

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no.
C'port	CPT IID2

2. Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form
Photo number 1100-36

1. Town Cambridge
Address 238 Columbia Street
Name Beth Israel Synagogue
Present use vacant
Present owner Cambridge Redevel. Author

3. Description:

Date 1901

Source facade inscription

Style Brick Romanesque w. Panel Brick decoration

Architect Nathan Douglass

Exterior wall fabric red brick

Outbuildings (describe) -----

Other features Corner pyramidal towers flank gabled main section. Syrian-arched entrance.

Altered No Date -----

Moved No Date -----

5. Lot size:

One acre or less X Over one acre -----

Approximate frontage 55'

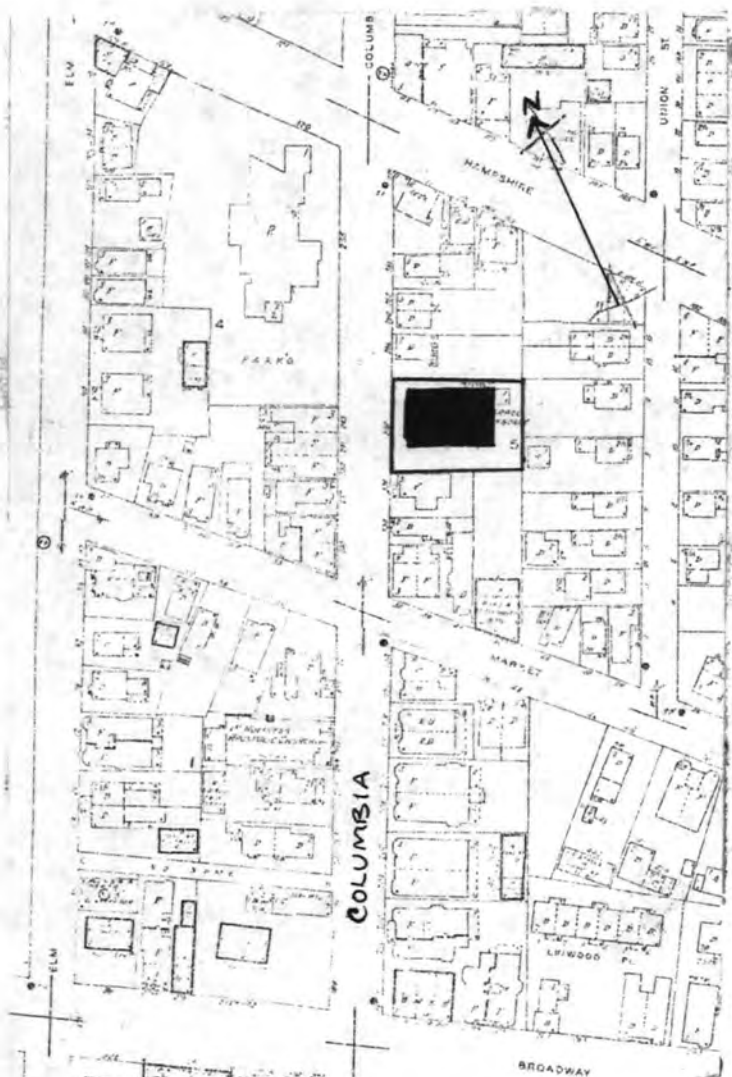
Approximate distance of building from street
15'

6. Recorded by H. White

Organization Camb. Hist. Comm.

Date June, 1980

UTM - BOSTON SOUTH
19/327360/4692670



ASSESSOR # 77-19

7. Original owner (if known) Congregation of Beth Israel Synagogue
Original use Synagogue
Subsequent uses (if any) and dates community center

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u> </u>	Conservation	<u> </u>	Recreation	<u> </u>
Agricultural	<u> </u>	Education	<u> </u>	Religion	<u>X</u>
Architectural	<u>X</u>	Exploration/ settlement	<u> </u>	Science/ invention	<u> </u>
The Arts	<u> </u>	Industry	<u> </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u> </u>
Commerce	<u> </u>	Military	<u> </u>	Transportation	<u> </u>
Communication	<u> </u>	Political	<u> </u>		
Community development	<u>X</u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

NOV 14 1981

The city's first synagogue was built in Cambridgeport in 1901 on Columbia Street, now in the heart of the Cambridge Model Cities area. Built of brick by architect Nathan Douglass, Beth Israel Synagogue is organized with two front corner towers flanking a slightly projecting center gable section containing the main entrance. All windows are roundheaded, and the main entrance is surrounded by a low Romanesque arch. No longer used as a synagogue, the building is now owned by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority.

Beginning in 1900, the Cambridge-Columbia Street area began attracting large numbers of Russian Jews, many of whom were moving from the North and West Ends of Boston. Schools, social clubs and synagogues were established, with the first and main synagogue in the area.

-END-

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

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

(See Attached Sheet)

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

(See Attached Sheet)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

(See Standard Bibliography)

Specific Reference:

Report Four: Old Cambridge, pp. 201-202.

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 4 of 7

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Cambridge Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

31. Bottle House Block

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

32. Building at 42 Edward J. Lopez
Avenue

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

33. East Cambridge Savings Bank

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

34. Hoyt, Benjamin, House

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

35. Lechmere Point Corporation
Houses

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

36. Sacred Heart Church, Rectory,
School and Convent

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

37. Union Railway Car Barn

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

38. B and B Chemical Company

Substantive Review

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

39. Baker House

Substantive Review

Determined Eligible

✓ Keeper

1/27/87

Attest

40. Beth Israel Synagogue

✓ Keeper

William H. Bracham 4.13.82

Attest

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: BETH Israel Synagogue
(Cambridge Multiple Resource Area)
 State, County: MA - Middlesex
 Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 11-14-80-2862

Fed. Reg. Date: _____

Date Due: 4-17-82Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/13/82☐ RETURN _____☐ REJECT _____

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

photos 1
 maps _____

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

Reviewer's comments:

*Eligible as first synagogue in city -
 Significant for associations with
 area Jews*

Recom. / Criteria AReviewer BraunhamDiscipline Arch / ResDate 4.2.82☐ see continuation sheet

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

1. Name2. Location3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property5. Location of Legal Description6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ moved
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ 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 _____

USGS 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

Site _____ date _____

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



1100-36

NOV 14 1980

076C

Beth Israel ~~sh~~ Synagogue

238 Columbia St.

Cambridge MA

1100-36

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000275