

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 30 1977

DATE ENTERED JAN 31 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**HISTORIC **\*\***  
Old Ohayi Zedek SynagogueAND/OR COMMON  
Ahavath Garem Synagogue**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Archibald Street, Corner of Hyde Street

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Burlington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Vermont

STATE

Vermont

CODE

50

COUNTY

Chittenden

CODE

007

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Ahavath Garem Synagogue

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Archibald Street

CITY, TOWN

Burlington

STATE

Vermont

\_\_ VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Burlington City Hall

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Church Street

CITY, TOWN

Burlington

STATE

Vermont

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Vermont State Register of Historic Places

DATE

3/71

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ahayath Garem Synagogue and its mortuary occupy a corner site in Burlington's North End, an area of mixed residential and commercial use. The 35' x 60' synagogue is a high one-story gable-roofed, wood-frame structure which is clad with a brick veneer on the front and side elevations and clapboarded on the rear elevation.

Main window and door openings in the three-bay by sevenbay building are in the form of pointed arches. The front gable elevation contains a central door with a pointed-arch transom which is flanked by double-hung pointed-arch windows. An oculus inscribed with a Star of David muntin pattern is set in the gable peak. The double-hung pointed arch windows on the side elevations are interspersed with four oculi in the first, second, third, and sixth spandrels from the front (those on the west elevation are boarded over). Segmental-arched basement windows extend above the rubblestone foundation interrupting the base of the brick apsidal structure cantilevered beyond the rear wall plane, flanked by double-hung pointed-arch windows and a Star of David - inscribed gable oculus.

The synagogue has been substantially altered twice since the original structure was occupied in 1885. In 1902, the structure was enlarged and given its present brick veneer. In 1928, the two rear most bays were added to the building making use of materials and techniques identical to the 1902 construction, save for the use of a poured concrete foundation on the newer portion. Additional minor alterations include gable-roofed clapboarded basement entrances on the east and west elevations and an exterior brick brick chimney on the west elevation.

The main meeting room of the synagogue has a beaded wooden dado, while its walls and barrel vaulted ceiling are clad with acoustical tile staggered to resemble stonework, a feature dating from the 1928 remodeling or later. A woman's gallery runs along the rear and a portion of the sides of the room, supported by metal columns. The room is dominated by a copper Ark of the Torah in the center of the north wall. The Ark, which was constructed by a local artisan at the time of the 1928 enlargement, is of a pedimented classical design and is decorated with tablets containing the Ten Commandments flanked by gilded lions and pineapple finials. A bimach or reading platform stands in front of the Ark. In addition, an earlier octagonal bimah stands in the center of the sanctuary. Dark stained wooden pews complete the major appointments of the room.

The basement of the synagogue contains a small meeting room, a mikvah or ritual bath, and a furnace room.

The clapboarded, wood-frame, one-room mortuary abuts the synagogue's eastern elevation at the rear. The one-story building is three bays wide, has a porch across the front elevation, and is topped with a flat roof which feeds a cistern supplying the mikvah according to biblical requirements.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Samuelson, Myron, The Story of the Jewish Community of Burlington, Vermont  
 Burlington: Myron Samuelson, 1976.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1 acre.

UTM REFERENCES

550										
A	1, 8	6, 4, 2	5, 0, 0	4, 9	2, 7	4, 6, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C				D						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies lots 27, 28, and 29 of Dodds and Stevens' plan of city lots (1884) and is approximately 60' x 90' in size.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John R. Axtell, Architectural Historian

June 2, 1977

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

802-828-3226

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Pavilion Building, Montpelier

Vermont 05602

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE XX

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*William B. Pinney*

6-25-77

TITLE

William B. Pinney  
Director/State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Muntz*

DATE

1-31-78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*Charles A. ...*

DATE

1-24-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1885-1902, 1928

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Spear Brothers Construction Co. (for 1902 alterations)

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Aharath Garem Synagogue was built in 1885 as the original home of Ohavi Zedek, the oldest continuing Jewish congregation in Vermont, founded in 1876. The synagogue building was remodeled and enlarged over the span of the next fifty years resulting in what is today a striking and well-preserved cultural document exhibiting a juxtaposition of Eastern European liturgical architecture with American vernacular construction.

The community of immigrant peddlers and merchants who founded Ohavi Zedek held services in private homes and commercial lofts until the time of their 1885 purchase of a former stone cutter's shed near Burlington's French Canadian cemetery. The appearance of the sanctuary which was created out of the shed is not recorded. In 1902, a major remodeling of the original frame structure resulted in the present vernacular Gothic style exterior. In additional building programs undertaken in 1928 brought the building to its present appearance.

In 1952, the congregation Ohavi Zedek built a new sanctuary for itself. A group of members chose, however, not to move to the new synagogue and formed the congregation Ahavath Garem, which today continues to occupy the historic structure.

Architecturally, the synagogue reveals both the inventiveness of its members, as well as the effects of relative isolation from the major urban centers of American Jewish culture. Thus one finds such typically European features as the bimah and horseshoe-shaped woman's gallery. The exterior of the synagogue with its unique interpretation of the Gothic design vocabulary - oculi interspersed among pointed arches - functions both as a way of architecturally distinguishing the unique identity of the synagogue and as a practical means for lighting the woman's gallery. The abilities of a synagogue member, a local tinsmith, are amply displayed in the outstanding Ark of the Torah. Finally, the synagogue's everyday importance in Burlington's Jewish community is underlined by the presence of the mortuary building next to the main sanctuary.