

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

AREA	FORM NO.
	33
	161-5,6

PHOTO: (3x3" or 3x5", black & white)
staple to left side of form

Photo number _____

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

Recorded by Carla Benka

Organization Brookline Hist. Comm.

Date December 1979

(Staple additional sheets here)

Town Brookline MRA

Address 11 Charles Street

Historic Name Second Unitarian
Church (now Temple Sinai)

Use: Present Synagogue

Original Church

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1916

Source Brookline Chronicle Citizen

Style Georgian Revival

Architect Edwin I. Lewis

Exterior wall fabric Brick

Outbuildings None

Major alterations (with dates) None

Moved No Date N/A

Approx. acreage Less than one acre

Setting Temple Sinai is located a short distance from Beacon St.,

Brookline's major thoroughfare, and Coolidge Corner, its major intersection

Boston South Quadrangle

UTM Reference:

19/375400/4689720

Map #: 7

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

With its monumental two-story portico supported by Ionic columns and topped by a modillioned and dentilated pediment, its decorative frieze, its round-arched windows capped by limestone keystones, and its brick quoins, Temple Sinai is a fine example of the Georgian Revival style. The building is surmounted by a cupola-topped tower. The synagogue stands on a plot of land that has been subdivided; in front of the building on Beacon Street (in fact, within the Beacon Street Historic District) is a non-contributing gas station.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

In 1896, a second Unitarian Church of Brookline was formed; the congregation held its first meetings in the Sears Chapel, located in the Longwood area of Brookline. By 1916, the Second Unitarian Society had been urged to find another place for its meetings, since the congregation of the Sears Chapel wanted full possession of its building.

The congregation of the Unitarian Church decided to purchase a lot of land near the Parish House, which had been built at Coolidge Corner in 1901 at which time it had been dedicated by Edward Everett Hale. The parish house was a small, wooden building (no longer standing), which stood on property once belonging to Charles Stearns, a major property owner in this area. The Parish House stood behind the site for the new meetinghouse. Boston architect Edwin J. Lewis was chosen as the architect; the plan that he submitted was based on the design of the Washington Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

The Brookline Chronicle Citizen's article on the church stated that "the Golder Dome which surmounts the clock and watch tower of the Meeting House is a shining object to be seen from a great distance. All in all, for beauty and historic correctness, the Second Unitarian Meeting House ranks high and is pronounced by J. Randolph Coolidge, Jr., a competent architect, as one of the finest examples of early American ecclesiastical structures in Boston and

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher) vicinity." (continued)

Brookline Atlas, 1888, 1900, 1907, 1913, 1919

Brookline Chronicle Citizen, 1916.

Clippings file in Brookline Public Library, "Temples," compiled by Beryl Cohon (1959)

Dimont, Max, The Jews in America. New York, 1978

Borowitz, Eugene, Reform Judaism Today. New York, 1978

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: BROOKLINE	Form No: 13 163-5,6
Property Name: ^(Second Unitarian Church) Temple Sinai	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, continued

Temple Sinai was the first new Reform Congregation to be founded in the Boston metropolitan area in 84 years. Its founding caused a degree of dissension with older Reform Congregations, which felt that a new congregation was unnecessary at that time. The congregation of Temple Sinai was formed during the summer of 1939 "to bring new energy to the religious life of Boston Jewry and a larger measure of Jewish spiritual influence to the general community." Its first place of worship and schoolhouse were located at 16 Sidlaw Road in Brighton, in an old stucco mansion.

In 1944 (September 8), the present sanctuary on Charles Street in Brookline was dedicated. The building was purchased from the Second Unitarian Society, whose president was a friend of Rabbi Beryl Cohen.

Temple Sinai lists a number of "firsts" in its founding and history. It was:

- first to introduce Sabbath eve services as a major program of worship in Reform congregations in the Boston area;
- first to introduce Bar Mitzvah consistently in reform congregations;
- first to give women equal membership and voting priveleges in the synagogue;
- first to provide equal seating privileges to all members; and
- first to encourage family worship by providing for group seating.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Temple Sinai is a religious property that meets National Register Criteria A, C, and Criteria Exception A and derives primary significance from its architectural distinction and historical importance, being a fine example of Georgian Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Its original congregation was a forerunner in establishing a number of reforms both in the worship service and administration of its institution, and the Temple is known for having established a number of precedents within Reform Judaism regarding worship services. It is additionally an important building representing a momentous development in the history and evolution of the Reform Judaism movement. building, representing a momentous development in the history and evolution of the Reform Judaism movement.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

9-4-85

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Brookline MRA
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

71. Saint Paul's Church, Chapel,
and Parish HouseEntered in the ^{for}
National Register KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

72. Saint Paul's Rectory

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

73. Sargent's Pond

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

74. Second Unitarian Church

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

75. Spurr, Eliphalet, House

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

76. Standish, James H., House

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

77. Strathmore Road Historic
DistrictEntered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

78. Toussaint, Winand, House

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

79. Town Stable

Entered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

80. Tuckerman, William F.,
HouseEntered in the
National Register^{for} KeeperDelores Byers 10/17/85

Attest

85063315

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Second Unitarian Church (Brookline MRA)

Norfolk County

MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. SEP 4 1985
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87
Date Due: 10/3/85 - 10/19/85
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 10-17-85
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Entered in the
National Register

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- ☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

- ☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Temple Sinai
(School Bldg)

Second Unitarian Church

Brookline (AIA) MRA



Temple Sinai
~~211~~ Charles St
5/25

Second Unitarian Church

Brookline (MA) MRA

11 Charles Street (33/161-5-6)
Temple Sinai (secondary school)
BROOKLINE (MA) MRA
Town of Brookline Map Jan '81
Scale 1/2" = 200 ft.

