

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Congregation Agudath Sholom (preferred)

other names/site number Walnut Street Synagogue

2. Location

street & number 145 Walnut Street N/A not for publication

city or town Chelsea N/A vicinity

state Massachusetts code 025 county Suffolk code 025 zip code 02150

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Judith B. McDonough 3/1/93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Judith B. McDonough Date Executive Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Melores Byers

Date of Action

4/16/93

Entered in the  
National Register

## 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 | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 2            |                 | buildings  |
|              |                 | sites      |
|              |                 | structures |
| 1            |                 | objects    |
| 3            |                 | Total      |

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:

Romanesque Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

roof STONE: slate

other STONE: limestone

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 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.)

Property is:

- ☒ **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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

RELIGION

ETHNIC HERITAGE: European

### Period of Significance

1909-1942

### Significant Dates

1909

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Joll, Harry Dustin

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 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

Name of repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Name of Property

County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 6.821 square feet

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

|      |         |        |         |
|------|---------|--------|---------|
| 1    | 19      | 332240 | 4695200 |
| Zone | Easting | North  | ing     |

|      |         |       |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|---------|-------|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3    |         |       |     |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone | Easting | North | ing |  |  |  |  |  |  |

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By** Brian Krasner, Office of Comm. Dev., City of Chelsea, members of the Congregation Agudas Sholom, and Anne McCarthy Forbes, NR Edit. Consultant  
name/title with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date February 1993

street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02116

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Congregation Agudas Sholom, (President: Sidney Spiegel)

street & number 145 Walnut Street P.O. Box 265 telephone (617) 884-8668

city or town Chelsea state MA zip code 02150

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. DESCRIPTION

Designed by Chelsea architect Harry Dustin Joll in 1908-1909, the Walnut Street Synagogue of the Congregation Agudath Sholom (MHC #606), is a massive rectangular brick building of the early twentieth-century Romanesque Revival style. Seven bays long, it is approximately 90 by 65 feet, three stories high, with a full basement. It has a gabled slate roof, and a triple-entry facade that is dominated by a pair of large square corner stair-towers that project forward to the street. Topping each tower is an eight-faceted copper dome. The rear bay of each side projects slightly, echoing the rectangular quality of the front towers.

The building occupies a corner site at the intersection of Walnut and Fourth Streets one block east of one of Chelsea's main thoroughfares, Everett Avenue, in the southwest, downtown section of the city. It stands close to both streets, with its main facade oriented west toward Walnut. A 9-foot-high wrought-iron picket fence with granite posts extends along the south side of the building, and a small outbuilding, a wood-shingled "succah", sits back from Walnut Street on a narrow grassed strip of land on the south part of the lot. Directly to the rear of the property is the massive elevated concrete ramp of the Tobin/Mystic River Bridge.

The neighborhood surrounding the synagogue is largely residential, and filled with three-story brick and wooden apartments and "three-decker" multi-family houses, most dating to ca. 1909-1912. A few nearby lots are vacant. Diagonally to the north, filling an entire block of Fourth Street, is the 1910 brick Williams School. One block to the east is another Romanesque Revival building, St. Stanislaus' Roman Catholic Church. Three blocks to the south are two large National Register Dis- tricts, the Downtown Chelsea Residential Historic District (NR:1988), and the Bellingham Square Historic District (NR:1985.) Although some alteration in the form of synthetic siding, window replacement, etc., has taken place in the vicinity, the area in which the synagogue is located is a largely intact representation of the early modern construction that took place immediately after the devastating Chelsea fire of 1908.

The main body of the synagogue is constructed of multi-hued red brick in an English/common bond variant in which six courses of red brick stretchers alternate with a single gray-brick header course. The basement story is of Flemish bond construction, with red brick stretchers and gray headers. The architect's original plans called for considerable limestone detailing around the windows and doors. In the finished building, however, instead of limestone, the liberal use of yellow brick accents the facade at the window

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lintels, entry surrounds, in banding atop the foundation, and, most strikingly, in a high veneer arch extending from the first story to the cornice of each of the corner towers. The only symbol on the outside of the building, a star of David under the main facade gable, is executed in yellow brick, as well. Colored brick is used more sparingly on the sides of the building--none appears on the south side, but on the north side facing Fourth Street, yellow brick is used at several locations. Here the yellow blind arch is repeated on the side of the tower, and yellow brick is used in the window arches of the upper story, two window lintels at the rear corner bay, in horizontal banding above the first story, and in vertical strips that articulate the corners of the rear bay of the building.

Other architectural detailing includes a red-brick corbeled cornice at the rooflines, and crenellations at the top of the towers; the southwest tower has a continuous molded cornice atop the crenellations. On the sides of the building, shallow brick buttresses with limestone capstones separate the five main window bays. A granite cornerstone is set into the northwest corner of the basement story of the north tower. It is carved with the Hebrew date of 5669 (the equivalent of 1908-1909) in both Hebraic and Arabic numerals.

The building's fenestration, consistent with the early twentieth-century Romanesque Revival style, features a combination of flat, round, segmental, and slightly pointed arched openings. On the facade, a flight of granite steps leads to three entries with double-leafed paneled doors set into yellow brick pointed-arched surrounds. Above the entries are a corbeled yellow-brick cornice and spandrels of yellow brick with red brick accents. Occupying a full two stories of the upper center facade is a four-stage, pointed-arched window, consisting of a band of five single-light sash at the bottom, topped successively by a row of molded wood panels, another five-part band of windows (the sash here has been removed and replaced with plywood), and, under a yellow brick arch, a wood-mullioned window of small leaded diamond panes of amber colored glass. In the upper section, a pair of curved mullions extends outward to meet the arch. In each corner tower the three stories of the building are demarcated by a paired sash window at the first and second stories, and a single window at the third. Most of the diamond- and lozenge-paned colored glass that formerly filled the window sash of the facade and corner towers has been destroyed by vandals, and two sashes have been removed for safe-keeping. A few colored-glass sash remain in place in the towers, however. The windows at first-story level on the sides of the building are paired one-over-one-sash (rectangular on the north side, but set into segmental-arched openings on the south). The second-story windows along both sides are large rectangular two-over-two-sash, and at the third, round-topped two-over-two-sash.

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The fenestration of the sides of the two stair towers varies slightly, with segmen- tal-arched openings at second- and third-story level on the south tower, and rectan- gular windows on the north. At ground level of each tower is a modern double-leafed door inserted in an original opening. In both locations a four-part glassed fanlight remains in place above the door, but that on the north is topped by a yellow-brick arch, and on the south, by a keystoned red-brick arch.

Both Harry Joll's final design and the plans for a prior building of 1903 were inspired by the exterior of the Romanesque Revival synagogue of the leading late- nineteenth-century congregation in Boston, Temple Israel on Columbus Avenue. Built in 1886, Temple Israel also sparked other imitations, including the Columbia Street Synagogue in Cambridge of 1901, and the Blue Hill Avenue Shul in Roxbury of 1906. Neither of the latter is still in use as a synagogue. The Walnut Street Synagogue departed from Temple Israel in the use of a traditional Orthodox interior plan for its sanctuary, however, which features the holy Ark at one end, central Bimah, and separate women's gallery.

In fact, the main sanctuary of the Walnut Street Synagogue is one of the most intact synagogue interiors of its time in the Boston area, retaining not only virtually all its original carved oak furnishings, but its wall and ceiling frescoes and light fixtures, as well. Except for the corner stairwells and a narrow entrance hallway or narthex at the streetfront, the sanctuary fills the entire second and third-floor space of the building. Banks of oak pews with brass fittings face the center on three sides of the floor space. In the middle of the floor is a raised square "Bimah," or platform for reading the scrolls, surrounded by a turned balustrade. This particular Bimah is extremely spacious, reflecting the great importance attached to the public reading of the Torah in traditional Orthodox services. Against a center projection of the east end wall is a high, massive oak Ark, believed to have been built by cabinetmaker Sam Katz, who was responsible for several Arks in the Boston area, including that at the Vilna Shul on Beacon Hill (NR.) This Ark is a particularly dramatic one, combining ornate carving, marquee lighting, and a painted backdrop. Its carved ornament includes columns, animals, and depictions of the Torah and other Hebrew images and symbols. A railing with turned balustrade encloses a small area in front of the Ark. Other interior finish in the sanctuary includes an oak chair rail just below the level of the windows; above it at the west end, occupying the wall space between three simply-paneled double-leaf oak doors, are four oak wall plaques with brass fixtures. Above the main floor, at third-story level, is a U-shaped balcony (the seating area for women), faced with a turned balustrade backed by solid wood. Its seating capacity is nearly as great as that of the

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men's level, indicating the increased participation of women in synagogue life in the early part of this century.

Throughout the sanctuary the original brass-and-glass lighting fixtures remain intact, and an elaborate original chandelier hangs over the center area. The most remarkable survival here, however, is the intact array of wall and ceiling frescoes, executed by a Mr. Spector, apparently one of several artists in the local Jewish community who made a living by decorating synagogues. The entire barrel-vaulted plaster ceiling is embellished with a painting of the sky, complete with clouds, and a sunrise at the east end. At the west end, over the ladies' balcony, is a painting of the tomb of Rachel, the symbolic mother of the Jewish people. Currently, the ceiling mural is in fair condition, with some cracking evident.

Intact frescoes adorn the wall surfaces, as well. The most elaborate section is the painting over the Ark on the east wall, which depicts a trompe-l'oeil curtained niche supported on Corinthian columns, and filled with symbols from Solomon's temple in Jerusalem, including stars of David and flowered urns. Frescoed decoration also adorns the chair rail, the area around the wall lighting fixtures, and the wall surface above and around the upper windows, which are flanked with fanciful paintings of Ionic-like columns.

While the main sanctuary is completely intact in all its features, the lower story of the synagogue is somewhat altered. The first-floor space has two chapels, a sabbath sanctuary and a daily sanctuary, both fitted with modern wall paneling and fluorescent ceiling lights. The Ark furnishings in both spaces, however, are the original hand-carved and gilded wood, and remain in excellent condition.

The basement, which once housed space for a sabbath school, is now used for storage, and contains two lavatories.

On the grass strip just south of the synagogue is a rare survival of a religious outbuilding, a small wood-shingled "succah." This is a simple one-room, gable-roofed structure, with a three-bay facade and an open roof. Believed to date to about the time the synagogue was built, its sunken front steps are of the same material as the synagogue's cornerstone. The succah is used annually for the blessing of wine during the holiday of Succoth, when the roof is adorned with leaves and branches.

There are extremely few alterations at the Walnut Synagogue. In addition to those noted above, an iron fire escape (date unknown) has been added to the rear southeast corner of the building, and in the 1960's a copper epee atop each tower dome was removed.

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Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property it is possible that sites are present. One prehistoric site is recorded in the general area (within one mile). In general, however, the potential for significant archaeological survivals, both prehistoric and historic is low because of extensive urban development in the area and because the present structure, which has a full basement, covers a major portion of the lot.

(end)

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Walnut Street Synagogue of Congregation Agudath Sholom is one of the major institutional landmarks in the city of Chelsea. Apparently the largest Orthodox synagogue of its era in continuous use in New England, it is a vivid representation of the strength of Chelsea's large and influential Jewish community in the early twentieth century, when Jewish residents numbered nearly a third of the city's population. It is the largest example here of the work of Harry Dustin Joll, one of the three primary architects involved in the rebuilding of Chelsea after the great fire of 1908, and an extremely well-preserved illustration of the early twentieth-century Romanesque Revival style. In its three ornate holy Arks and other furnishings, and in the extremely rare survival of a complete set of wall and ceiling frescoes in the main sanctuary, the building also provides an important glimpse of traditional eastern European artistic elements in American architecture. The entire property, including an early wood-frame "Succah," retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and meets Criteria A and C of the National Register, as well as Criteria consideration A at the local level.

The small area that is today the city of Chelsea occupies a peninsula just northwest of Boston. It is bounded by the Mystic and Chelsea Rivers, with Mill Creek and the town of Revere to the north, and Everett to the northwest. It was first settled as Winnisimmet trading post by the English in 1624, and annexed to Boston in 1635. Separated from Boston by water, however, it remained an isolated, largely uninhabited area for the next century. It was incorporated as part of Chelsea town grant in 1739. The community grew slowly for the remainder of the eighteenth century, with a population of only 472 in 1790. In spite of the building of the 1801 Chelsea Bridge from Charlestown, in 1820 the population was still only 642, but improved accessibility via an 1831-1832 steam ferry and a new roadway and bridge across the Chelsea River to

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East Boston in 1834 led to rapid growth over the next two decades. The Chelsea waterfront became a popular summer resort in the 1840s, and in 1857, with the population at 12,000, Chelsea was chartered as a city. Much of the explosive population increase was the result of the rapid development of industry here during the early years of the industrial revolution, and the ensuing influx of immigrant workers. The former resort neighborhood at the waterfront quickly changed to an industrial area, with rubber, paint and varnish, wallpaper, and other manufactories interspersed with five shipyards. Large portions of the rest of the city were soon filled with densely-packed housing, much of it consisting of multi-family "tenement" dwellings. With a land area of only 1.86 square miles, (today still the smallest city in area in Massachusetts), over the middle of the nineteenth century Chelsea was transformed from a residential town to a fully developed urban community. By 1908 it was the most densely populated in proportion to its size of any city in the United States.

Prior to 1890, European immigrants who came to Chelsea were primarily Irish and Polish Catholics. Between 1889 and 1920, however, the major influx shifted to a great wave of Jews from Russia and eastern Europe. In 1890 Jews in Chelsea numbered 82. By 1910 their number was 11,225, nearly one third of the population, and with over 50% of the city's immigrants and their children of the Jewish faith, the Chelsea Jewish community had become one of the most important and cohesive ethnic enclaves of the early twentieth century in Massachusetts.

The major physical event to alter Chelsea's downtown in the first half of the twentieth century was the Great Fire of 1908. Beginning on Palm Sunday, April 12, it razed nearly 3,000 structures on 500 acres, destroying nearly half the city. During the ensuing period of rebuilding, ownership and occupancy of properties in the downtown substantially changed. A shift took place from long-time residential owners and an ethnic mix of occupants to a neighborhood of middle- and working-class Jews that was the most densely populated Jewish settlement in the United States. As a group, the city's Jewish residents played a major role in the rebuilding of the downtown, with Jewish investors and architects alike taking part in the reconstruction. The presence of the magnificent Walnut Street Synagogue, built just after the fire at the height of the era in which Chelsea's Jewish population was at its peak, signifies the strength of their numbers and the power they had accrued over the previous two decades.

In the period between the two world wars, the Jewish community in Chelsea remained large enough to support fourteen congregations, along with other associated institutions such as the Chelsea Hebrew Free School, built in

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1923. The city's population, however, which peaked in 1925 at 47,247, dwindled progressively thereafter, and is today in the 26,000 range. Much of the decline can be linked to worsening economic conditions in the 1950s and 1960s. Physical deterioration in the downtown area was also accelerated by the 1956 construction of the Tobin Bridge over the Mystic River, which cut a swath through the city just north of its municipal center and adjacent to the rear boundary of the Walnut Street Synagogue. During the post-war period several of the city's Jewish congregations were dissolved and their buildings converted to other purposes. In 1973, another major fire, which devastated 18 blocks in the same area as the 1908 fire, destroyed several more synagogues. Of them all, the Walnut Street Shul remains not only the only pre-World-War-I synagogue in Chelsea, but the only structure of its era connected with the Jewish faith still in active use for its original purpose in the city. According to members of the congregation, services have been held every day in the synagogue since its construction in 1908.

The Walnut Street Synagogue is also significant for its association with the earliest Jewish congregation in Chelsea. The first congregations here were small groups formed in private homes. The earliest was the Ohab Sholom, formed in 1890, which was largely founded by upper-class immigrants of Litvak/Mitnaged heritage. By 1901 they had gathered enough funds to purchase the property at the corner of Walnut and Fourth Streets to build a synagogue. Shortly after the building process was started, however, another congregation, Beth HaMidrash HaGadol, took over the property and in 1903 announced their own plans for a synagogue, with a front page depiction of the design in the Chelsea Gazette. The two congregations subsequently merged, joining with at least one other group which had been meeting for several years near the Winnisemet River. The new combined congregation, Agudath Sholom (Congregation of Peace), was the largest orthodox group in Chelsea, and had nearly completed the building when the Great Fire of 1908 destroyed it.

The synagogue was rebuilt the next year to a new design by Harry Dustin Joll, one of the three primary architects involved in the rebuilding of Chelsea after the Great Fire. The choice of a non-Jew as architect, along with the grandeur of the building he designed, reflects Agudath Sholom's growing desire for respectability and its emerging position as the major Jewish congregation in Chelsea. Often called the "Queen of Synagogues," the building is reputed to have been the largest orthodox synagogue of its time in New England.

Of the few synagogues that were built in Chelsea before the 1908 fire, all were burned down. The first to be constructed after the fire, for many years the Walnut Street Synagogue was the only one in Chelsea, and of the eventual fourteen synagogues in the city, Agudath Sholom's Walnut Street Shul was

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always the largest and best known. Through the early modern period its main competition for status in Chelsea was the Congregation Ahavas Achim Anshe Sfard, which built a synagogue on Elm Street. In contrast to the Lithuanian origin of Agudath Sholom, however, the congregation of the Elm Street Shul was largely composed of Russian Jews, and had been formed five years later. (The Elm Street synagogue, somewhat smaller than the Walnut Street Shul, was destroyed in the 1973 fire.) Another congregation, Linath Hazedek, erected a smaller synagogue nearby on Chestnut Street in the mid-1920s, but later dissolved as a congregation.

Today even the congregation of Agudath Sholom has diminished. Most of its members are elderly, and travel to the downtown synagogue from outside the city or from outlying parts of Chelsea. Services are held only on the first floor, and the great sanctuary space is presently unused. National Register designation for the building will aid greatly in bringing the Walnut Street Synagogue the public recognition it deserves, and should help prepare the way for future fund-raising efforts to preserve its frescoes and other important architectural features.

(End)

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Archives of The Chelsea Evening Record.The Chelsea Gazette. 18 December, 1909.

National Register Applications for the Bellingham Square and Downtown Residential Historic Districts. 1983 and 1987.

Joll, Harry D. "Synagogue for Congregation Agudas Huchin of Chelsea." Scale drawing of west elevation.

Kaufman, David. Research from records of Jewish Historical Society. 1991.

Kopf, Edward. The Intimate City: A Study of Urban Social Order in Chelsea, MA 1906-1915. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1974. (Brandeis Ph.D. dissertation.)

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report for Chelsea." 1980.

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Congregation Agudath Sholom  
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Pratt, Walter M. The Burning of Chelsea. Boston: Sampson Publishing Co.,  
1908.

Research by American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Massachusetts.

Records of the City of Chelsea Building Department, Assessor's Department, and  
Department of Community Development.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for the City of Chelsea, 1954.

(End)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as Lot 57 on the accompanying  
detail of the Chelsea Assessor's map, Sheet #38.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the entire parcel of land belonging to the  
Congregation Agudath Sholom. It includes the synagogue, succah, and land  
historically associated with the property since 1901, when the Congregation  
Ohab Shalom of Chelsea bought the property.

Congregation Agudath Sholom  
Chelsea, Massachusetts

RESOURCE COUNT

| <u>RESOURCE</u>                                          | <u>TYPE</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>CONTRIBUTING/<br/>NON-CONTRIBUTING</u> |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Congregation Agudath Sholom<br>(Walnut Street Synagogue) | building    | 1909        | contributing                              |
| Succah                                                   | building    | ca. 1909    | contributing                              |
| Wrought-iron and granite fence                           | object      | ca. 1909    | contributing                              |

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Congregation Agudath Shalom

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 3/08/93 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/23/93  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/08/93 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/22/93  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 93000283

NOMINATOR: STATE

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4/16/93 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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**CLASSIFICATION**

\_\_\_count      \_\_\_resource type

---

**STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

---

**FUNCTION**

\_\_\_historic      \_\_\_current

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**DESCRIPTION**

\_\_\_architectural classification  
\_\_\_materials  
\_\_\_descriptive text

---

**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

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

\_\_\_acreage      \_\_\_verbal boundary description  
\_\_\_UTMs      \_\_\_boundary justification

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**ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION**

\_\_\_sketch maps    \_\_\_USGS maps    \_\_\_photographs    \_\_\_presentation

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**OTHER COMMENTS**

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
 CORNER OF WALNUT  
 & FOURTH STREETS  
 CHELSEA, MA

WEST: WALNUT STREET  
 NORTH: FOURTH STREET  
 #1 OF 6

CONG HEBRAS Shalom of  
 WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
 P.O. Box 265  
 CHELSEA MA 02150  
 WALNUT ST FRONT & FOURTH ST. SIDE



WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA, MA

WEST; SOUTH ELEVATIONS

#2 OF 6

CONG. AGUDAS SHOLOM of  
WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
P.O. Box 265  
CHELSEA MA 02150  
WALNUT ST. FRONT & NORTHERLY SIDE

1991



CONG ABUDAS Solomon of  
WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA MASS 02156  
CEILING ~~STAIR~~ Floor.  
MURAL

WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA, MA

CEILING MURAL  
#3 OF 6



WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA, MA

MAIN SANCTUARY; BALCONY  
SECOND FLOOR

#4 OF 6

Cong. HODAS Shalom of  
WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA MA. 02150  
P.O. Box 265  
MAIN SANCTUARY - SECOND FLOOR  
AND BALCONY -



WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA, MA

SABBATH SANCTUARY  
FIRST FLOOR

#5 of 6

CONG. AGUDAS Shalom of  
WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
P.O. BOX 265  
CHELSEA MASS 02150  
SABBATH SANCTUARY



WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
CHELSEA, MA

DAILY SANCTUARY  
FIRST FLOOR

#6 OF 6

CONG. ABRAHAM SHOLOM OF  
WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
OF CHELSEA MASS 02150  
DAILY SANCTUARY - 1st Floor



WALNUT ST. SYNAGOGUE  
(AGUDAS SHOLOM)

CITELSEA, MA

- SUCCAH

APR  
1991

1991 - additional  
photo

5669

WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
(AGUDAS SHOLOM)

CHELSEA, MA

-CORNERSTONE

-additional  
photo

APR  
1991

1991

APR  
1991



WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE  
(AGUDAS SHOLOM)

CHelsea, MA

- NORTH ELEVATION

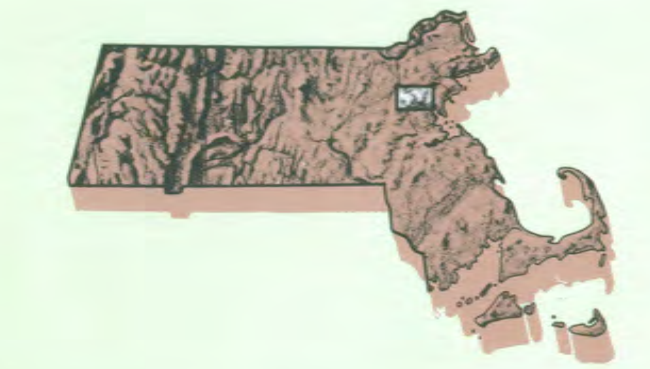
APR  
1991

- additional  
photo

1991

# Boston North MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale metric  
topographic map



7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE  
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names



Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works  
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies  
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1978. Field checked 1979. Map edited 1985  
Supersedes Boston North and Lexington 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1971  
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS chart 13272 (1982)  
This information is not intended for navigational purposes  
Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 19  
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone. 1927 North American Datum  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 41 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM of 1929  
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER  
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER  
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN METERS  
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE  
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER  
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.5 METERS

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

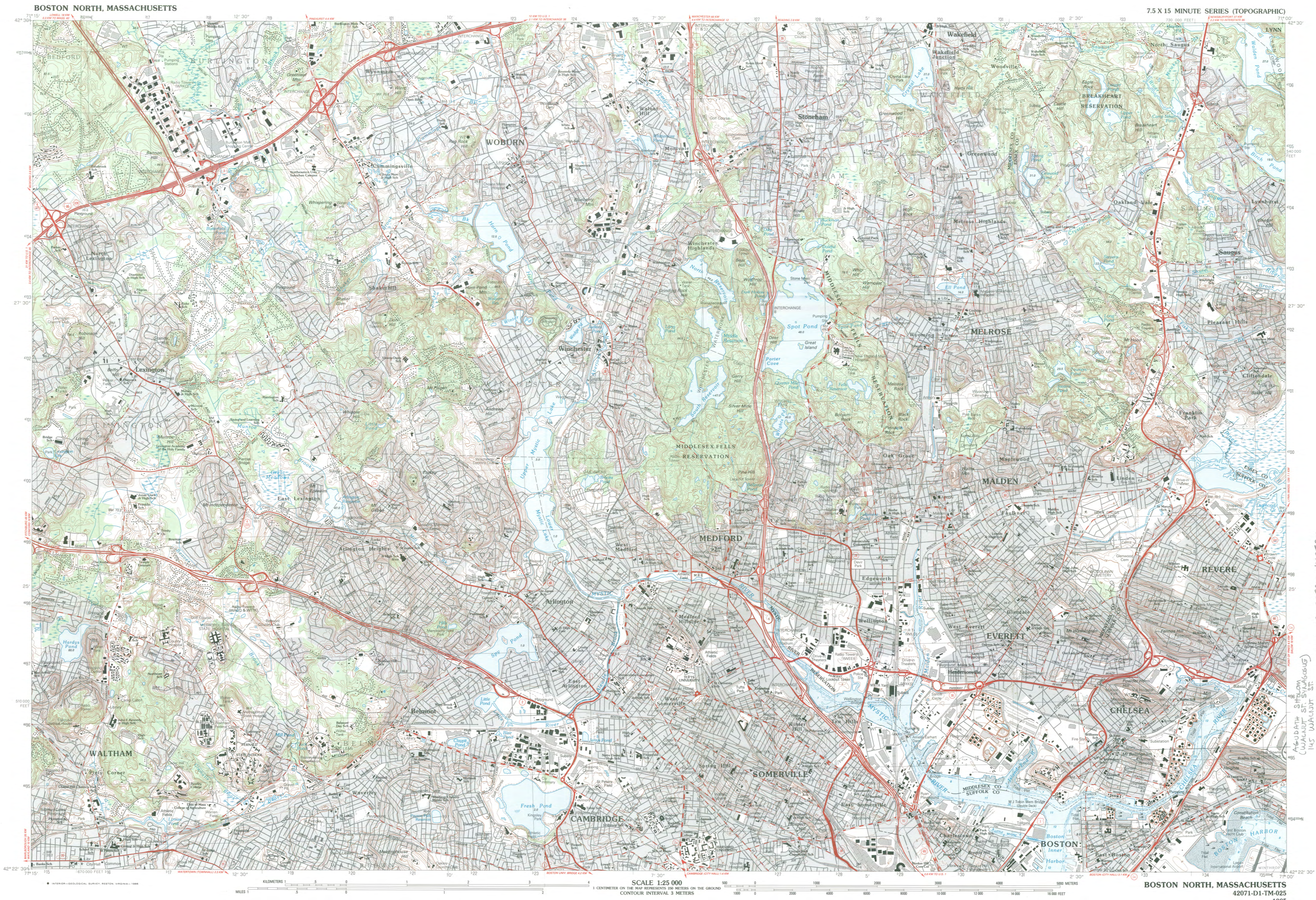
| CONVERSION TABLE                             |         | DECLINATION DIAGRAM                                                                                  | ADJOINING MAPS |   |   |  |
|----------------------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---|---|--|
| Meters                                       | Feet    |                                                                                                      | 1              | 2 | 3 |  |
| 1                                            | 3.2808  |                                                                                                      | 4              | 5 |   |  |
| 2                                            | 6.5617  |                                                                                                      | 6              | 7 | 8 |  |
| 3                                            | 9.8425  |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 4                                            | 13.1234 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 5                                            | 16.4042 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 6                                            | 19.6850 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 7                                            | 22.9659 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 8                                            | 26.2467 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 9                                            | 29.5275 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| 10                                           | 32.8084 |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |
| To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808 |         | UTM grid convergence (GN) and 1985 magnetic declination (MD) at center of map Diagram is approximate |                |   |   |  |
| To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048 |         |                                                                                                      |                |   |   |  |

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
DENVER, COLORADO 80205, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

## Topographic Map Symbols

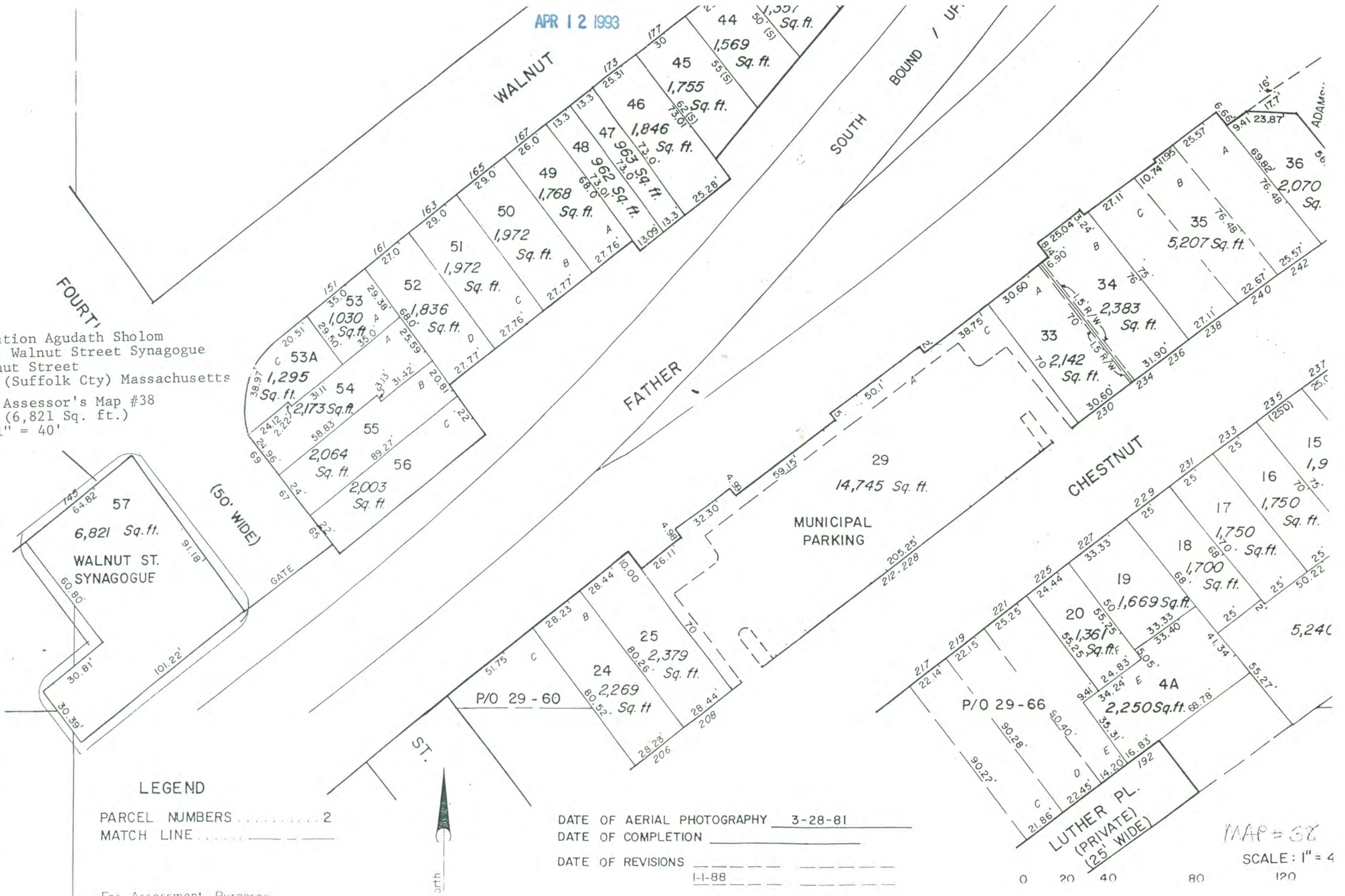
|                                                               |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Primary highway, hard surface                                 |  |
| Secondary highway, hard surface                               |  |
| Light-duty road, hard or improved surface                     |  |
| Unimproved road; trail                                        |  |
| Route marker: Interstate, U. S., State                        |  |
| Railroad: standard gage, narrow gage                          |  |
| Bridge: drawbridge                                            |  |
| Footbridge; overpass; underpass                               |  |
| Build-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown         |  |
| House; barn; church; school; large structure                  |  |
| Boundary:                                                     |  |
| National, with monument                                       |  |
| State                                                         |  |
| County, parish                                                |  |
| Civil township, precinct, district                            |  |
| Incorporated city, village, town                              |  |
| National or State reservation; small park                     |  |
| Land grant with monument; land section corner                 |  |
| U. S. public lands survey: range, township, section           |  |
| Range, township; section line: location approximate           |  |
| Fence or field line                                           |  |
| Power transmission line, located tower                        |  |
| Dam; dam with lock                                            |  |
| Cemetery; grave                                               |  |
| Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument              |  |
| Woodlot; water well; spring                                   |  |
| Mine shaft; prospect; well or cave                            |  |
| Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation |  |
| Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression      |  |
| Delineated surface: strip mine, lava, sand                    |  |
| Barometric contours: index; intermediate                      |  |
| Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream       |  |
| Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small               |  |
| Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp                                 |  |
| Land subject to controlled inundation; wetland                |  |
| Scrub; mangrove                                               |  |
| Orchard; vineyard                                             |  |

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



APR 12 1993

Congregation Agudath Sholom  
(a.k.a.) Walnut Street Synagogue  
145 Walnut Street  
Chelsea (Suffolk Cty) Massachusetts  
Chelsea Assessor's Map #38  
Lot #57 (6,821 Sq. ft.)  
Scale: 1" = 40'



LEGEND  
PARCEL NUMBERS ..... 2  
MATCH LINE ..... 2

DATE OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY 3-28-81  
DATE OF COMPLETION \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF REVISIONS \_\_\_\_\_  
1-1-88

MAP = 38  
SCALE: 1" = 40'



RECEIVED

MAR 8 1993

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

March 1, 1993

Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination form:

Congregation Agudath Sholom, 145 Walnut Street, Chelsea (Suffolk County),  
Massachusetts, 02150.

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Sidney Spiegel, President, Congregation Agudath Sholom  
Brian Krasner, Economic Development Administrator, City of Chelsea  
Judith D. McConnell, Office of Community Development, City of Chelsea  
Anne McCarthy Forbes, Preservation Consultant  
Bob Collins, Chelsea Public Library



RECEIVED  
APR 12 1993  
NATIONAL  
REGISTER

March 16, 1993

Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

ATTN: Deloris Beyers

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the Chelsea Assessor's Map #38, as you requested. With the enclosed map, the Congregation Agudath Sholom National Register nomination should now be considered complete. Please contact me if you have any additional questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Doug Kelleher  
National Register Assistant  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure