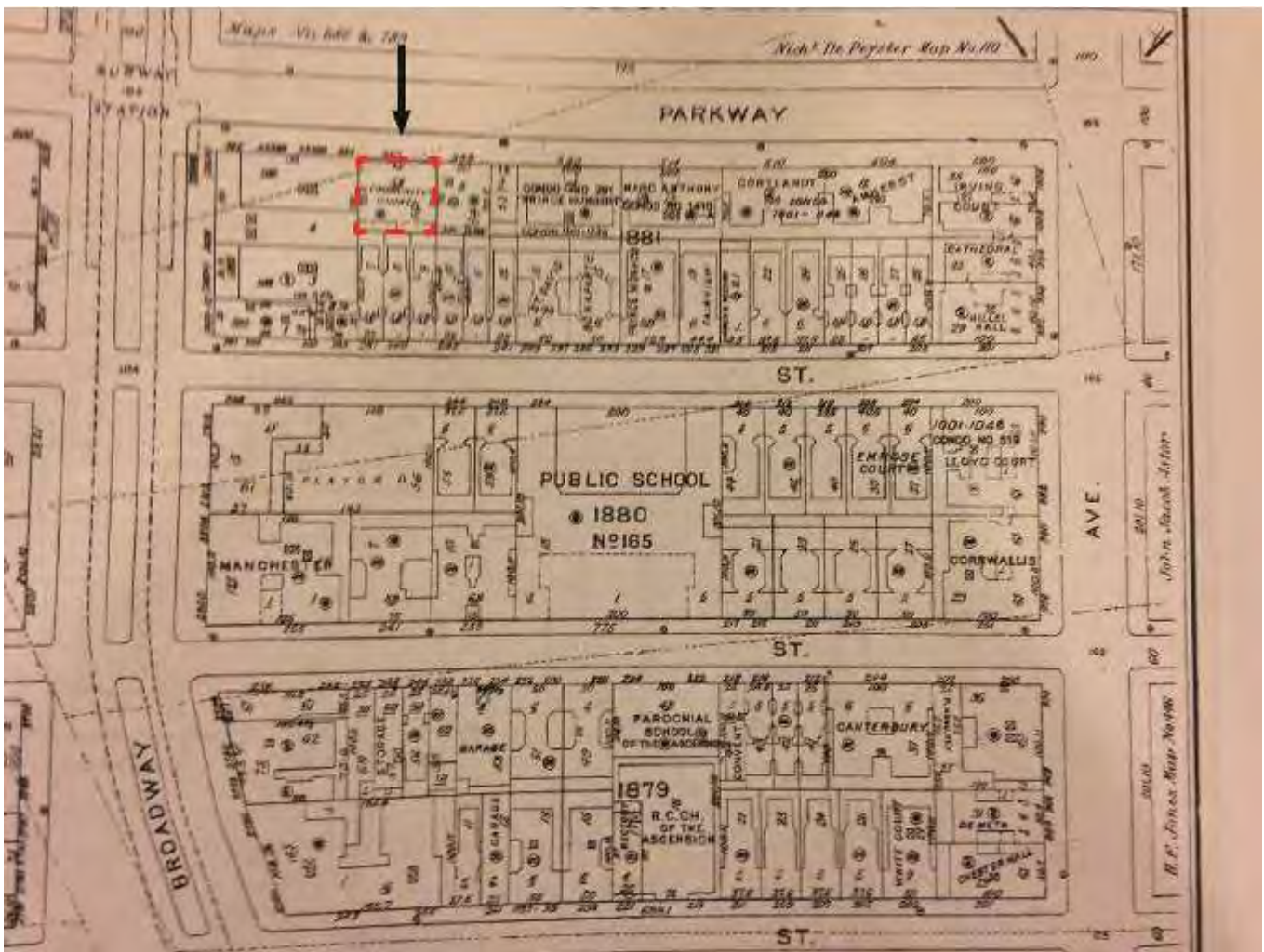
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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated site is located on the south side of West 110th Street in Manhattan. The lot is roughly square and indicated by the heavily line on the accompanying maps.

Boundary Justification

The boundary justification includes the entire lot that is historically associated with this property, that being; Block 1881, Lot 56 in the Borough of Manhattan, New York, New York.



2008 Sanborn Map: Block 1881, Lot: 51 or 550 West 110th Street, New York, New York.

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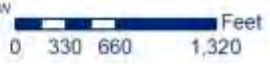
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West Side Unitarian Church Congregation Ramath Orah
Manhattan, New York Co., NY

550 W. 110th St.
New York, NY 10025



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



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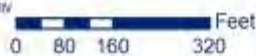
West Side Unitarian Church Congregation Ramath Orah
Manhattan, New York Co., NY

550 W. 110th St.
New York, NY 10025



587000

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



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Additional Information

Photo Log

Name of Property: West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah

City or Vicinity: New York

County: New York State: New York

Photographer: Michael Anthony Middleton & Anne Friedman

Date Photographed: January 25, 2015

- 1.) The West Side Unitarian Church looking south east
- 2.) Entry
- 3.) Engaged pediment detail
- 4.) Exterior signage
- 5.) Vestibule
- 6.) Sanctuary facing south
- 7.) Sanctuary facing north
- 8.) Upper balcony – Former choir loft
- 9.) Upper balcony – Former choir loft detail
- 10.) Basement ballroom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah

Name of Property

New York County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 2



Original elevation drawing of the proposed West Side Meeting House.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramath Orah

Name of Property

New York County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 3



Dr. Robert Serebrenik in the West Side Unitarian Church circa 1950s



SYNAGOGUE
RAMATH OLAM
INCORPORATED 1882

777 רמת אולם

CRO
550
CONGREGATION RAMATH OLAM

510

ק"ק רמת אורה

CRO

550

CONGREGATION RAMATH ORAH





SYNAGOGUE
RAMATH ORAH
FOUNDED 1942 - 2 27













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: West Side Unitarian Church--Congregation Ramath Orah

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, New York

DATE RECEIVED: 8/07/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/28/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/14/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/22/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000608

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 9.17.15 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.



NYC
Landmarks Preservation
Commission



Meenakshi Srinivasan
Chair

March 3, 2015

Sarah Carroll
Executive Director
SCarroll@lpc.nyc.gov

Ruth Pierpont, Deputy Commissioner
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189
Peebles Island
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

1 Centre Street
9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

212 669 7902 tel
212 669 7797 fax

Re: West Side Unitarian Church, 550 West 110th Street, Manhattan

Dear Deputy Commissioner Pierpont:

I write on behalf of Chair Meenakshi Srinivasan in response to your request for comment on the eligibility of the West Side Unitarian Church, located at 550 West 110th Street in Manhattan, for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The New York Landmarks Preservation Commission's Director of Research Mary Beth Betts has reviewed the materials submitted by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau and has determined that the West Side Unitarian Church appears to meet the criteria for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sarah Carroll

cc: Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
Mary Beth Betts, Director of Research



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

RECEIVED 2280

AUG - 7 2015

**Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service**

24 July 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 three nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

West Side Unitarian Church – Congregation Ramapo-Orah, New York County
First Presbyterian Church Complex, St. Lawrence County
Burton Hall, Washington County

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