

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Kneseth Israel Synagogue

Other Name/Site Number: NA

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 236 Pinney Street Not for publication: NA

City/Town: Ellington Vicinity: NA

State: CT County: Tolland Code: 013 Zip Code: 06029

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: x
Public-local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

 1

 1

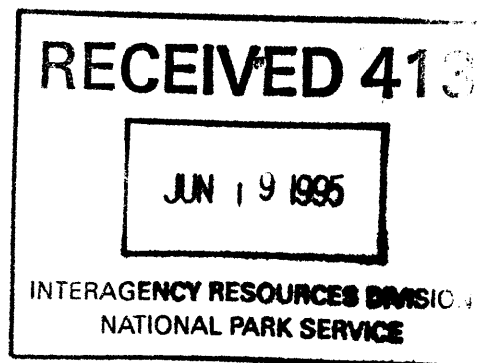
Noncontributing

 buildings
 sites
 structures
 objects
 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National

Register: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Synagogues of Connecticut



Kneseth Israel, Synagogue, Ellington, CT

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

John W. Shannahan June 14, 1995
Signature of Certifying Official Date

John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register *Edson H. Beall* *7.21.95*
- Determined eligible for the _____
- Determined not eligible for the _____
- Removed from the National Register _____
- Other (explain): _____

Entered in the
National Register

Signature of Keeper
Bar

Date of Action

Knesseth Israel Synagogue, Ellington, CT

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: <u>religious structure</u>	Sub: <u>synagogue</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
Current: <u>religious structure</u>	Sub: <u>synagogue</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification:	Materials:
<u>LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY</u>	Foundation: <u>CONCRETE</u>
<u>REVIVALS/Colonial Revival</u>	Walls: <u>SYNTHETIC/vinyl</u>
_____	_____
	Roof: <u>ASPHALT</u>
	Other Description: _____

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Exterior

Knesseth Israel Synagogue is a small one-story white frame building set back from a country road on the outskirts of Ellington. Its high hipped roof, pedimented portico, and clapboard exterior place it in the Colonial Revival style. (Photograph 32)

The synagogue is a well-proportioned compact building. Within the eaves returns of the portico roof, which suggest a pediment, there is a Magen David, gold on a blue field. The portico protects a double-leaf door with small glazed panels at the top and two pairs of vertical panels below the glazing. Flanking windows are divided into three horizontal sections; the top section features a pattern of two round arches.

Interior

The interior displays traditional Judaic features, although the bimah and bimah platform occupy a larger-than-usual proportion of the space because the room is small. The balustrade of the bimah, which has Magen Davids in its pattern, is wrought-iron, the only iron balustrade known in historic Connecticut synagogues. While the bimah is directly in front of the ark, it rests on its own platform and is therefore reminiscent of the traditional central location seen at Adath Israel, Bridgeport, and Beth Israel, New Haven. There is a candelabra symbolic of the menorah in the Temple of David under an Eternal Light in front of the ark. Since the building is one story without the opportunity for galleries, seating for women is provided on the other side of a low divider, south of the main sanctuary space. (Photograph 33)

The basement provides space for a social room and kitchen facilities.

Knesseth Israel Synagogue, Ellington, CT

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: A___ B___ C x D___

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

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance		Significant Dates
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1913</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: Leon Dobkin

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

Architectural Significance:

Knesseth Israel Synagogue is significant architecturally because it is a good example of a small frame synagogue built in eastern Connecticut early in the 20th century. Its country setting, well separated from nearby structures, readily accepts the modest but well-proportioned hipped-roof Colonial Revival design.

Historical Background

Knesseth Israel is an integral component in the settlement and growth of the Jewish farming community in eastern Connecticut. An important factor in the settlement and welfare of Jewish immigrants in eastern Connecticut was the benevolence of German railroad tycoon Baron Maurice de Hirsch. The Baron de Hirsch Fund, which he established, had wide impact throughout the communities, although specific names of particular individuals or congregations assisted by Baron de Hirsch are rare.

Kneseth Israel Synagogue, Ellington, CT

Kneseth Israel is one of the few congregations to be so identified. The farmland was purchased and the synagogue was constructed with the help of loans from the Jewish Agricultural Society, an offshoot of the Baron de Hirsch Fund.

The Orthodox Congregation Kneseth Israel was organized in 1905. The synagogue was built in 1913 at the corner of Abbott and Middle roads. It was moved to its present location, and remodelled, in 1954. The land was given by a member of the congregation with the stipulation that it be used for the erection and maintenance of an Orthodox synagogue, and if not used for an Orthodox synagogue, the land is to revert to the grantor.

Anna R. Maskel in her Kneseth Israel Synagogue, Ellington, Connecticut (nd, ca.1986) states that the congregation was organized in 1906, meeting in homes until the synagogue was constructed in 1913 on ground donated by Julius and Molly Sugerman. Plans were drawn by Leon Dobkin. The synagogue served Jewish "settlers" in Ellington, Vernon, South Windsor, East Windsor, Somers "and also strangers." Women prayed in one room, men in another. Jacob Schiff, a New York City Jewish philanthropist, contributed \$100 toward the cost of \$1,500.

Registration Requirements

Kneseth Israel Synagogue qualifies under Criterion C for inclusion in this multiple property listing as a country or resort synagogue in Connecticut by meeting the following requirements:

- Functioned before 1945 as a Jewish house of worship
- Located in a rural setting relatively separate from other buildings, or along the Connecticut shoreline
- Exhibits integrity of design and workmanship
- Constructed prior to 1945

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dorothy B. Cohen, Ellington: Chronicles of Change (Town of Ellington: 1987), pp. 142, 143.

Ellington Assessor's Records.

Ellington Land Records, volume 55, page 254, Mar. 12, 1953; 72/207, Feb. 9, 1966.

Morton L. Gordon, "The History of the Jewish Farmers in Eastern Connecticut," (Ph. D. dissertation, Yeshiva University, 1974), p. 67.

Evan Lawn, interview, May 7, 1991.

Anna R. Maskel, Kneseth Israel Synagogue, Ellington, Connecticut (nd, ca.1986).

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other: Specify Repository:

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████████████████████
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreeage of Property: less than one

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting

A 18 4641240 709040

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is described in the Ellington Land Records at volume 72, page 207.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary is drawn to encompass the land that has gone with the building since it was erected.

████████████████████
11. FORM PREPARED BY

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

Org.: Connecticut Historical Commission

Date: June 6, 1994

Street/#: 59 South Prospect Street

City/Town: Hartford

State: CT

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