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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Beth Israel Temple
Other names/site number: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 320 S. Ninth St.
City or town: Muskogee State: Oklahoma County: Muskogee
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination X 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
 X A B X C D

[Signature] 1/21/14
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official: Date
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- 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:)


Signature of the Keeper

2/27/2014
Date of Action

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
1

Noncontributing
0

buildings

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<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Mission Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: _STUCCO_

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Beth Israel Temple, at 320 South Ninth St. in Muskogee, Oklahoma, was constructed in 1938 in Mission Revival style. The setting is residential and remains as it was historically. The footprint is that of a traditional Eastern European Jewish synagogue church, and the Mission Revival detailing on all four elevations is the building's most outstanding characteristic. The building is one story and has shaped Mission-style pedimented front and rear gables. The walls are brick but are uniformly stuccoed and painted white. There are arch-topped wooden windows and, on the main elevation, one small circular window. Battered buttresses, perpendicular to the walls, buttresses are an important visual characteristic. Other than the removal of a stained-glass window and addition of a concrete ramp in 1996, the building is in good condition and there is great integrity of materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association. It is eligible under Criterion C, Architecture, as one of only five examples of non-domestic Mission Revival architecture in Muskogee.

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Narrative Description

The Beth Israel Temple is located at 320 S. Ninth St. in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The building faces south, fronting on Ninth Street. Its long axis runs north-south along Denver Street. The setting remains as it was in 1938 when the temple was built. The neighborhood comprises single-family residences. It is only a few blocks to one of the main streets that traverses Muskogee.

In plan, Beth Israel Temple is in one story. The building is detached and is rectangular. It measures 36 feet north-south (along Ninth) and 58 feet east-west, with its long axis (along Denver Street). It has brick walls, covered by stucco and painted white.

The building's primary architectural characteristics follow the Mission Revival style, with curved parapet in the gable ends. Buttressed walls resemble the "melting effect" that older adobe buildings eventually assume. The roof is gabled and is about eighteen feet in height at the peak. In the east and west elevations, Mission-style parapets rise above the roof peak. The parapets make three steps upward and inward to a gently curved arch in the center. All along the parapet is a heavy concrete coping that extends out over the wall, and under each coping is crown molding. The top and rear of the parapet is covered with a sheet roofing material. The eaves extend about eighteen inches past the side walls, and the overhang is open, exposing the rafter tails. Gray composition shingles cover the roof. The wall is covered with smooth stucco, painted white.

A major visual feature is a series of regularly placed, sloped pier buttresses set along the walls in three of the elevations and at the four corners. The buttresses are eighteen inches wide and at ground level project sixteen inches out from the wall. The north and south walls each have three of these sloped buttresses. The slightly wider corner buttresses are an outward extension of the west and east walls. The end wall of the west elevation has a set of intersecting buttress on each side of the main entry. One of thee has its side flush against the wall, and the other is set at a ninety-degree angle to it.

West elevation:

The west elevation is the main façade, which is in three bays. The outer bays, which are quite narrow, each have one narrow, slab-glazed fixed window. The central bay, created by the two intersecting pier buttresses that support the front wall, projects one foot out from the wall and is punctuated by the building's sole entry. One approaches the building from the street via a narrow sidewalk that leads up to a set of five steps up to a six-foot-deep porch in the center bay. Short, red brick walls with heavy concrete caps (presently painted a dull red) extend out from the wall to form low boundaries for the porch area. The combined concrete porch and the boundary walls extend fourteen feet in width between the two buttresses.

The door surround, shaped like the roof parapet, projects about six inches out from the wall. The surround offers one of the building's only decorative applications at present: on either side, fifteen ceramic tiles are placed vertically and extend from the porch almost to the height of the doors. One additional single tile sits above and to the inside of each vertical row, emphasizing the surround's stepped-in shape. The doorway is recessed in a series of reveals that mimics the steps and curves of the roof parapet above. A set of wood slab doors, which are of some age, fill the opening. They resemble batten doors and are also shaped at the top to match the surround. In the top of the surround, above the doors, is a plaque with the words "BETH ISRAEL" [בית ישראל] carved in Hebrew and in

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English. Above this is a small circular window, now partly obscured by a painted sign. The sign carries the words "SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH," presently the building's owner. Flanking the entry, and also in the center bay, are two tall, narrow, wood-frame, slab-glazed fixed with semi-circular transoms.

Further up in the wall, under the curve of the parapet, is the outline of a large round opening, formerly a stained glass window but now filled in and stuccoed. The original stained-glass window, with a Star of David design, was initially concealed behind a wood covering but later was removed when the congregation disbanded. The window now resides in the Sherwin-Miller Museum of Jewish Art in Tulsa.

A concrete access ramp with metal railings extends up from the east sidewalk to the porch. This was added at an unknown date but is not present in a circa 1995 photograph that was commissioned and used for the "Prairie Landsmen" photography exhibit at the synagogue in Tulsa.

South elevation:

The south elevation, along Denver Street, is primarily characterized by three pier buttresses and two corner buttresses. These divide the wall into four bays. Each bay has tall, narrow, wood-framed, fixed window with an arched top. Each window is divided into three sections, each with five lights separated by thin mullions. The sills are also wood. There are regularly spaced vent holes near the ground, indicating a pier-and-beam foundation. In this elevation, the overhang has a metal rain gutter and downspouts at each corner of the building.

East elevation:

The rear or east elevation's only visual hallmark is sheer expanse of stuccoed wall extending up into the curved Mission-style gable and parapet. Eight feet in from each corner, the wall steps out one foot, but there are no buttresses. This thicker center projection gives the wall additional support. There are no doors or windows in the east elevation. This side of the building also faces residential property.

North elevation:

The north elevation faces residential property. The wall duplicates the arrangement of the south wall, with three buttresses, four bays, and four arched, wood-framed, fifteen-light fixed windows. There are regularly spaced vent holes near the ground. There is also metal rain gutter and downspouts. Outside the wall an air conditioner compressor sits inside a chain-link fence (not counted as a noncontributing resource).

Interior:

From the existence of extensive wall buttressing and from the window and door placement, it would appear that the building may comprise one large room with no interior structural walls to support the roof. There may be interior posts, but this is unknown. The building interior is not accessible for examination.

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Alterations:

The Beth Israel Temple is essentially unaltered from the time of its construction in 1938. The only known alterations are the removal of the stained-glass window from the west elevation circa 1996 and the addition of a concrete access ramp on the west side (date unknown). These changes do not affect the building's ability to transmit its significance as an excellent example of Mission Revival style, an architectural type rarely seen in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is 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 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 the 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE/JEWISH

Period of Significance

1938-1960

Significant Dates

1938

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

JEWS

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Beth Israel Temple, at 320 S. Ninth Street in Muskogee, Oklahoma, is being nominated for the National Register for its local significance, 1938-1960, under Criterion A (Ethnic Heritage) for its social function in Muskogee's ethnic history. It is the only historic building remaining to represent the noncommercial activities of the city's Jewish ethnic community. Jewish community life is historically organized around a temple or synagogue, which is not only a place of prayer but a place of study and teaching of ethnic tradition. The period of significance represents the peak years of activity for the congregation's use of the building and coincides with the growth and decline of Jewish population in Muskogee and the decline in synagogue membership. The building is also being nominated under Criterion C (Architecture). Because it is one of only five examples of non-domestic Mission Revival style architecture, it is eligible for the National Register.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Beth Israel Temple, located at 320 S. Ninth St. in Muskogee, Oklahoma, in a residential neighborhood, served a portion of Muskogee's Jewish population for almost four decades. The congregation erected the building in 1938, choosing as its exterior style the Mission Revival, which at the time was one of several styles popular for synagogue¹ exteriors. In the 1930s, as now, few Mission Revival examples existed in Muskogee, and the building was unusual among its contemporaries of both nondomestic and domestic uses.

The Jews of Muskogee:

The Jewish population of Muskogee grew as a result of opportunity that drew people of many cultures to Indian Territory. A major center of population, finance, and politics in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries, Muskogee, Oklahoma, was the second-largest town in the state of Oklahoma by 1910, when the population stood at 25,278. The town was, and is, characterized by a multi-ethnic population, with white, African Americans, and Native Americans forming large percentages of the residents. County seat of Muskogee County, Muskogee also boasted the headquarters of the federal district court for eastern Indian Territory as well as considerable manufacturing and transportation interests, and it was a regional trade center for farmers in the surrounding hundreds of miles.² Muskogee's commercial and industrial communities flourished. By 1910 there were six railroads with fourteen passenger trains daily[,] and Muskogee became division headquarters for the Katy [Missouri, Kansas and Texas], Missouri Southern, [and the] Muskogee Union, and [it was also a center for the] Pullman Company. Muskogee boasted of three cotton gins, a cotton compress, a vitrified brick plant, a concrete block plant, two daily newspapers, and four weekly papers."³ Business houses

¹ "Synagogue" is the general term used for a Jewish house of prayer. However, Beth Israel has historically been known as "Temple," and that is how it is designated in Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and Muskogee City Directories. Therefore, the designation "Temple" has been retained for the building's "historic name." For a simple explanation, see www.jewfaq.org, "Synagogues, Shuls and Temples," accessed May 1, 2013.

² Wallace F. Waits, Jr., "Muskogee," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, ed. Dianna Everett et al (Oklahoma City: OHS, 2009), 995-96.

³ *Moore's Directory of the City of Muskogee*, 1909, passim.

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abounded downtown. The federal censuses reveal that by 1920 the city had gradually grown to 30,277 and by 1940, to 32,332.

Among the ethnic groups who arrived to do business in town were Irish, English, Germans, and other Europeans. Most of the first Jewish residents hailed from Germany. Arriving in the 1870s and 1880s, they included Joseph Sondheimer, the first major Jewish presence in Muskogee. Sondheimer, a Bavarian Jew born in 1840, arrived in the United States in 1852 and then migrated to Muskogee, settling there permanently in 1878.⁴ A trader and business entrepreneur, he became a promoter of Jewish immigration. Soon, he was one among many. According to historian Henry Tobias, "Muskogee, the second largest city in the state in 1907, had Jewish merchants running general stores, dealers in hides and pecans, scrap metal dealers, grocers, pawnshop proprietors, insurance agents, and attorneys."⁵ By 1918 Muskogee had a modest population of 225 Jews.⁶ The "second wave" of Jewish immigration to the United States also brought Jewish families to Muskogee. Many, if not most, of these newcomers were from Eastern Europe, and many were adherents of Orthodox Judaism.

Tobias uses Muskogee's Jewish history as an example illustrative of Jewish life and community around the turn of the twentieth century. He indicates that Jewish community activity, including religious exercises, languished with the pioneer generation. With the second generation, the children of the original pioneer Jewish families and new immigrant families, religious and cultural activities greatly expanded.⁷ The arrival of Eastern European Jews augmented this. The result was the creation of two synagogue buildings in Muskogee within only a few years.

Historic Synagogues of Muskogee:

Among the original Jewish merchant and business families of Muskogee were Kirschner, Stolper, Landwirth, and Fist. In 1905 a dozen families organized the first Jewish prayer group, Beth Ahaba, a Reform congregation that held services in English. It established a Jewish cemetery in 1917 and dedicated Beth Ahaba ("house of love"), also known as Beth Ahaba Temple, a red brick building, at Eighth and Okmulgee streets in 1916.⁸ After World War I, and especially in the 1920s, there was a national trend of increased synagogue affiliation by Jewish Americans. The Jewish population of the United States grew by 40 percent, and the number of synagogues doubled. The trend extended to Oklahoma and led to the expansion of the congregation's membership in Muskogee, as well as in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.⁹

Some of Muskogee's Jewish residents, those who belonged at that time to Beth Ahaba, were more conservative in their religious observances. Orthodox Jews attending Beth Ahaba preferred traditional customs and a traditional prayer service, one that would be conducted in Hebrew. In 1918 they established congregation Beth Israel [בית ישראל] (translated as "house of Israel"), and their own place for prayer, Beth Israel, at 320 S. Ninth St., circa 1922-25. Families whose names are associated with Beth Israel were Russian or Russian-Polish Jews who had

⁴ Henry Tobias, *The Jews in Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 16, 18.

⁶ *American Jewish Year Book 20, 1918-1919* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1919), 54.

⁷ Tobias, *Jews in Oklahoma*, 33.

⁸ Daniel V. Stolper, "Congregational History---Temple Beth Ahaba---Muskogee, Oklahoma, *OzarksWatch Magazine* 12 (Nos. 1 and 2, 1999): 27-29.

⁹ Amy Shevitz, "Past and Future: The Life of the Oklahoma Jewish Community," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 75 (Spring 1997): 14; Kerry M. Olitzky, *The American Synagogue: A Historical Dictionary and Sourcebook* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996), 10.

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immigrated to the United States just after the turn of the twentieth century, and their children: Frank Kahn (1902), A. C. Jacobson (1904); Morris Krawitz (1904); and Samuel Russac (1910). The Russac, Krawitz, and Kahn families lived in the 700 block of S. Second Street, only a few blocks from the site of the temple.¹⁰ In 1926 Beth Israel Temple (listed thusly in the *American Jewish Yearbook*) had 25 members. The president was A. C. Jacobson, and the secretary was Daniel Russic (aka Russac).¹¹ In 1938 the congregation replaced their original Beth Israel building, for reasons unknown, with the present Mission Revival building, which is the subject of this nomination.¹²

Many members of Beth Israel Temple also attended services at Beth Ahaba Synagogue, and vice versa. This may have been because the Orthodox congregation of Beth Israel Temple was never large enough to employ a full-time rabbi. According to the *American Jewish Yearbook* (various years), it was never larger than 25 congregants, not including children.¹³ The congregation continued to exist and to use the facility at 320 S. Ninth St. until 1977, almost sixty years after its 1918 founding.¹⁴ Because of declining Jewish population in Muskogee after the middle of the twentieth century, attendance at Beth Ahaba also declined. The original Beth Ahaba building and land was sold to a Baptist congregation and razed in 1983, although a newer house of prayer was erected across the street. Beth Ahaba closed in 2011.¹⁵

Although a small group, the Jews of the United States have been a significant presence in American life over time. In Muskogee, they had a real impact on the economic community, and their religious culture was made evident in two synagogue buildings. Of these two, only Beth Israel Temple survives to objectify the history of Jewish community life in Muskogee. In 1995-96 the Gershon and Rebecca Fenster Museum of Jewish Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma, conducted a research and exhibit project to photograph the remaining Jewish historical resources in Oklahoma. They identified business buildings, cemetery markers, houses of prayer, and an oil field. The study revealed that very few non-commercial Jewish historic property resources still exist in Oklahoma, and in Muskogee, there is only Beth Israel Temple.¹⁶ Mark Lee Raphael, in his book *The Synagogue in America* (2011), asserts that "we can say with some confidence of the American synagogue . . . that it has been the most significant Jewish institution in the life of the Jews."¹⁷ Henry Tobias applied this maxim to the Sooner State as well: "the temple and synagogue were the focal points of local American Jewish life."¹⁸

¹⁰ U.S. Census of 1920, Muskogee, Muskogee County, Oklahoma, accessed via www.ancestry.com, July 1, 2013.

¹¹ *American Jewish Year Book 27, 1925-1926* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1926), 343.

¹² Daniel V. Stolper, "Congregational History---Temple Beth Ahaba---Muskogee, Oklahoma, *OzarksWatch Magazine* 12 (Nos. 1 and 2, 1999): 27-29. See also "Pioneer Muskogee Merchant Dies [Morris Krawitz, a founder of Beth Israel], *Southwest Jewish Chronicle* 44 (June 1974), 48; "Muskogee, Oklahoma," *Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities*, ed. Stuart Rockoff (an online resource available at www.isjl.org, accessed May 1, 2013), 2. Rockoff did extensive research and interviews in the third and fourth generations of Jews in Muskogee in preparing his article. Ethnicities were verified in the 1920 and 1930 U.S. Censuses.

¹³ Rockoff, "Muskogee, Oklahoma," *Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities*, 2.

¹⁴ Stolper, "Congregational History," 48.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; Rockoff, "Muskogee, Oklahoma," *Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities*, 2.

¹⁶ *Prairie Landsmen: The Jews of Oklahoma*, exhibit label copy, Oklahoma Jewish Experience Collection, Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma, provided courtesy of museum staff. All photographs in this collection are copyrighted to David Halpern.

¹⁷ Mark Lee Raphael, *The Synagogue in America: A Short History* (New York: NYU Press, 2011), 85.

¹⁸ Tobias, *Jews of Oklahoma*, 38.

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The number of Jews declined in Muskogee from a high of 225 in 1920 to 155 in 1940, 145 in 1950, and 120 in 1960. In 1953 only 23 Jewish families remained in Muskogee.¹⁹ Beth Israel's congregation, never large, also dwindled. In 1977 it merged with Beth Ahaba and sold its Ninth St. building to a Baptist congregation. As the sole reminder of the once-vibrant community life of an ethnic group, Beth Israel Temple is significant under Criterion A for its importance to the ethnic/Jewish history of Muskogee and is eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

Architectural Significance:

Beth Israel Temple is also significant under Criterion C, Architecture. Historians of synagogue architecture in the United States agree on one concept: There is no traditional "Jewish synagogue architecture." The interiors of houses of prayer have many uniform characteristics relating to ceremonial practices. Exterior designs, however, vary greatly and are not prescribed by religious law or practice. According to Samuel Gruber's *The American Synagogue: A Century of Architecture and Jewish Community* (2003), "A synagogue requires only an enclosed space to allow a congregation to assemble for prayer and to hear the Torah read." A synagogue must meet two criteria: it must have windows, and the Torah Ark will be on the east side of the building. Other common characteristics are arched windows and a central window over the main entry.²⁰ Otherwise, synagogues often reflected the current trends in architecture. The 1920s and 1930s were a time in which "revival" styles were popular for synagogue design. Thus, Classical Revival, "Palestinian" Roman (drawn from contemporary archeological investigations), and many other styles were often used.²¹

Why would the congregants of Beth Israel Temple choose an unusual "Mission" or "Spanish" style for the exterior of their building? The congregation members were primarily Eastern European Jews and their children, and they were Orthodox. Henry and Daniel Stolzman, in their book *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity* (2004), point out that Eastern European Jews sometimes created houses of worship that were "exotic" looking [his word], buildings that "distinguished their otherness [i.e., their distinctness from American Reform Judaism] in a way that was accepted by Jews and non-Jews alike." The chosen styles "were believed to metaphorically convey the Jewish experience"²² Perhaps the selection of "Mission Revival" is "metadata" that serves to distinguish this Orthodox congregation from Muskogee's Reform congregation, Beth Ahaba. It may also refer to the Jewish experience in the American West. Certainly, at the time that the congregation selected the style, theirs was one of a very few Mission Revival properties in Muskogee. Further, the building is in one room, and it is rectangular in plan, oriented east and west. Both characteristics are traditional with Eastern European synagogues.

On the exterior, Beth Israel Temple is a classic example of the symmetrical subtype of Mission Revival style. It has a rectangular plan, symmetrical facades, curved, shaped roof parapets, moderately wide, open eave overhangs with exposed rafter tails, smooth-stuccoed walls that

¹⁹ *American Jewish Yearbook*, 42, 1940-1941 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1941), 235; *American Jewish Yearbook* 50, 1948-1949 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1949), 682; *American Jewish Yearbook* 61, 1960 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1960), 60.

²⁰ Samuel Gruber, *The American Synagogue: A Century of Architecture and Jewish Community* (New York: Rizzoli, 2003), passim.

²¹ Olitzky, *American Synagogue*, 15-16; Raphael, *The Synagogue in America*, 74; Henry and Daniel Stolzman, *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity* (Mulgrave, Victoria, Australia: The Images Publishing Group, 2004), 17, 19.

²² Stolzman, *Synagogue Architecture*, 51.

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are buttressed to resemble the "melting" shape of adobe buildings.²³ The only element missing is a Spanish tile roof. It does, however, have red tile decoration in the door surround.

Criteria Considerations:

Beth Israel Temple in Muskogee, Oklahoma, is owned and used by a religious organization (Sovereign Baptist Church), therefore meeting Criteria Consideration A. The property derives its primary significance from historical importance in Muskogee under Criterion A because it is associated with a pattern of ethnic/Jewish history important in the city of Muskogee. It also derives significance from its design and is eligible under Criterion C, Architecture as an almost pristine example of Mission Revival style applied to a small building that is not commercial in use. It is one of only four such resources in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Additional Developmental Context:

In 1997-98 a reconnaissance level survey identified only four (4) Mission Revival-style non-domestic (i.e., commercial or religious) properties within the survey boundaries in central Muskogee, and only two (2) domestic properties. The survey thus indicates that the Mission Revival style was uncommon in Muskogee. The commercial buildings executed in this style include Bradley Funeral Home at 1020 West Okmulgee Avenue and the Midland Valley Passenger Depot in the 200 block of Elgin Avenue. Two of the properties are religious: other than Beth Israel, the survey identified the First Church of Christ, Scientist, at 304 North Seventh Street as a Mission style building.²⁴

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, built in 1920, is two stories in height. It has a Mission-parapeted, hipped roof originally covered by red tiles but now covered by reddish-brown composition shingles. The walls are smooth-stuccoed and there is a recessed entry porch. It has the typical shaped parapets and is generally symmetrical in its wall openings. It has numerous buttresses in various shapes and configurations. Apparently in the late 2000s (as indicated by historical GoogleEarth views), a very similar addition was constructed slightly to the north and was attached to the original church by a covered walkway, altering the original building's exterior.

Built in 1940, the Bradley Funeral Home is a two story, smooth-stuccoed building that has a low-pitched roof with multiple roof lines and a square tower with triple arches. The facade is asymmetrical. The roof is covered by red tile. The building was altered at an unknown date by a large addition on the east side that expanded the facility by about one-third. (Compare footprint in 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map with GoogleEarth view dated 2012. The addition may have occurred after the 1990s survey.)

The 1911 Midland Valley Passenger Depot is a large, one-story building a two-story central block. It has smooth stucco walls and a flat, Mission-parapeted roof. The two-story section is covered with red tile. It is distinguished by its wide overhang with eave braces along various walls, and by its size and asymmetrical plan, as befits a multipurpose building with both

²³ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1989), 409.

²⁴ Brad A. Bays et al., "Reconnaissance Level Survey of a Portion of Muskogee, Project No. 40-97-12040.013," submitted to Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1998, 22, 46, 59. See also the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory.

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passenger waiting areas and areas for baggage and freight. As late as 2012 it was deemed National Register eligible.

Another non-domestic property, the former Fife Indian Memorial Church at 603 E. Okmulgee Ave., was excluded from the Muskogee survey but is identified in the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory as Mission Revival. Built in 1951, it resembles a residence. This small, wood-frame building with cross gables is listed as Fife Indian Memorial Church but it was home to an alarm company. In 1998's OLI form it was described as having a red tile roof and stucco wall material and was potentially significant as "one of the very few urban Native American Protestant Christian churches in the United States." It now has wood or vinyl lapped siding and appears to have a sheet-metal roof.

These four properties all differ considerably from the Beth Israel Temple, which has significant characteristics of its architectural type as well as characteristics of the ethnic group that built it in 1938.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- American Jewish Year Book*, vols. 20, 27, 42, 50, and 61. New York: American Jewish Committee, var. dates.
- Bays, Brad A. et al. "Reconnaissance Level Survey of a Portion of Muskogee, Project No. 40-97-12040.013," submitted to Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1998.
- Moore's Directory of the City of Muskogee*, 1909.
- Olitzky, Kerry M. Olitzky, *The American Synagogue: A Historical Dictionary and Sourcebook* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996)
- "Pioneer Muskogee Merchant Dies [Morris Krawitz, a founder of Beth Israel], *Southwest Jewish Chronicle* 44 (June 1974),
- "Prairie Landsmen: The Jews of Oklahoma." Exhibit label copy, Oklahoma Jewish Experience Collection, Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- Raphael, Mark Lee. *The Synagogue in America: A Short History* (New York: NYU Press, 2011),
- Rockoff, Stuart. "Muskogee, Oklahoma." *Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities*, ed. Stuart Rockoff. Available at www.isil.org.
- Shevitz, Amy. "Past and Future: The Life of the Oklahoma Jewish Community." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 75 (Spring 1997): 14;
- Stolper, Daniel V. "Congregational History---Temple Beth Ahaba---Muskogee, Oklahoma. *OzarksWatch Magazine* 12 (Nos. 1 and 2, 1999): 27-29.
- Stolzman, Henry and Daniel. *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*. Mulgrave, Victoria, Australia: The Images Publishing Group, 2004.
- Tobias, Henry. *The Jews in Oklahoma*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Beth Israel Temple
Name of Property

Muskogee, Oklahoma
County and State

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 (one) acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 35.748709 Longitude: -95.380697

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Beth Israel Temple
Name of Property

Muskogee, Oklahoma
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property encompasses the South 50 feet of Lots 7 and 8, Block 157, Muskogee Old Town.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all of the area included with the property's history as recorded in the Muskogee County Clerk's Office, Deed Records, Book 390, page 107, and Book 1474, page 121.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dianna Everett, Consultant to City of Muskogee Planning Department
organization: _____
street & number: 2510 Countrywood Lane
city or town: Edmond state: Oklahoma Zip code: 73012-6433
e-mail weaver25@cox.net
telephone: 405/348-4679
date: 22 July 2013

Beth Israel Temple
Name of Property

Muskogee, Oklahoma
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Beth Israel Temple

City or Vicinity: Muskogee

County: Muskogee State: Oklahoma

Photographer: Dianna Everett

Date Photographed: May 7-8, 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 4.

Photo 1, West/ main elevation, camera facing east

Photo 2, South elevation, camera facing north

Photo 3, East elevation, camera facing northwest

Photo 4, North elevation, camera facing east-southeast

Beth Israel Temple
Name of Property

Muskogee, Oklahoma
County and State

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Beth Israel Temple
Muskogee, Muskogee County, Oklahoma
Data Source: Google Earth
Date Retrieved: May 1, 2013
Date Copy: May 1, 2013

Click to look around



35.748709° -95.380697°



Denver Ave

© 2013 Google

Google earth

84 ft

Imagery Date: 3/11/2012 1995

lat 35.748709 lon -95.380697 elev 585 ft

Eye alt 944 ft



SOVEREIGN
GRACE
CHURCH

בית ישראל
BETH ISRAEL







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: OWNER OBJECTION

PROPERTY NAME: Beth Israel Temple

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OKLAHOMA, Muskogee

DATE RECEIVED: 1/23/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/11/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000051

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: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

 ACCEPT RETURN REJECT DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Beth Israel Temple has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture and Ethnic Heritage-Jewish, at the local level. The 1938 building is a rare local example of Mission Revival-style design, as applied to a non-residential property. Retaining strong physical integrity, the building served Muskogee's Jewish (Orthodox) population as an important center of religious and cultural activity for a period of almost 40 years. First established by Eastern European/Russian Jews in 1918, the small congregation built the current temple facility in 1938. The building remains one of the few extant non-commercial properties able to reflect Muskogee's historic Jewish ethnic community and their particular social and cultural activities during the early twentieth century.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criteria A+C

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignea DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 2/27/14

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y

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



Oklahoma Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office

Founded May 27, 1893

Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm

January 23, 2014

Ms. Carol Shull
Acting Keeper of the Register
National Park Service 2280, 8th floor
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20005



Dear Ms. Shull:

We are pleased to transmit a National Register of Historic Places nomination for an Oklahoma property. The owner of record has objected to the nomination and the supporting documentation is being provided with this submittal. The nomination is for the following property:


Beth Israel Temple, 320 South Ninth Street, Muskogee, Muskogee County

The property is located within the boundaries of a Certified Local Government program and therefore was subject to review by the local historic preservation commission and elected body. Their report is included in the submittal.

The members of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (state review board), professionally qualified in the field of architectural was absent from the public meeting at which this nomination was considered and the recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer was formulated. However, the member possessing the requisite professional qualifications for evaluation of the nominated property was present and participated in the recommendation's formulation.

We look forward to the results of your review. If there may be any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Lynda S. Ozan of my staff or myself.

Sincerely,


Melvena Heisch
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

MKH:iso
Enclosures

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION REPORT

Note: This report shall be completed for each nomination to the National Register of Historic Places submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office. Each item must be completed. The report form shall be attached to the complete National Register nomination. All comments received from the owner and others must also accompany the report.

1. Name of Nominated Property: Beth Israel Temple
Location (Street Address): 320 S. Ninth St.
City: Muskogee
State: Oklahoma
County: Muskogee

2. CLG Reporting: City of Muskogee
Contact Person: Tish Callahan
Title: Assistant City Planner
Address: PO Box 1927
Muskogee, OK 74402
Telephone: 618-684-6232

3. a. Date CLG received the nomination(s): 10-2-2013
b. Date Property Owner(s) notified: 10-15-2013
c. Date of Public Hearing (if appropriate): 11-19-2013
d. Date nomination considered
by local review commission: 11-19-2013
e. Date nomination submitted to SHPO: 12-9-2013

4. Recommendations of the CLG (check appropriate item):

The chief elected local official and the local review commission agree that the property is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The chief elected local official and the local review commission agree that the property is not eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The chief elected local official considers the property eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, but the local review commission disagrees.

The local review commission considers the property eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, but the chief elected local official disagrees.

5. Owner(s) Response (check appropriate item):

The owner (majority of owners) consent to listing of the nominated property in the National Register of Historic Places.

- ✓ The owner (majority of owners) object to listing of the nominated property in the National Register of Historic Places.

(Additional comments should appear in this area)

The owners object to listing of the nominated property in the National Register of Historic Places and submitted a letter stating their objection.

6. Local Review Commission's Statement of Opinion:

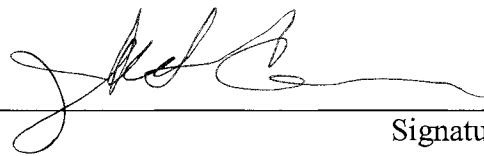
The Local Review Commission considers the property

✓ Eligible

Not Eligible

For nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons:

The City of Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission considers the property to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places due to its local significant contribution to the history of Muskogee as a religious institution as a Synagogue from 1938 to 1960. It is also eligible for its architectural significance of non-domestic Mission Revival style architecture.



Signature of Chairman

Joel E. Pete Carson

Printed Name

12-9-2013

Date

*Add additional pages if necessary

6. Chief Elected Local Official's Statement of Opinion:

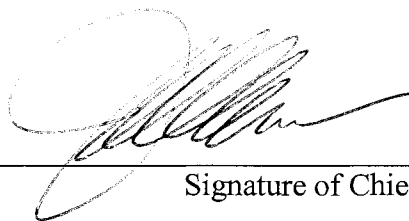
The Chief Elected Local Official considers the property

✓ Eligible

Not Eligible

For nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons:

The City of Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission considers the property to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places due to its local significant contribution to the history of Muskogee as a religious institution as a Synagogue from 1938 to 1960. It is also eligible for its architectural significance of non-domestic Mission Revival style architecture.



Signature of Chief Elected Local Official

John Robert Coburn, Mayor

Printed Name

12-9-2013

Date

Sovereign Grace Church
P.O. Box 1562
Muskogee, OK 74402

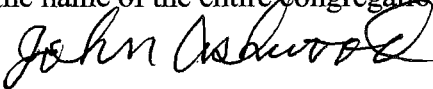
Mayor Bob Coburn
C/O Tish Callahan
Planning and Community Development Department
P.O. Box 1927
Muskogee, OK 74402
November 14, 2013 A.D.

Honorable Mayor Bob Coburn:

We, the congregation of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church at Muskogee, OK, have voted unanimously to "object" to listing with the National Register of Historic Places and the Oklahoma State Register of Historic Places the church building of said Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, located at 320 South Ninth Street (P.O. Box 1562) Muskogee, OK.

Thank you for the kind consideration.

In the name of the entire congregation,



Pastor/Elder John Ashwood

Nov 18, 13

11-6-17

