

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

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 "Y" 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 United Synagogue of Hoboken

other names/site number Star of Israel; Kochov Israel

2. Location

street & number 115-117 Park Avenue  not for publication

city or town City of Hoboken  vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Hudson code 017 Zip code 07030

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.)

Amy Cradic 5/6/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Amy Cradic, Assistant Commissioner Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO  
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

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

6/27/2008

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private, public-local (county), 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.)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

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)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Exotic Revival: Moorish Revival

MID-19th CENTURY: Gothic Revival

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK; STONE: Limestone; STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other METAL

Narrative Description

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

See attached 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

ETHNIC HERITAGE: European

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1915 - 1957

Significant Dates

1915

1942

1946

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Beyer, Max J.

Radner, Usdin and Taub

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: United Synagogue of Hoboken; Hoboken Free Public Library; Teaneck Public Library; Mary Delaney Krugman Associates, Inc., Jersey City Public Library

United Synagogue of Hoboken  
Name of Property

Hudson County, New Jersey  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 0.0895 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	18	581634	4510209
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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**

name/title Mary Delaney Krugman, J.D., M.S.H.P.

organization Mary Delaney Krugman Associates, Inc. date January 28, 2008

street & number 36 Park Street telephone (973) 746-2810

city or town Montclair state NJ Zip code 07042

**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 United Synagogue of Hoboken

street & number 115 Park Avenue telephone (201) 659-4000

city or town Hoboken state NJ Zip code 07030

**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 at 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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
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City of Hoboken  
Hudson County, New JerseySection number   7   Page   1  **SECTION 7 - DESCRIPTION****The Building**

The United Synagogue of Hoboken (USH), formerly known as the Star of Israel (or "Kochov Israel") synagogue, is located at 115-117 Park Avenue, in the City of Hoboken, Hudson County, New Jersey (Photos 1 - 3). It occupies Lots 6 and 7 of Block 177 on the City Tax Map (See Tax Map).

The synagogue was designed by prominent Hoboken architect Max J. Beyer and completed in 1915. It is a three-story building constructed of brick masonry and steel framing (Section 7, Existing Conditions Drawings A0.00 - A3.03); Photos 1 – 3). The builder was Radner, Usdin and Taub, of Hoboken.<sup>1</sup> The footprint measures 40 feet across at the street and 37 feet across the rear of the building, and slightly over 87 feet deep.<sup>2</sup> The foundation and footings of the building are concrete set on pilings.<sup>3</sup>

The façade is a tripartite composition, having a central mass flanked on each side by a stair tower capped with a polygonal, copper-clad, bulbous dome ("onion dome") (Photo 4). The façade is of warm buff brick masonry laid up in stretcher bond and ornamented with limestone and terra cotta elements.<sup>4</sup> The architectural style is a blend of Gothic Revival, Moorish, and Romanesque Revival. The sides of the building are inset from the side lot lines, which would have provided a small light well that would have provided ventilation and light into the sanctuary if adjacent buildings were to be built to their full permitted width at some point in the future. At the time of original construction, a 2-1/2 story building was already in existence on the south lot line – a fact that would have made the need for the light wells all too clear (Maps of 1909 and 1923).

There are four bays at street level – a two-bay main entrance in the center, flanked by a dressed window on each of the side towers. The main entry consists of two arched doorways, each having paired doors with five courses of three plain stained-glass lights (Photos 7, 8, and 10). The arches are infilled with stained glass above the springing line, executed in a stylized organic pattern found in other locations throughout the synagogue. Arched openings throughout the building are typically blunt, or drop, arches, with the exception of the full-story round arch and reveal over the rose window on the main façade. Column capitals at the main entrance have a botanical motif (Photo 8).

<sup>1</sup> Agreement between Star of Israel Association and Radner, Usdin and Taub, of Hoboken, NJ for construction of synagogue at 115 – 117 Park Avenue, Hoboken, June 16, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> The original blueprints show the footprint as 97' deep, plus 2-1/2 feet at the sidewalk entrance; the Addendum to the Specifications, however, noted a shortening of the footprint to the approximate current depth. See Max J. Beyer, Architect, *Plans and Addendum to General Specifications for Synagogue of the Star of Isreal [sic] Association, Hoboken, N.J.* [n.d.]. This may have been due to the late discovery of a 5' utility easement at the rear lot line of Block 177, Lot 6. Lot 7 was 100 feet deep.

<sup>3</sup> Max J. Beyer, Architect, *General Specifications for Synagogue of the Star of Isreal [sic] Association, Hoboken, N.J.* [n.d.] and Addendum [n.d.].

<sup>4</sup> The original Specifications (see fn 3) called for Terra Cotta trim throughout; but in the Addenda, an item that specified the elimination of all Terra Cotta trim at the entrance, doorways, and window arches at the second story front and other locations where brick could be used, was crossed out. As in other features of the building, the original drawings do not reflect the "as built" conditions. It appears that, while Terra Cotta may have been used for the upper arch over the rose window, at street level the trim appears to be limestone.

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A wrought iron fence encloses the sidewalk in front of the façade, providing a small front yard about 6 feet deep (Photo 1). A double gate at the center allows access to the front steps up to the main entry. A wrought iron finial in the form of a six-sided star (also called the Star of David, a symbol of Judaism) surmounts the gateposts. A brass plaque mounted on the fence to the right of the front gates notes that a Charles Schweller donated the fence in 1923.

The fenestration increases its rhythm on the upper stories. On each tower, a pair of attenuated stained-glass windows marks the stair halls. Across the center bay at the second floor level, a triplet of stained glass windows with drop arches and keystones defines the seating area at the rear of the sanctuary (Photo 9). A large rose window with twelve divisions inside a rounded brick masonry arch occupies the center bay of the third floor and is the major decorative element of the façade (Photo 1 and 22).<sup>5</sup> What appears to be limestone circumscribes the round arch over the rose window and a crocket surmounts the top of the arch. The keystone is embossed with a trefoil. A triplet of slender stained glass windows with blunt arches marks the top floor of each tower. Over the past two years, the congregation has temporarily removed, restored, and reinstalled the stained glass windows on the facade, with the exception of the two rectangular ones at street level, and installed protective safety glazing over the restored windows.

White mosaic tiles cover the surface of the wall between the arched openings and the first and second floor stringcourses in the center bay (Photos 5 and 9). Above the front entry door, a painted blue banner with the words "United Synagogue of Hoboken" painted on it in white letters is installed; it obscures the words, "Star of Israel" executed in red mosaic tiles, which was the name of the congregation before it united with the Hoboken Jewish Center in 1946 (Photo 6).

In 2000, the congregation opened the Kaplan Annex, a brick masonry addition on the north side of the synagogue that houses offices, classroom space and meeting rooms, as well as an elevator that has helped make the complex fully accessible (Photos 2 and 3). Architect Dean Marchetto, with offices at 1225 Willow Avenue, Hoboken, New Jersey, designed the addition.<sup>6</sup> The addition communicates with the synagogue building at all three levels, permitting assessable circulation throughout the two buildings (Photos 11, 23; Existing Conditions Drawings A1.01 – A1.03). The addition abuts the synagogue structure on the north wall, obscured two bays of windows on the north wall of the original structure. The interior of the sanctuary was otherwise left intact (Photos 23; Existing Conditions Drawings A1.01 – A1.03). The addition uses materials, color, texture and a design that is compatible with the historic building.

113 Park Avenue (Block 177, Lot 5), is now a paved lot on the south side of the synagogue (Photo 3). USH owns this parcel and uses it for parking. A 2-1/2 story apartment building that occupied that lot at the time of original construction was removed some time between 1937 and 1951 (Maps of 1909, 1923, 1937, and 1951).

On the interior, the main entrance and lobby are at street level and the sanctuary occupies the upper floors. Wood staircases up to the sanctuary are located at both sides of the lobby. Beyond the lobby, a hallway

<sup>5</sup> The number twelve has been associated with the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve months of the year, the signs of the Zodiac, and a number of other mythological and religious associations. The meaning, if any, of its use here is unknown. See Emil G. Hirsch, "The Twelve Tribes," *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901 – 1906).

<sup>6</sup> Ken Schept, correspondence with Mary Delaney Krugman (11 November 2007).

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provides access to a coatroom, storage room on the north side, and a kitchen on the south. At the rear of the first level is a large all-purpose room, which occupies the remainder of the space (Photo 13). At the far eastern end of the room, a raised platform and cabinet are set off from the main floor by a wood railing and may have served as a modest bimah for smaller religious services at some point.

Access to the second floor and sanctuary is via the two staircases from the main entry lobby (Photo 14 and 15). The sanctuary consists of a main floor and a balcony (Photos 16, 18, 23). Wood pews that appear to be original to the building serve as seating throughout. On the main floor, seating is arranged in three sections. The two side sections are flush against the north and south walls and separated from the center section by two aisles, one at each side (Photos 16 and 18). There is a fourth section of seating at the rear of the main part of the sanctuary, in front of the three stained glass windows on the center of the façade (Photo 21).

The balcony hangs from the steel framing by means of three wrought iron rods on each side, which are embossed with leaves (Photo 19 and 20). The balcony is unsupported from below, so that all seats on the main floor enjoy an unobstructed view.

The lighting throughout the sanctuary is of particular interest, because the fixtures appear substantially unchanged from the original (Photos H-2 and H-3; and 24 – 27). There are two large electric chandeliers in the center section of the sanctuary, one suspended from the ceiling in line with the balcony rod closest to the front of the sanctuary, the second in line with the third rod from the bimah. They each have two tiers of lights: each lower tier has six pendants and each upper tier has nine. The pendant lights are each fitted with a large white globe and hang from one of two ornamental bronze-color metal rings by means of a bronze-colored chain. A large, bronze-colored metal globe hangs within the lower tier of pendant lights of the rear fixture, which is part of a recently introduced sound system. At the rear of the sanctuary are four smaller chandeliers in a similar style, but have only four pendant lights hanging from an ornamental metal ring. At the center is a fifth light with a globe and collar suspended from the center chain (Photo 26). Wall sconces adorned the walls throughout the sanctuary and individual pendant lights hang from the edge of the balcony (Photos 16 and 27). These fixtures appear identical to the ones shown in historic photographs (Photos H-2 and H-2).

The windows on the east and west walls of the sanctuary are stained glass in stylized organic forms. They differ somewhat from those shown in the original plans. The windows on the east wall differ from those on the façade in terms of the shape of the arches (Photo 16 and 17). The window over the bimah is a single window with what appears to be an equilateral, as opposed to a blunt arch. The single windows on the east wall at either side of the bimah are rectangular with pointed tops formed by straight wood members rather than segmental arches (these do not appear on an original section drawing that shows the window over the bimah, so it is possible these were a later addition to the design). The windows on the north and south walls are paired double-hung wood sash with translucent glazing, which obscures the view but does not appreciably limit light into the sanctuary. The windows along the balcony have glazed transoms with a slightly rounded arch (Photos 16, 18, and 19).

The sanctuary walls have evidence of early decoration schemes. A recent paint study<sup>7</sup> has revealed two separate campaigns: the first campaign was primarily stenciling, polychromy, and gilding. The gilding

<sup>7</sup> Darla M. Olson, *United Synagogue of Hoboken – Paint Study*, Report dated June 12, 2005.

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consisted of aluminum leaf with an amber glaze. The second and third floor walls in the sanctuary were decorated with this stenciling. The stencil patterns created borders with inset panels.<sup>8</sup> There is also evidence of animal murals on the walls of the upper level, just below the cove molding between the windows (Photos 19 and 29), and scenic murals elsewhere.

A second decorative painting campaign was conducted by S. Massarsky & Co., Inc., a Hoboken firm, in 1942,<sup>9</sup> to which the recent paint study attributed some, but not all of the murals. Olson's study noted differences between the animal murals and the scenic murals in brush strokes and the condition of paint and substrate, the animal murals suffering from delaminating substrate, delaminating finish paint, unmatched touchups, areas of loss, and a darkened varnish.<sup>10</sup> The balcony railing was finished with faux marbling, which is still evident today, and some various elements like wood sash were to be painted, "grained," and varnished to match the woodwork. Other woodwork was to be washed and varnished. The study attributes the trompe l'oeil ceiling and faux marbling on the walls in the main lobby to the second campaign, as well as medallions on the balcony soffit and walls, the sky painting on the coffered ceiling and trompe l'oeil drapery on the east wall of the sanctuary (Photos H-2 and H-3) to this second campaign. A later renovation campaign painted over some of these decorative elements.

**Location and Setting**

The neighborhood setting is low-scale urban and predominantly residential, like much of Hoboken. The surrounding buildings appear, in large part, to be the same or similar to those in existence in 1915 when the synagogue was first constructed. Near the north and south corners of the west side of Park Avenue, three- and four-story apartment buildings predominate, as they do on the east side of the street north of the synagogue (Photo 30). A cluster of two- and three-story homes is set back from the street opposite the synagogue (Photo 31). South of the synagogue are situated a four-story apartment building and a three-story former furniture store, which has been recently renovated and converted to offices (Photo 2).

<sup>8</sup> Olson, *USH - Paint Study*.

<sup>9</sup> Star of Israel Congregation, *Articles of Agreement between Star of Israel Congregation and S. Massarsky & Co., Inc.* ([n.d.], 1942).

<sup>10</sup> Olson, "Executive Summary," *USH - Paint Study*.



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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## Summary Statement

The United Synagogue of Hoboken (formerly the "Star of Israel" Synagogue) stands today as rare evidence of the large and vibrant Jewish community that lived in Hoboken during the late 19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries and that made significant contributions to that city's history. This building has enjoyed uninterrupted service as a synagogue from the date of its original construction. As such, the building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) under **Criterion A**, as evidence of the a pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the City of Hoboken and the State of New Jersey. The period of significance under Criterion A is 1915 – 1957.

The Star of Israel Synagogue is also eligible for the National Register under **Criterion C** (Architecture) and **Criteria Consideration A** (Religious Properties), as a remarkably intact example of an American expression of a European synagogue of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Elements of several Revival styles, i.e., the Gothic, Romanesque, and Moorish Revival styles are deftly blended in the façade. On the interior, the architecture has remained unchanged since its original construction. The building is a late example of the period during which it enjoyed its greatest popularity in the United States and as such, it is one of the rare 20<sup>th</sup> Century examples of its type. Its designer, Hoboken architect Max J. Beyer, was recognized as a significant architect in the Hudson County area during his lifetime, and thus the building qualifies as the "work of a master." and is thus eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The period of significance under Criterion C is 1915, which is the date of original construction.

## History and Significance

*Jewish Settlement in Hoboken (ca. 1850 – present)*

The first Jewish settlers reportedly settled in Hoboken in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, during the period when war and unrest was causing great distress in Europe, especially in the southern principalities of Germany, which caused dislocation among local populations and resulted in a massive German emigration to the United States:

Jews joined this migratory movement beginning toward the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and increased in numbers rapidly by reason of the events of 1848. From that time until 1870, when this phase of immigration lost its strength, they came in a steady stream, so that the Jewish population of the United States was quadrupled within the twenty years between 1850 and 1870.<sup>1</sup>

Many of these German immigrants – Jews and Christian alike - found their way to Hoboken.

<sup>1</sup> Cyrus Adler, Herbert Friedenwald, Herman Rosenthal, Judah David Eisenstein, and Joseph Jacobs, "United States," *Jewish Encyclopedia*. Internet edition (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901 – 1906): 362. URL: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com> accessed 19 November 2007; 28 January 2008.

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By 1871,<sup>2</sup> there were enough Jewish settlers to form the city's first Hebrew congregation. That year, German immigrants organized the Reform congregation of Adas (or Adath) Emuno. Their first meetings were held in the Odd Fellows Hall at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Washington Streets.<sup>3</sup> Since many of Hoboken's Jewish families were shopkeepers and tradesmen, the core of their community was located near the main shopping district – the streets near Washington and First Streets. By 1883, Adas Emuno built its own synagogue at 637 Garden Street near Seventh Street (Figure 8). It was constructed on land donated by the Stevens family.<sup>4</sup> This congregation was the first to follow Reform Judaism in Hudson County – a movement that was growing in strength in the United States in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, particularly for Jews eager to assimilate into their adoptive culture.<sup>5</sup> This diminutive Gothic Revival synagogue building, unlike the later Hoboken synagogues, embodied none of the Moorish Revival influences that informed synagogue design later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The assimilation to which this congregation aspired can be best appreciated by comparing the Adas Emuno synagogue to a Hoboken church building of approximately the same period: the St. Matthew Baptist Church, formerly at 131 Garden Street in Hoboken (Figure 9). Not only does Adas Emuno lack any exterior evidence of Moorish Revival elements, but it was a very close architectural cousin to its Baptist contemporary.

The demographics of Jewish settlement in Hoboken changed during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Hoboken experienced a decline in the number of German immigrants and a dramatic increase in immigrants from Russia, particularly Russian Poland, Galician, and Rumanian Jews. From 1870 to 1880, nearly 50,000 Jews were reported to have resettled in the United States. Anti-Jewish persecution swept across southwestern Russia in the 1880s, sending an annual average of almost 21,000 Jewish people to the U.S. Additional persecution campaigns in Russia in the 1890s and Rumania during the early 1900s drove ever larger numbers of Jewish families to America seeking refuge.<sup>6</sup> Between the years of 1881 – 1905, the total immigration from those areas through the ports of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore numbered almost one million people.<sup>7</sup>

The Orthodox shul Moses Montefiore, Hoboken's second Jewish congregation, was founded by Eastern European Jews during this second phase. This congregation is more difficult to document since it has long been disbanded and historical data and primary source material are scarce. Multiple conflicts exist in the data, e.g., the date of the congregation's organization ranges from 1892 to 1899;<sup>8</sup> the year the synagogue

<sup>2</sup> One source notes that Adas Emuno was organized in 1875 (see Beavers, \_\_\_\_, Comp., Robert L. Stevens Fund for Municipal Research in Hoboken, *A Directory of Public Officials, Educational, Civic, and Charitable Organizations, Churches and Religious Congregations of the City of Hoboken* (Hoboken NJ: The Ivins Printing and Publishing Co., 1911), but 1871 is the date reflected in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*. See: Cyrus Adler and Abram S. Isaacs, "New Jersey [Jewish congregations in]" *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901 – 1906), Internet site URL: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com> accessed 19 November 2007.

<sup>3</sup> "3 Synagogues Active in City." News Clipping, Vertical files. Hoboken Free Public Library [n.d.].

<sup>4</sup> "Adas Emuno Is First Jewish Temple Here [Partially Illegible]." *Jersey Observer* (7 February 1942). The Hoboken Historic District Commission designated this building as its first local landmark in 1980. See: "Landmark," *Jersey Journal*, Photograph and caption (27 June 1980); "Church dedicated as historic landmark." *H.P.* [detail omitted]. 3 July 1980.

<sup>5</sup> Adler, Friedenwald, *et al.*, "United States," *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

<sup>6</sup> Adler, Friedenwald, *et al.*, "United States," *Jewish Encyclopedia*: 346.

<sup>7</sup> Adler, Friedenwald, *et al.*, "United States," *Jewish Encyclopedia*: 346. The authors allow that this figure may include Christians as well as Jews.

<sup>8</sup> Both the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and *American Jewish Year Book* in 1906 - 1907, noted that it was founded in 1892. See Cyrus Adler and Abram S. Isaacs, "New Jersey [Jewish congregations]," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901 – 1906), Internet edition, URL: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com> accessed 19 November 2007; Henrietta, Szold, Ed., *American Jewish Year Book 5668: September 9, 1907 – September 25, 1908* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America,

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was built is unknown from available data; and several addresses on Grand Avenue were identified for the synagogue. Until at least 1898, Moses Montefiore was leasing space at 76 Grand Street in Hoboken, when a newspaper reported that it had offered to purchase that property and several adjoining lots from the Estate of the former owner.<sup>9</sup> In 1901, Congregation Moses Montefiore is said to have built a synagogue at 80 Grand Street,<sup>10</sup> which could have included several parcels including the one it already had under lease at No. 76 Grand Street.

A Hoboken historian reported that the Moses Montefiore synagogue building had two towers.<sup>11</sup> This is bolstered by a 1904 Birds-eye view of Hoboken that shows a large building with two towers flanking a central bay, located in a spot consistent with 80 Grand Street (see Map of 1904 and detail).<sup>12</sup> However, the drawing is not sufficiently detailed to decipher the architectural treatment of the building or profile of the tops of the towers.

The exact number of Jews in Hoboken around 1900 is unknown from available data, but in 1905 the *Jewish Encyclopedia* estimated that some 1,000 Jews lived in that city, up from an estimated 600 in 1877.<sup>13</sup> The *American Jewish Yearbook* reported that the Jewish population was 1000 in 1905 and by 1912, three years before the construction of the Star of Israel synagogue, it had increased to 2,500.<sup>14</sup> In 1914 alone, there were approximately 62,500 immigrants to New Jersey, over 5,000 of which were Jewish. The increase in population was reflected in the number of synagogues constructed; during 1914 – 1915, six new synagogues were dedicated in New Jersey.<sup>15</sup>

During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the continuing influx of Jewish refugees fostered two new congregations in Hoboken – not only the result of increasing numbers of congregants, but also because of philosophical differences that emerged in the community. The Star of Israel was founded in 1905 by former members of Congregation Moses Montefiore seeking a more liberal version of Orthodox Judaism. Some twenty years later, the Hoboken Jewish Center, a Conservative synagogue, split off from the Star of Israel

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1907). The 1924 Van Winkle history of Hudson County recognized the existence of "Temple Adas Emuns" [sic] for Jewish congregations in Hoboken. See Daniel Van Winkle, Ed., *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, New Jersey 1630 – 1923*. 2 Volumes (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1924: 478 – 480). The 1911 Edition of Beaver's Directory identifies Moses Montefiore Synagogue as having been organized around 1899. See Beavers, \_\_\_\_, comp., Robert L. Stevens Fund for Municipal Research in Hoboken, *A Directory of Public Officials, Educational, Civic, and Charitable Organizations, Churches and Religious Congregations of the City of Hoboken* (Hoboken NJ: The Ivins Printing and Publishing Co., 1911). And finally the Hoboken city directories do not list Moses Montefiore congregation until the 1908 edition. See *Boyd's Jersey City and Hoboken Directory 1906 - 1907* ([n.p.]: Howell & Co., Publishers, 1908).

<sup>9</sup> "Hoboken Synagogue Lifted," *The New York Times* (30 July 1898): 12.

<sup>10</sup> United Synagogue of Hoboken, *The First 100 Years*, Centennial Gala Booklet dated November 19, 2005 (Hoboken: USH, 2005). No source was provided for the date of construction of the Moses Montefiore synagogue. A 1950s newspaper article notes that the Moses Montefiore synagogue was dedicated in 1895. See "3 Synagogues Active in City," News Clipping, Local History Collections of HFPL [n.d.] (Ca. 1957).

<sup>11</sup> John J. Heaney, *The Bicentennial Comes to Hoboken*, Booklet (Hoboken NJ: Hoboken American Revolution Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 106.

<sup>12</sup> Hughes & Bailey, *City of Hoboken, New Jersey 1904*, Bird's-eye view (New York: Hughes & Bailey, 1904). The maps shows only this one institutional building in this block of Grand Street.

<sup>13</sup> Adler, Friedenwald, et al., "United States," *Jewish Encyclopedia*: 373.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Jacobs, Ed., American Jewish Committee, *American Jewish Year Book 5676 [September 9, 1915 to September 27, 1916]* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1916).

<sup>15</sup> These included two in Atlantic City, and one each in Glen Ridge, Hoboken, Jersey City, and Passaic. Jacobs, *American Jewish Year Book 5676*.

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Congregation to embrace the even more liberal Conservative Judaism. It purchased a former townhouse in the 800 block of Hudson Street for its school, meeting rooms, and religious services, which was far north and east of the historic center of the Orthodox Jewish community along First Street between Grand and Washington Streets. First Street was a bustling commercial district second only to Washington Street, which was home to many of the small shops that were owned by Jewish storekeepers.<sup>16</sup>

Jewish presence in Hoboken reached its zenith during the 1920s and continued through the early 1940s. During the 1930s, there was a growing Nazi presence among the many German-American residents of Hoboken. The city government made attempts to temper the public appearances of Nazi-affiliated groups, but they were not always successful. In 1933, William A. Meyer, leader of the "Friends of New Germany" [Nazi] movement in the United States, made an unpublicized appearance at a meeting of some 500 Italian Fascists in Public School No. 3, at Fifth and Adams Street; Mayor Bernard McFeeley intimated that he would investigate and ban further attempts by Nazi leaders to address meetings in Hoboken.<sup>17</sup> In 1935, however, when some 3,000 members of Hudson County's German-American societies paraded down Washington Street to celebrate the return of German ships to Hoboken piers, some 20,000 people lined the route with their arms upraised in the Nazi salute; on that occasion, Mayor McFeeley and other officials on the reviewing stand took the salutes, after refusing an appeal from Jewish organizations and others to ban Nazi emblems, flags, and uniforms from the parade.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the political and economic challenges of the 1930s, Hoboken's Jewish population reached its peak of 3,500 families during that period. The city was reported to have six [sic]<sup>19</sup> synagogues, two kosher butcher shops, and a kosher restaurant that accommodated their needs.

After World War II, the Jewish population dropped off sharply as Jews migrated into suburban communities west and north of Hoboken. Faced with a substantial reduction in the number of families that supported their buildings and programs, the Orthodox congregations of Moses Montefiore and Star of Israel joined in merger discussions with the Conservative Hoboken Jewish Center.<sup>20</sup> In May 1946, the three congregations proposed a merger to their respective memberships. When the final resolutions of merger were adopted in July 1946, only the Star of Israel and the Hoboken Jewish Center participated. The two formed a new Conservative congregation that survives today as the United Synagogue of Hoboken (USH) (see discussion below).

The numbers of Jewish families continued to decline in Hoboken through the 1950s and 1960s. As early as 1942, the Moses Montefiore congregation still existed, but it had relocated to 79 Grand Street – the former location of the Hebrew Institute and other Jewish non-profits; it had no regular rabbi.<sup>21</sup> It appears that the

<sup>16</sup> "Busy First Street," News Photo ca. 1950, In "Architecture, Buildings, and Places" Clipping Binder, Local History Collections, HFPL.

<sup>17</sup> "Nazis Share Rally of Fascist Group." *New York Times* (6 November 1933): 15.

<sup>18</sup> "Nazi Parade Saluted by 20,000 in Hoboken," *New York Times* (11 April 1935): 9.

<sup>19</sup> Pamela Margoshes, "Jewish Life on the Upswing in Hoboken," *New York Times* (8 January 1984): NJ1. This is a possible error. Based on available data, there appear to have been only four synagogues in Hoboken's history: Adath Emuno, Moses Montefiore, Star of Israel, and the Hoboken Jewish Center.

<sup>20</sup> *Digest of Minutes of Joint Meeting of Committees Representing Traditional Synagogues of Hoboken Re Merger*, Minutes of Meeting of 21 May 1946.

<sup>21</sup> An article about the Jewish congregations in Hoboken included the congregation of Moses Montefiore as being located at 79 Grand Street – the former home of the Hebrew Institute, which was across the street from the site of the M. M. synagogue (see

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congregation had already disposed of its synagogue building by that time, but whether the building was ultimately sold, demolished, or destroyed by fire is not known from the available data.<sup>22</sup> Reports in 2007 noted that the building had been gone for decades. The congregation itself was disbanded sometime after 1957, the last documented report of its existence discovered to date.<sup>23</sup>

By the early 1970s, the Jewish community in Hoboken had dwindled to less than 300. It was around that time that Congregation Adas Emuno moved to the Borough of Leonia, a suburban community in Bergen County, leaving behind the synagogue it occupied for almost a century.<sup>24</sup> The building was subsequently used as a Presbyterian Church and community center and was later converted into apartments.<sup>25</sup>

By the 1980's, however, many Jewish congregations began to experience a resurgence in membership.<sup>26</sup> In Hoboken, young Jewish singles, couples, and families began to move back into the city and neighboring towns. By this time, however, few historic synagogues remained to be restored and/or returned to active use.<sup>27</sup> Of the three synagogues constructed in Hoboken in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, only the Star of Israel (now the United Synagogue of Hoboken) has survived. This synagogue stands as rare evidence of the history of the vibrant Jewish community in Hoboken during that period.

### *Star of Israel Synagogue*

The Star of Israel synagogue was organized in October 1905 by thirty-two former members of Hoboken's first Orthodox congregation, Moses Montefiore. The new congregation was seeking a more liberal environment for its observance, although it remained Orthodox. In January 1906, the Star of Israel Association filed its Certificate of Incorporation with the State of New Jersey.<sup>28</sup>

The Star of Israel first occupied temporary quarters at 79 Grand Street, just across the street from Moses Montefiore – an address that was also home to a number of non-profit organizations serving the needs of

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<sup>22</sup> "Only Congregation in County Which Conducts Services in Line with Reform Mode – Was Established in 1871 at the Old Oddfellows Hall," *Jersey Observer* (7 February 1942).

<sup>23</sup> Hoboken historian John Heaney noted that Moses Montefiore synagogue was torn down after the congregation dwindled. See Heaney, *The Bicentennial Comes to Hoboken*: 106; other members of USH seem to recall that the building was destroyed by fire.

<sup>24</sup> "3 Synagogues Active in City," News Clipping, Local History Collections of HFPL [n.d.] (ca. 1957).

<sup>25</sup> There is a conflict in the dates reported for the move to Leonia. One source cites 1966 (See "Congregation [Adas Emuno] to note 110 Years," *Jersey Journal* (31 October 1981); but an advertisement for the congregation in Leonia appeared in the *New York Times* in 1972 (See "A cordial invitation to join our congregation," *New York Times*, Display Ad. (27 August 1972): 73). The Congregation's web site proclaims that it moved to Leonia in 1974 (see "I feel a responsibility to Adas Emuno and I'm determined that it's not gonna [sic] go out of existence," *Congregation Adas Emuno*, Official Internet site, URL <http://www.adasemuno.org/history.htm> accessed 23 October 2007).

<sup>26</sup> "I feel a responsibility to Adas Emuno and I'm determined that it's not gonna [sic] go out of existence," *Congregation Adas Emuno*, Official Internet site, URL <http://www.adasemuno.org/history.htm> accessed 23 October 2007; Frank L. Greenagle, "Adas Emuno Synagogue, Hoboken, Hudson County," *The New Jersey Churchscape*, Internet site, URL: <http://www.njchurchscape.com> accessed October 23, 2007.

<sup>27</sup> Oscar Israelowitz, *Synagogues of the United States: A Photographic and Architectural Survey* (Brooklyn NJ: Israelowitz Publishing, 1992): 11.

<sup>28</sup> Israelowitz, 11.

<sup>29</sup> Star of Israel Association, *Certificate of Incorporation*, Record of filing with the State of New Jersey as non-profit corporation on January 4, 1906. Records of the New Jersey Treasury, Division of Revenue, Corporate Filing Unit, Business Gateway Services. Official New Jersey Internet site. URL: <http://www.state.nj.us/njbgs/services.html> accessed 8 November 2007.

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new Jewish community.<sup>29</sup> The new congregation remained close to the traditional center of Jewish life in Hoboken, which was concentrated, for the most part, in the southern half of that city.

Eventually, the Star of Israel Association found new quarters in the upper floors of 111 Grand Street that it leased from a Michael J. Lolly who, it is said, operated a saloon and hangout for politicians on the first floor.<sup>30</sup> The group garnered its resources until it could build its own synagogue.

In early 1910, the congregation had accumulated sufficient capital to purchase two lots on the 100-block of Park Avenue where two wood frame dwellings then stood<sup>31</sup> (Map of 1909<sup>32</sup>) and held at least one major fundraising event for the new building.<sup>33</sup> In January 1914, Association Board minutes indicate that one or both of the dwellings still stood at 115-117 Park Avenue.<sup>34</sup>

In April 1914, a fire destroyed the premises at 111 Grand Street and temporarily drove the Star of Israel congregation back to 79 Grand Street.<sup>35</sup> The congregation's efforts to build a home for itself intensified. They resulted in the signing of a contract with respected Hoboken architect Max J. Beyer (see discussion below), apparently soon after the fire. By June, the plans and specifications had been drawn up for the new synagogue and the project put out to bid.

The original specifications called for a steel frame and masonry building on pilings, with a footprint of 99'-8" deep and 40' wide, which represented almost a full build-out of Lots 6 and 7 (Figures 1 – 7; and Tax Map). The composition of the façade was defined by the central bay with its double arches at street level, the triplet of Gothic windows at the second story, and unified by the single round arch and impressive rose window. The central mass was flanked by the two stair towers capped with the paired copper-clad "onion" domes. In the original scheme the brickwork on the façade was to be in Flemish Bond, using first quality, cream-tinted white pressed brick. All trim was to be Terra Cotta and match the color of the bricks. On the interior, the third floor balcony was to have three rows of seats on either side, which would leave a 13' space in the center that was open to the floor below. The balcony was to be supported by a system of eight

<sup>29</sup> Among these were the Hebrew Institute; Young Men's Hebrew Association; Montefiore Ladies Aid Society; Hebrew Institute Loan Association; and the Hebrew Institute School. (See Beavers, \_\_\_\_\_, comp., Robert L. Stevens Fund for Municipal Research in Hoboken, *A Directory of Public Officials, Educational, Civic, and Charitable Organizations, Churches and Religious Congregations of the City of Hoboken* (Hoboken NJ: The Ivins Printing and Publishing Co., 1911). Adas Emuno also had its affiliated charitable organizations as well.

<sup>30</sup> United Synagogue of Hoboken, *The First 100 Years*, Centennial Gala Booklet, November 19, 2005 (Hoboken: USH, 2005): 9.

<sup>31</sup> *Star of Israel Association, a Corporation of New Jersey, from Brandt, George F. and Annie E. his wife*, Deed dated Jan 13, 1910, and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office January 15, 1910, in Book 1059 at page 8 [Property located at 115 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ, including rights and interest in the lease of 5' strip at rear of property]. *Star of Israel Association, a Benefit Association, a corporation under the laws of New Jersey from Daniel Wallace, Unmarried*, deed dated February 1, 1910, recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office February 2, 1910 in Book 1050 at page 453 [Property located at 117 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ].

<sup>32</sup> G. M. Hopkins, Surveyor, Hudson County, Part of Hoboken." *Atlas of Hudson County, N.J.*, Vol. 2 ([N.p.]: G. M. Hopkins & Co., 1909.

<sup>33</sup> Announcement of benefit performance at the Lyric Theatre, Hoboken, reported in 19 November 1910 edition of Jersey Journal. See United Synagogue of Hoboken, *The First 100 Years*, Centennial Gala Booklet dated November 19, 2005 (Hoboken: USH, 2005): 37.

<sup>34</sup> Board Minutes of the Star of Israel Association (Excerpted translation) (January 18, 1914). Collections of USH member Richard Mason.

<sup>35</sup> Board Minutes (Excerpted translation), Star of Israel Association (April 19, 1914).

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steel brackets tied in to the steel framing and framed with angle iron sections and plates. The stairs to the upper floors from the entrance hall were to be iron with marble treads, with wrought iron railings, decorative iron newel posts, and hardwood hand rails. The reinforced concrete landings in the stair halls were to be tiled and rimmed with marble baseboards.<sup>36</sup>

The original plans and specifications were modified by two Addenda, one of which was for the general specifications for mason-work, the second for additional changes to the mason work and carpentry.<sup>37</sup> The first Addendum seemed to contain refinements to the plans based on shifting priorities as to which areas should receive greater resources and finer quality materials, rather than major changes to the building. Among other things, the first addenda called for the addition of steel rebars to the concrete enclosing walls of the cellar, previously formed concrete. The brickwork on the façade was changed to American bond, and the owner's option of substituting tinted Indiana limestone for the Terra Cotta trim was introduced. The Iron and marble staircases were changed to all metal – wrought iron string, cast iron treads, steel plate risers, and a wrought iron railing. The more expensive tile work was eliminated from the side walls in the first and third floor toilet rooms, as was the marble window sills in those areas. The vestibule was to receive a marble base and wainscot of "the best grade of Italian marble." The landings remained tiled reinforced concrete with marble bases. The tiled field over the entrance doorways and second story windows were to be inlaid with 4" x 4" 1-inch thick glazed bluish tinted ceramic tile.

The second Addendum introduced several major alterations. These included the shortening of the building depth by 12' – from 99'-8" to 87'-8" (perhaps due to the late discovery of a 5' utility easement at the rear of Lot 6). The balcony was reduced to two rows of seats, which increased the size of the opening to the floor below to 18' from 13'. The steel work that supported the balcony was reduced from four steel columns along either side of the building and eight steel brackets to six wrought iron rods that would suspend the balcony from the roof girders. The girders were increased from 15" I-beams to 20" 72# I-beams; a steel angle would encircle the balcony to carry the floor beams. These changes still allowed the floor below to be free of any posts that might obstruct the view. In addition, the ceiling of the church auditorium was reduced in height from 30' to 28', which the Addendum noted would result in a "saving of two feet of brickwork encircling the building." The stairs were changed to all hardwood from the original iron and marble and the tile work, reinforced concrete, and marble bases for the landings were also eliminated. These changes no doubt made for cost savings, which perhaps allowed certain refinements to be made to the design. One of these apparently was the use of Indiana limestone – what actually was installed on the façade – instead of original Terra Cotta for the masonry trim.

On June 16, 1914, the Association entered into a contract with the firm of Radner, Usdin and Taub of Hoboken, for carpentry work and hardware for the new synagogue for \$9,600.00.<sup>38</sup> The same day, it signed

<sup>36</sup> Max J. Beyer, Architect, *General Specifications for Synagogue of the Star of Isreal [sic] Association, Hoboken, N.J. and Addenda* (n.d.) [1914].

<sup>37</sup> Max J. Beyer, Architect, *Addenda to the General Mason and Carpenter Specifications for the erection of Synagogue for the Star of Israel Association* (n.d.) [1914].

<sup>38</sup> *Star of Israel Association and Radner, Usdin and Taub, Hoboken, NJ, Agreement for construction of synagogue at 115 – 117 Park Avenue, Hoboken (June 16, 1914).*

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a contract with the Hoboken firm of J. K. Stein, Sanitary Plumber, for the installation of the plumbing and heating systems "according to the Plans and Specifications" for \$2,550.00.<sup>39</sup>

On May 9, 1915, the first Board meeting was held in the new synagogue<sup>40</sup> and on a rainy May 16, 1915, the building was formally dedicated in services conducted by a "noted Boston Rabbi M. Eichler."<sup>41</sup> The new synagogue was greeted with enthusiasm by the community. The *Jersey Journal* noted, "The new pulpit and other equipments of the synagogue presented a splendid appearance and there were many expressions of satisfaction from the members of the church."<sup>42</sup> A 1942 article on the Jewish community of Hoboken, described the Star of Israel synagogue as "one of the most beautiful synagogues in Hudson County"<sup>43</sup> – a sentiment that was echoed some 35 years later by local historian John Heaney.<sup>44</sup>

In 1925, soon after the death of the 81-year-old Rabbi Pincus Eichler, the Star of Israel's first spiritual leader,<sup>45</sup> a group of families broke away from that congregation to found their own synagogue. They purchased a brown sandstone townhouse at 830 Hudson Street, in which they organized the Hoboken Jewish Center (HJC).<sup>46</sup> Just as the founders of Star of Israel sought to establish a more liberal form of Orthodoxy, the HJC continued that trend by establishing Hoboken's first "Conservative" Jewish congregation, which shed some of the more demanding precepts and rituals of Orthodox Judaism.

In 1942, the Star of Israel's membership generated sufficient resources to support a comprehensive interior renovation of the decorative finishes of the synagogue – something that reportedly had not been renovated since the first decorative scheme was applied.<sup>47</sup> The firm of S. Massarsky & Co., Inc. was retained for the painting and decorative finishes.<sup>48</sup> A recent study of the interior finishes studied the two schemes:

The first campaign was primarily stenciling, polychromy, and gilding with aluminum leaf with an amber glaze. The stencil patterns created borders with inset panels...

The second campaign was painted by an artist from the synagogue with the last name of Masarsky [sic]. There is little known about Masarsky or when the work was performed.<sup>49</sup> It has been told that Masarsky was

<sup>39</sup> Star of Israel Association, Agreement with J. K. Stein, Sanitary Plumber, Hoboken, NJ [for installation of plumbing and heating systems at 115-117 Park Avenue] (16 June 1914).

<sup>40</sup> Board Minutes (Excerpted translation), Star of Israel Association (May 9, 1915).

<sup>41</sup> "Boston Rabbi Addresses Jews at Dedication," *Jersey Journal*, 17 May 1915. In the obituary of Rabbi Pincus Eichler, the first spiritual leader of the Star of Israel congregation, it was noted that he was father to Rabbi Max Eichler, "the Zionist leader of Buffalo." See "Ex. Governor Glynn's Funeral Tomorrow," *New York Times* (16 December 1924). It is assumed, but not confirmed, that this Max Eichler was the same Rabbi who presided at the dedication in 1915.

<sup>42</sup> "Boston Rabbi Addresses Jews at Dedication," *Jersey Journal* (17 May 1915).

<sup>43</sup> "Adas Emuno Is First Jewish Temple Here [Partially Illegible]," *Jersey Observer* (7 February 1942).

<sup>44</sup> John J. Heaney, *The Bicentennial Comes to Hoboken*, Booklet (Hoboken NJ: Hoboken American Revolution Bicentennial Committee, 1976): 106.

<sup>45</sup> "Rabbi Pincus Eichler," Obituary, *New York Times* (16 December 1924): 25.

<sup>46</sup> "Jersey City Flat Sold for \$540,000 [Realty transactions]," *New York Times* (19 July 1925): 20.

<sup>47</sup> Darla M. Olson, *United Synagogue of Hoboken, Hoboken, New Jersey - Paint Study*, Report (Hoboken: Darla M. Olson, [Conservator], 12 June 2005).

<sup>48</sup> Star of Israel Congregation, *Agreement between Star of Israel Congregation and S. Massarsky & Co., Inc.* 1942. In a news article that same year, a "S. Massarsky" was named as a charter member of the Star of Israel congregation and was still an active member. See "Adas Emuno Is First Jewish Temple Here [Partially Illegible]," *Jersey Observer* (7 February 1942).

<sup>49</sup> Since the date of that Paint Study report (2005), an unsigned, undated copy of the agreement with S. Massarsky & Co., Inc., has been found in the USH archives, which identifies the year of the contract as 1942.



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from Russia and went to school with Marc Chagall.... The second campaign was trompe-l'oeil, faux finishes, murals, lettering, and decorative free hand painting. The remaining visual evidence of the second campaign are the murals, the sky ceiling in the sanctuary, faux marble finish in the entry lobby (where there remains a "window" in the new faux marble finish) and finally, hand painted lettering [in the foyer]....<sup>50</sup>

In 1946, following World War II and just four years after the extensive renovations, the three "traditional" congregations – Moses Montefiore (Orthodox); Star of Israel ("liberal" Orthodox); and Hoboken Jewish Center (Conservative) – entered into merger discussions as the result of a sharp decline in the number of Jewish families (see discussion above). A proposed resolution setting forth the basic understandings of the merger were drafted by the representatives of the three congregations on May 21, 1946,<sup>51</sup> which then had to be approved by all three congregations. Among the provisions was one that said that the resulting congregation would be Conservative, with religious services to be held at the Star of Israel and the school to be operated out of 830 Hudson Street (apparently there was no intent to retain the Moses Montefiore synagogue building, if indeed it still stood by then).<sup>52</sup> It also specified "mixed pews" [of men and women] and that the vestry in Star of Israel would be set aside for Orthodox services. None of these points, however, caused greater consternation than the one that described this arrangement as temporary and that ultimately a new "centrally located" facility ultimately would be secured to house all functions in one location.<sup>53</sup>

The Star of Israel balked at this last point. In a letter to the Hoboken Jewish Center, the President of the Star of Israel noted that his congregation had adopted all but the provision that called for the ultimate abandonment of its synagogue building; no specific reason was given for its objection.<sup>54</sup> We have no documentation of the discussion within Moses Montefiore. When the final Authorization of Merger was signed by the officers of the Star of Israel Congregation in March 1947, only the Star of Israel and the Hoboken Jewish Center were participating.<sup>55</sup>

The new entity, the United Synagogue of Hoboken (USH), filed its Certificate of Incorporation as a non-profit corporation with the State of New Jersey on December 12, 1947. USH continued to use HJC's former building at 830 Hudson Street for its offices, school, and rabbinical residence, reserving the synagogue building at 115-117 Park Avenue for religious services.

When Hoboken's Jewish community began to regain in strength and numbers in the 1980s, the United Synagogue of Hoboken flourished. By 1997, the congregation decided to sell the building on Hudson Street and consolidate its operations on the Park Avenue site. Proceeds from the sale were used to design and construct a new building adjacent to the synagogue to house its offices, meeting rooms, and educational

<sup>50</sup> Darla M. Olson, *United Synagogue of Hoboken, Hoboken, New Jersey - Paint Study*, Report (Hoboken: Darla M. Olson, [Conservator], 12 June 2005). Olson notes, however, that, due to apparent differences in style and brushwork between the scenic murals (notably the ceiling) and the animal murals (on the side walls), that not all the murals date from the second campaign. The Paint Study offers no further clarification as to which may have been the earlier work.

<sup>51</sup> Hoboken Jewish Center, Moses Montefiore Synagogue, and Star of Israel Synagogue, *Digest of Minutes of Joint Meeting of Committees Representing Traditional Synagogues of Hoboken Re Merger and Proposed Resolution of Merger* (21 May 1946).

<sup>52</sup> See above, fn 21.

<sup>53</sup> Hoboken Jewish Center, Moses Montefiore Synagogue, and Star of Israel Synagogue, *Digest of Minutes of Joint Meeting of Committees Representing Traditional Synagogues of Hoboken Re Merger and Proposed Resolution of Merger* (21 May 1946).

<sup>54</sup> Benjamin Rothbard, President of Star of Israel Congregation, Correspondence with Isador H. Brand, Esq., President of the Hoboken Jewish Center (25 July 1946).

<sup>55</sup> Star of Israel Congregation, *Trustees Authorization of Merger*, Resolution dated 19 March 1947.

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facilities (1999-2000) (Photo 2). The designer was noted Hoboken architect Dean Marchetto & Associates Architects.<sup>56</sup> The addition was dedicated in Spring 2000 as the Kaplan Family Learning Center.<sup>57</sup>

Today the former Star of Israel is the only surviving synagogue in the City of Hoboken. It enjoys the special distinction of having been in active and continuous use as a synagogue since its original construction in 1915. The congregation now has turned its efforts toward the restoration of the building and has retained the services of Alexander Gorlin Architects, an internationally recognized firm based in New York and with extensive knowledge of synagogue design, to assist the congregation in its restoration efforts.<sup>58</sup>

2005 was the congregation's Centennial Year. As part of its restoration campaign, the stained glass windows on the façade were removed and temporary windows installed. The windows, which had suffered damage and deterioration over the years, are being restored as funds become available. Much of the work on the windows of the façade has already been completed and the windows reinstalled. The USH Congregation applied for, and was recently awarded a grant from the Garden State Preservation Trust to assist it in its planning and site management efforts. The New Jersey Historic Preservation Office found the Star of Israel/United Synagogue of Hoboken eligible for the National Register in April 2005.

### *Architectural Significance*

The Star of Israel synagogue is an excellent and remarkably intact example of the American expression of an Eastern European synagogue of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The façade carries subdued elements of the Gothic Revival style, particularly expressed in the blunt-arched window and door openings, and the Romanesque style, the round-headed arch surrounding the rose window. It also has an element of the Moorish Revival style – a style that has often been identified as a “typical” style for a Jewish synagogue – in its twin copper-clad onion domes atop the stair towers at either side of the central bay.

Over the course of its history as a building type, synagogues claimed no particular architectural style as their own, but typically used the styles that predominated in the regions in which they were located.<sup>59</sup> And, in the same way the architectural styles of each region were adopted, synagogues also often echoed the styles of neighboring churches in the same area.<sup>60</sup> Numerous examples of synagogues are found

<sup>56</sup> Dean Marchetto & Associates Architects has offices at 1225 Willow Avenue, Hoboken, NJ.

<sup>57</sup> “History,” *United Synagogue of Hoboken*, official website, URL <http://www.hobokensynagogue.org/History.htm> accessed March 3, 2005.

<sup>58</sup> United Synagogue of Hoboken, Brochure (2004).

<sup>59</sup> A. S. Isaacs, “Recent American Synagogue Architecture,” *American Architect and Building News*, Vol. XCIV No. 1706 (2 September 1908): 73-76; and Joseph Jacobs and A. W. Brunner, “Synagogue Architecture,” *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901 – 1906), Internet site URL: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com> accessed 10 November 2007. (Arnold William Brunner (1857 - 1925) was an American architect educated in Manchester, England and in New York. His own entry in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* notes that he was a graduate of the special architectural course in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Brunner was one of the founders of the Architectural League of New York (1881), was a member and vice-president (1898) of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a fellow of the Institute, and (1902) a member of the Board of Education of New York City. He designed many notable buildings, among them the United States Post Office, Customs House, and Courthouse at Cleveland, Ohio; Temple Beth-El, the synagogues of the congregations Shearith Israel and Shaaray Tefila; and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, all in New York. Brunner was a contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Architecture*, edited by Russell Sturgis, as well as the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.)

<sup>60</sup> Jacobs and Brunner, “Synagogue Architecture,” *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

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throughout Europe built in styles such as Italian Renaissance, Romanesque, Gothic, and Classical styles. Synagogues in the United States also enjoy a full stylistic range, including the Touro synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island (1763), commissioned by prosperous Spanish Jews in the Georgian style;<sup>61</sup> the Greek temple form of a synagogue at Charleston, South Carolina (1840); and the monumental scale of the Classical synagogue on Central Park West, New York, New York.<sup>62</sup> In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, these historicist forms gave way to new, modernist ones – none of which define any particular architectural style for synagogues.

Jewish law provides only very general guidelines for the exterior form of the synagogue: it must have windows, as did the Temple in Jerusalem, and it must rise higher than the surrounding buildings. On the interior, the building should lend itself to Jewish services, as well as the meetings and study sessions that are all part of the traditional uses of a synagogue. In ornamentation, representation of the human form is not allowed, but such things as animals, eagles, the six-pointed Jewish star, foliage, and geometric designs are considered appropriate.

From about the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, especially in western and Central Europe, synagogues began to emerge as significant public buildings. Although a variety of architectural styles with Western roots persisted in synagogue design, the Moorish Revival style took on new popularity with Jewish congregations, as it was thought to be devoid of Christian associations.<sup>63</sup> Some scholars suggest that the Moorish style, which emerged out of Muslim Spain, recalled a golden age of Jewish peace and prosperity under the Medieval Spanish Caliphs.<sup>64</sup> Some also point out that the Jews enjoyed a period of self consciousness and independence in Central Europe during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, which is when the "Oriental" (also called the "neo-islamische" style in Germany) assumed a new importance.<sup>65</sup> However, other research suggests that the bulbous dome – a characteristic not only of Moorish Revival but also predominant "local style" for houses of worship in Poland, Russia, and Eastern Europe – is merely another reflection of attempts to assimilate into the prevailing culture of those areas through the adoption of the regional architectural styles.

A good history of the synagogue form is found in Gruber's article in *Common Bond*, the magazine published by the New York Landmark conservancy.<sup>66</sup>

Although New York's first Jewish congregation was established a little less than 25 years after the Dutch founded New Amsterdam, it was not until 1730 that its first synagogue was built. The Mill Street Synagogue, North America's first, would set the tone for many of the state's future synagogues, incorporating as it did the fashionable architectural motifs popular during the era with the elements common to synagogues for centuries....

<sup>61</sup> Jacobs and Brunner, "Synagogue Architecture," *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

<sup>62</sup> A. S. Isaacs, "Recent American Synagogue Architecture," *American Architect and Building News*, Vol. XCIV No. 1706 (2 September 1908): 73-76.

<sup>63</sup> Sharman Kadish, Ph.D, "Synagogues," *Pevsner Architectural Guides: Looking at Buildings*, Internet site, URL: <http://www.lookingatbuildings.org.uk> accessed 10 March 2005 [not available 2007].

<sup>64</sup> A. S. Isaacs, "Recent American Synagogue Architecture," *American Architect and Building News*, Vol. XCIV No. 1706 (2 September 1908): 73-76.

<sup>65</sup> Marc Grellet, "The History of Jewish Religious Architecture," *Synagogues in Germany: A Virtual Reconstruction*, Internet site, URL: <http://www.cad.architektur.tu-darmstadt.de/synagogen/inter/menu.html> accessed 23 October 2007.

<sup>66</sup> Samuel Gruber, "American Synagogue Architecture," *Common Bond* New York Landmarks Conservancy, Vol. 11, No. 1 (May 1995). URL: <http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSP-InfoClearingHouse/articles/AMERICAN%20SYNAGOGUE%20ARCHITECTURE.htm> accessed 3 March 2005.

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The first Jewish communities in America accepted prevailing architectural styles, as can be seen in the Georgian classicism of Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island (1753), America's oldest surviving synagogue. In the nineteenth century, synagogue design reflected the country's fascination with styles inspired by previous eras -Italianate, Renaissance, Queen Anne, or even Egyptian. However, the Gothic style, so popular for churches, was the one style rarely employed, as it was closely associated with Christianity....

The Moorish style became popular in the post-Civil War period. By the late nineteenth century, however, assimilated Jews increasingly found it too exotic and deemed it "un-American." New classical style edifices---- dignified, austere, monumental, and reflecting the favored style of America's cultural elite were built at a time when many, including established American Sephardic and German Jews, were lamenting the cultural differences of the newly-arriving Eastern European Jews. In 1897, Arnold Brunner designed a new home for Shearith Israel. While overtly responding to the revival of classicism largely fostered by the 1893 Columbian Exposition, Brunner justified its use by citing discoveries in Palestine of ancient synagogues --all classical buildings.

The synagogue took on new forms during the 1920s through the 1950s -- Art Deco, Byzantine, and later the contemporary designs of such renowned architects as Frank Lloyd Wright, Paul Rudolf, Philip Johnson, and Walter Gropius<sup>67</sup> -- evidenced a new architectural confidence of American Jewry in the building of new synagogues in the 1950s.

In the opening years of this century, the Byzantine Revival style was increasingly employed and became especially popular after World War I. During this period, the central dome over the sanctuary space became a common feature....

Jewish communities were quicker to embrace Art Deco and other variants of modernism than other religious communities, but few synagogues were built in the 1930s. Immediately after World War II, the demand for new synagogues in the suburbs created a building boom of modern style community centers, designed to serve a variety of the social, educational and religious needs formerly met in the coherent, essentially homogenous urban neighborhoods. These buildings, which gave special attention to school facilities, were intended as bastions against the assimilation of post-war suburban life. The success of Jewish Americanization and the trauma of the Holocaust encouraged congregations to cast off European historical styles and embrace new architectural forms.

Forsaking the use of styles to evoke historic ties and instead employing the manipulation of form for symbolic purposes, the design of contemporary synagogues often recalls forms such as the mountains or tents associated with the nomadic tribes of ancient Israel.<sup>68</sup>

When the Star of Israel synagogue was built, the newly arrived immigrants who comprised the Jewish community of Hoboken around 1900 were not yet fully assimilated into American culture. They were also Orthodox in their observance, which reinforced the traditional aspects of Jewish practice. It is therefore not surprising that the Star of Israel synagogue reflected the architectural heritage of Central and Eastern

<sup>67</sup> Oscar Israelowitz, *Synagogues of the United States: A Photographic and Architectural Survey* (Brooklyn NJ: Israelowitz Publishing, 1992): 132 – 144.

<sup>68</sup> Samuel Gruber, "American Synagogue Architecture," *Common Bond* New York Landmarks Conservancy, Vol. 11, No. 1 (May 1995). URL: <http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSP-InfoClearingHouse/articles/AMERICAN%20SYNAGOGUE%20ARCHITECTURE.htm> accessed 3 March 2005.

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Europe, Poland, and Russia, just as the church-like Gothic Revival synagogue constructed by Adas Emumo reflected the Reform movement's desire to assimilate into mainstream American culture the mid-1800s.

It has been suggested that the Great Synagogue on the Judengasse (Jew's Lane) in Frankfurt-am-Main informed the design of the Star of Israel (Figures 10 and 11),<sup>69</sup> but that relationship seems tangential at best to this writer.<sup>70</sup> The source for the design, however, is not as important as the facts that 1) the Star of Israel combines elements of both European and Moorish Revival styles; and 2) it was completed in 1915. These both make the Star of Israel a very late iteration of the style of synagogues of that period – a style that had been steadily losing popularity among the Jewish population and that would soon be supplanted by others. As was the case in previous generations of immigrants, the Jewish population experienced a slow but inexorable assimilation into the prevailing culture, and synagogues lost the need for architectural reminiscences of a lost homeland – particularly one that later was hostile to the Jewish community. The Star of Israel, now the United Synagogue of Hoboken, is perhaps one of the last synagogues in New Jersey that proudly reflects that lost heritage through its architecture.

*Architect - Max J. Beyer (1872 – ca. 1960)*

The architect selected by the Star of Israel Association to design their new synagogue was Max J. Beyer (b. 1872; d. ca. 1960). Beyer was the son of noted Hoboken architect and engineer Albert Beyer and his wife Ida, who were born in Germany. Max was born on September 22, 1872, in North Bergen, New Jersey; he received his early education in Jersey City and Hoboken public schools.<sup>71</sup>

In 1889, 17-year-old Max became a clerk in his father's architecture and engineering firm, Beyer and Tivy (later Beyer and McCann), which had its offices in Hoboken. It is reported that he later studied civil engineering at Cooper Union and then architecture at Brooklyn Institute of Architecture, from which he earned a degree in architecture.

1892 was the first year in which Max Beyer was listed as an architect in the Hoboken city directory. His address was shown as 925 Washington Street, which was also his father's (and his) home address.<sup>72</sup> (The offices of Beyer and McCann, his father's architecture and engineering firm, were listed on Hudson Place near River Street, not far from City Hall.) Max's older brother Richard, a civil engineer, had been practicing on his own as a surveyor in Hoboken since 1890, according to the local directory.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Israelowitz, 111.

<sup>70</sup> "Frankfurt-Am-Main Photo Gallery," *Simon Wiesenthal Center Multimedia Learning Center*, Internet site URL: <http://motlc.learningcenter.wiesenthal.org/albums/palbum/p01/a0069p2.html>, accessed 27 November 2007.

<sup>71</sup> Daniel Van Winkle, Ed., "Max J. Beyer," *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, New Jersey 1630 – 1923*, Vol. III (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1924): 479.

<sup>72</sup> *Gopsill's Jersey City, Hoboken, West Hoboken, Union Hill, and Weehawken Directory 1891 - 1892* (Jersey City NJ: W. Andrew Boyd, Publisher, 1892).

<sup>73</sup> *Gopsill's Jersey City, Hoboken, West Hoboken, Union Hill, and Weehawken Directory 1890 - 1891* (Jersey City NJ: W. Andrew Boyd, Publisher, 1891).

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In 1899, his father's firm apparently dissolved and in 1900, Max and his father are said to have opened an architectural practice together in Hoboken.<sup>74</sup> In 1902 at age 56, Albert is said to have retired, giving over the reins to his son Max.<sup>75</sup>

According to Van Winkle's history of Hudson County, Max Beyer went on to become a well-respected architect of residences and commercial and public buildings in Hudson County.<sup>76</sup> After practicing for some years at 832 Garden Street, he moved to the prestigious Second National Bank Building at River and Hudson Streets in Hoboken, where his brother Richard also practiced as a member of the firm of McCann and Beyer, civil engineers and surveyors.<sup>77</sup> His religious affiliation was with Trinity Church (Presbyterian) of Hoboken. In 1900, he married Ella Jurgs, a native of Kiel, Germany and daughter of Hoboken contractor John Jurgs.<sup>78</sup>

In 1924, Van Winkle described the work of Max J. Beyer as follows:

As a designer of beautiful and serviceable residences, of well-planned buildings for commercial purposes, and of public structures, Max J. Beyer has added considerably to the aesthetic and economic development of Hudson County. After careful preparation for his work, Mr. Beyer engaged in business as an architect more than thirty years ago, and hundreds of the residents of Hoboken, Weehawken and vicinity are now living in houses planned by him, transacting business in plants of his design, and meeting in public buildings which were conceived by Mr. Beyer or his father.<sup>79</sup>

Max Beyer's increasing prominence during the years 1906 – 1915 can only be implied from the larger size and better placement of the telephone directory display ads for his architectural practice at the Second National Bank Building, since there is little else that has been found to document his work.<sup>80</sup>

However, something changed Max Beyer's fortunes in 1915 – the same year the Star of Israel synagogue was dedicated. It was the last year in which Beyer's firm took out a display advertisement in the Jersey City-Hoboken city directory, although the firm remained at the same address until around 1927. 1915 was also the year that Max Beyer and his wife moved from their 10-year home address at 504 Hudson Street to 925 Washington Street. In 1920, the census shows Max Beyer residing at 925 Washington Street, Hoboken.<sup>81</sup> In

<sup>74</sup> Daniel Van Winkle, Ed., "Max J. Beyer," *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, New Jersey 1630 – 1923* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1924).

<sup>75</sup> It's interesting to note that Albert Beyer apparently did not retire, but rather changed the spelling of his surname to "Byers" and continued to be listed as an architect until the 1905-1906 directory (see *Boyd's Jersey City and Hoboken Directory 1905 - 1906*. ([n.p.]: Boyd's Directory Co., 1905).

<sup>76</sup> Daniel Van Winkle, Ed., "Max J. Beyer," *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, New Jersey 1630 – 1923* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1924).

<sup>77</sup> After the dissolution of "Beyer and McCann" in the late 1890s, Albert Beyer's son Richard apparently entered into partnership with his father's former partner Thomas McCann around 1904 (see *Boyd's Jersey City and Hoboken Directory 1904 - 1905* ([n.p.]: Boyd's Directory Co., 1904).)

<sup>78</sup> Daniel Van Winkle, Ed., "Max J. Beyer," *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, New Jersey 1630 – 1923* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1924).

<sup>79</sup> Van Winkle, 478-479. Unfortunately, Winkle provides no further details concerning the names or locations of the buildings designed by Beyer.

<sup>80</sup> *Boyd's Jersey City and Hoboken Directory 1906 - 1907* ([n.p.]: Howell & Co., Publishers, 1906, 1907, 1908, and 1909); *Polk's Jersey City, Hoboken, and Hudson County Directory* (New York: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1915).

<sup>81</sup> "Hoboken, NJ," *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 – Population* (U.S. Government Census).

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spite of these hints of a declining practice, Hudson County historian Daniel Van Winkle included a glowing biography of Max J. Beyer in his three-volume *History of Hudson County* in 1924.<sup>82</sup>

With the onset of the Great Depression, Mr. Beyer's practice seemed to migrate from location to location, changing every year or two, which suggests instability. It remained rooted in downtown Hoboken, however, and always in the vicinity of Newark, Hudson, and Washington Streets – the core of the business district around City Hall. In 1930, Max and his wife moved to "Park View Place" in Weehawken, following his brother Richard and his wife, who moved to that community a year earlier.<sup>83</sup>

In 1943, when his brother Richard was killed in a fire, Max Beyer and his wife were reported as living in Teaneck, NJ,<sup>84</sup> although his office was still shown as being in Hoboken, at 68 Hudson Street.<sup>85</sup> The last known address for his architectural practice was recorded in 1953 as being 40 Hudson Place; he would have been 81 years old.<sup>86</sup> By 1955, Max Beyer lived at 478 Linden Avenue in Teaneck. In 1960, when Max Beyer would have been 88 years old, all listings for Max Beyer ceased to appear in the Teaneck city directory.<sup>87</sup> No information could be found as to the date of his death or other residence.

Although the full scope of Max J. Beyer's lifetime architectural achievements may never fully be recognized given the limited data available, his Star of Israel synagogue nonetheless stands as a testament to his substantial abilities as an architect. It is a unified composition that demonstrates his mastery over a wide-ranging architectural vocabulary. It is aesthetically pleasing, well-proportioned, and well constructed. It also demonstrates Beyer's mastery of the principles of engineering, perhaps a result of his family's expertise in that discipline. The 12' shortening of the footprint, for instance, required a quick rethinking of the entire building envelope and structural system, no doubt under substantial time pressure. The deft handling of the other modifications to the original design and specifications was also impressive, considering that only six months elapsed between the devastating fire and the start of construction.

It is probable that Max J. Beyer designed many beautiful and useful buildings, although we haven't yet identified them. However, even if the Star of Israel synagogue were his only design, it deserves recognition by the National Register of Historic Places as both as the work of a master and as the only remaining architectural evidence of the significant history of Jewish settlement in Hoboken.

### Conclusions

The United Synagogue of Hoboken offers us rare surviving evidence of the significant Jewish community of Hoboken's late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, which has enjoyed an uninterrupted life as an active synagogue from the date of its original construction. As such, the building is eligible for listing on the

<sup>82</sup> Daniel Van Winkle, Ed., "Max J. Beyer," *History of the Municipalities of Hudson County, New Jersey 1630 – 1923* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1924).

<sup>83</sup> "Weehawken, NJ," *Fifteenth Census of the United States* (1930).

<sup>84</sup> "Richard A. Beyer and Wife Killed in Florida Fire," News clipping (no publication name, n.d.) [February 1943]; "Florida Fire Kills New Jersey Couple," *New York Times* (22 February 1943): 34.

<sup>85</sup> *New Jersey [Registered] Architects Directory*, 1943 Ed.

<sup>86</sup> *New Jersey [Registered] Architects Directory*, 1953 Ed.

<sup>87</sup> Reference Librarian, Teaneck Public Library, Teaneck, NJ, citing Teaneck, NJ, City Directory, 1955 and 1960 Ed. Local History Collections, Teaneck Public Library, Teaneck, NJ.

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National Register of Historic Places (National Register) under **Criterion A**, as evidence of the a pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the City of Hoboken and the State of New Jersey.

In addition, the Star of Israel Synagogue is a remarkably intact example of an American expression of a European synagogue of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. The building is a late example of the period during which it enjoyed its greatest popularity in the United States and as such, it is one of the rare 20th Century examples of its type. Its designer, Hoboken architect Max J. Beyer, was recognized as a significant architect in the Hudson County area during his lifetime and thus qualifies the building as the "work of a master." All of these qualities render the building eligible for **Criterion C** (Architecture), having met Criteria Consideration A (Religious Properties).



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Chronology

Date	Description of Event
1860	First Jewish settlers arrive in Hoboken
1871	Reform Jewish Congregation of Adath [Adas] Emuno is founded in Hoboken.
1872	Sept 22 - Max Beyer born (Van W 479)
1873	First Hebrew Ladies Aid Society formed (Beavers)
1877	"Fouquet & Beyer" dissolved; firm "Beyer & Tivy" [Albert and Aloys] founded.
1878	Note conflict: Van Winkle says Beyer and Tivy founded this year (1878 – 1892)
1883	Reform Congregation of Temple Adas Emuno erects synagogue at 637 Garden St on land donated by Stevens Family.
1884	Beyer & Tivy, Surveyors, located at 21 Newark Avenue, Hoboken NJ
1889	Beyer and Tivy dissolved; Beyer and McCann founded (Conflicts)
1890-91	Directory lists Max Beyer as clerk, with home at 369 Washington Max Beyer attends Cooper Union, NYC, in civil engineering after high school)
1891 –	No. 113 Park Avenue occupied by a 3-story tenement.
1892	No. 115, 117, 119, and 121, occupied each by 2-story buildings.
1892- 1893	Orthodox Congregation Moses Montefiore is founded reportedly by Eastern European Jews. Beyer, Max, architect, 925 Wash (possible matriculation year from Brooklyn Institute of Architecture? (Note conflict: Van Winkle says he joined Beyer & Tivy in 1889 after he completed his arch courses, but B+T dissolved that year)
1895	Sir Moses Montefiore dies; Moses Montefiore Synagogue reported to be dedicated; Moses Montefiore Ladies Aid Society founded (79 Grand).
1897 - 1898	News article in notes that Orthodox Cong. Moses Montefiore is located at 76 Grand Street. Free Public Library dedicated (built under "architectural supervision of Albert Beyer (father of Max Beyer), who also may have been the designer.
1899	Beavers <i>Directory</i> notes Moses Montefiore founded this year: p34. [Note Conflict: <i>Jewish Encyclopedia</i> says it was founded in 1892] [Note Conflict: Van Winkle says Beyer & McCann dissolved this year, not 1896]
1900	Max Beyer forms partnership with his father, according to Van Winkle; and marries Ella Jurgs, daughter of contractor John Jurgs (dec'd) of Hoboken.
1901	Moses Montefiore Congregation built at 76 Grand Street (Note Conflict: 1910 directory lists 80 Grand St; Jersey Journal ca. 1950s reports 79 Grand St. and dedication in 1895). Hebrew Institute Founded at 79 Grand St.
1902	Albert Beyer retires; son Max Beyer takes over architectural practice.
1903	Hebrew Institute founded at 79 Grand St. (Note conflict: date of school founded is 1901); Max Beyer, Architect, listed at 832 Garden St.
1904- 1905	1904 - Hebrew Inst. Loan Assn organized (79 Grand St), supported by capital from Hebrew Institute.
1905- 1906	Hoboken's Jewish population is 1000, Jersey City's is 6,000; United Hebrew Representatives organized at 79 Grand St. Beyer, Max, arch., located at 632 Garden St. <b>Orthodox congregation of Star of Israel organized; Cert. of Incorporation filed with NJ on 1/4/1906; Occupies building at 111 Grand Street.</b>

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1906 – 1907	Albert Beyer (or Byers) no longer listed in city directory (deceased?) Max Beyer, arch., moves offices to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nat'l Bank Bldg (father's former offices); moves home to 504 Hudson St.
1909- 1910	Cong. Moses Montefiore, shown at 80 Grand (first listing in city directory) Beyer, Max J. arch., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nat'l Bank Bldg, h 504 Hudson (first display ad)
1910	<b>Purchase of 2 lots at 115 -117 Park Avenue:</b> <b>Jan 13 - George F. Brandt and Annie E. his wife to Star of Israel Association</b> <b>Feb 1 - Daniel Wallace, unmarried, to Star of Israel Association</b> Nov 10 – <i>Jersey Journal</i> has article on benefit for new synagogue.
1914	Jan 18 – query re paying taxes on building at 115-117 Park Ave. Ca. April 5 – 19 – Fire destroys 111 Grand St. Max Beyer hired as architect for new synagogue (n.d.); General Bid Specs and two addenda for new synagogue prepared. June 16 - Contract signed between RADNER, USDIN & TAUB, contractors June 16 - Contract between J. K. STEIN SANITARY PLUMBER June 20 – Jefferson Trust correspondence re mortgage of \$23,000. Sept 13 – Cornerstone is laid Sept 19 –Correction to deed from Wallace to Star of Israel Sept 24 – Mortgage for \$20,000 issued by Jefferson Trust for Star of Israel.
1915	Star of Israel, listed at 115 Park Ave Max J. Beyer, Arch., listed at 77 River Rd (no display ad); home moved to 925 Washington Synagogue completed after 6 months of construction. May 15 – Dedication Ceremonies at Star of Israel
1925	Benjamin Margolies sells 3-story brownstone at 830 Hudson to Hoboken Jewish Center for \$18,000.
1927	Max Beyer offices listed at 77 River Road.
1930	Max Beyer moves home to Weehawken
1931	Max Beyer moves offices to 51 Newark St
1934	Max Beyer moves offices to 93 Washington St
1935	Max Beyer moves offices to 52 Newark St.
1937	Max Beyer moves offices to 116 Hudson St. Sanborn Map shows 113 Park Avenue (now parking lot) with 2 story "Flats" with basement and 2-story rear addition; 115 – 117 Park Avenue occupied by Star of Israel Synagogue; and 119 and 121 Park Avenue each occupied by a 2 story dwelling, with 1-story front porch at rear of lot.
Late 1930s	Hoboken's Jewish pop. at peak of 3,500 families. There are 4 synagogues in Hoboken.
1942	Agreement between STAR OF ISRAEL CONGREGATION and S. MASSARSKY & CO, a corporation of NJ, Hoboken to paint and decorate the interior of the synagogue
1943	Max Beyer moves offices to 68 Hudson St.; In article about death of Richard and Caroline Beyer in fire in FL, Max J. Beyer is described as architect living in Teaneck.
1946	May 21 – Moses Montefiore, USH, and Star of Israel discuss possible merger. July 24 - HJC and S/I merge to form USH [SOURCE: Trustees Authorization of Merger].
1947	Dec 10 – USH incorporated (Cert of Inc), filed 12/20/47 (NJ State Bus Gateway Service)
1948	Max Beyer offices at 54 Newark St.
(Post 1951)	Demolition of dwellings at 119- 121 Park Ave. (Year? – sometime between 1951 and 1979)
1953	Max Beyer offices at 40 Hudson Pl

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<b>1955</b>	Max Beyer home shown at 478 Linden Ave., Teaneck, NJ
<b>1960</b>	Max Beyer no longer listed in any directory (deceased?)
<b>Ca 1972</b>	Congregation Adas Emuno moves to Leonia.
<b>1984</b>	USH membership climbs to 80 families.
<b>1997</b>	USH sells building at 840 Hudson St.; consolidates operations at 115-117 Park Avenue synagogue.
<b>1999</b>	Addition built at 119-121 Park Avenue (Dean Marchetto, Arch.)
<b>2000</b>	Kaplan Learning Center (addition) dedicated.

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#### Abbreviations

HFPL Hoboken Free Public Library, Hoboken, NJ 07030  
MDKA Mary Delaney Krugman Associates, Inc., Montclair, NJ  
NR National Register of Historic Places  
SR New Jersey Register of Historic Places  
USH United Synagogue of Hoboken, Hoboken, NJ

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United Synagogue of Hoboken  
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*Hoboken Land & Improvement Co. to John N. Smith. Deed dated April 28, 1863 and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office May 26, 1863, in Book 101 at page 137 [Property located at 115 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ].*

*Hoboken Land & Improvement Co. to John N. Smith (co-signed by Katie J. Myddleton). Abstract. Lease dated February 14, 1868 and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office May 1, 1868 in Book 167 at page 604 [Strip of land at the rear of 115 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ].*

*Hoboken Land & Improvement Co. to Margaret Wallace, Wife of Daniel Wallace. Deed dated Jan 14, 1888 and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office February 9, 1888 in Book 449 at page 607 [Property located at 117 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ].*

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*Myddleton*,<sup>1</sup> *Katie J., Widow, to George F. Brandt & Annie E., his wife.* Deed and Assignment of Lease dated Feb 1, 1905, and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office Feb 2, 1905 in Book 901 at page 28 [Property located at 115 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ].

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Rothbard, Benjamin, President of Star of Israel Congregation. Correspondence with Isador H. Brand, Esq., President of the Hoboken Jewish Center. 25 July 1946. Archives of USH, Hoboken, NJ.

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*Rouse, German to Jacob Peter Mansell.* Abstract. Agreement relating to party wall dated May 4, 1863 and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office May 14, 1863 in Book 100 at page 233 [Properties located at Nos. 117 and 119 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ]. Collections of United Synagogue of Hoboken.

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<sup>1</sup> Alternate spelling: "Middleton."

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*Star of Israel Association, a Corporation of New Jersey, from George F. Brandt, and Annie E. Brandt, his wife.* Deed dated Jan 13, 1910, and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office January 15, 1910, in Book 1059 at page 8 [Property located at 115 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ, including rights and interest in the lease of 5' strip at rear of property].

*Star of Israel Association to Jefferson Trust Co.* Mortgage for \$20,000.00 dated September 24, 1914, and recorded in the Hudson County Register's Office September 26, 1914 in Book 835 at page 59.

*Star of Israel Congregation. Articles of Agreement between Star of Israel Congregation and S. Massarsky & Co., Inc.* 1942. Archives of the USH, Hoboken, NJ.

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary encompasses the footprint of the historic synagogue building. Thus it is nearly coextensive with the two parcels historically owned by the United Synagogue of Hoboken, known on the City of Hoboken Tax Map as Block 177, Lots 6 and 7, which is also has the street address of 115-117 Park Avenue. The Lot 6 and 7 are both 20 feet wide, for a total width of 40 feet. Lot 6 is 95 feet deep; Lot 7 is 100 feet deep (see Tax Map in Maps Section).

### VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The proposed boundary excludes the new construction that is attached to the historic synagogue building. The other parcels owned by the USH do not contribute to the significance of the proposed building and are not included within the boundaries of the National Register property.

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**HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS**

- Photo H-1 of 3 Star of Israel Synagogue (now United Synagogue of Hoboken), *circa* 1920.
- Photo H-2 of 3 Interior view of sanctuary, *circa* 1945.
- Photo H-3 of 3 View of bimah, looking E, *circa* 1945.

**PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Unless otherwise indicated, following information applies to all of the photographs listed below:

- 1. *Name of Property:* United Synagogue of Hoboken (formerly Star of Israel)
- 2. *County, City, and State where located:* Hudson County, Hoboken, New Jersey
- 3. *Name of Photographer:* Mary Delaney Krugman, JD, MSHP
- 4. *Date of Photographs:* April 11, 2005; November 1, 2007
- 5. *Location of original digital files:* Mary Delaney Krugman Associates, Inc.  
36 Park Street  
Montclair, New Jersey 07042

*Number of photograph/Description:*

- Photo 1 of 31 United Synagogue of Hoboken, formerly Star of Israel synagogue (USH), looking SE.
- Photo 2 of 31 USH and 2000 addition (119 – 121 Park Avenue), looking SE.
- Photo 3 of 31 USH, looking NE.
- Photo 4 of 31 Detail of copper-clad onion dome and finials of south stair tower, looking NE.

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- Photo 5 of 31      Door arches over main entry and painted sign "United Synagogue of Hoboken," looking ESE.
- Photo 6 of 31      Detail: ghost of "Star of Israel" in red mosaic tiles under painted sign.
- Photo 7 of 31      North door of main entry, looking ESE.
- Photo 8 of 31      Detail of capital of south column of the south entry door, looking ESE.
- Photo 9 of 31      Band of three stained glass windows at second story of façade, looking ESE.
- Photo 10 of 31     Interior view of main entry doors, looking W.
- Photo 11 of 31     Doorway from main lobby into 2000 addition, looking NNE.
- Photo 12 of 31     Plaque commemorating the founding of the congregation and dedication of the synagogue on north wall of the main lobby, looking N.
- Photo 13 of 31     View of the social hall/all purpose room, looking E.
- Photo 14 of 31     Interior view of main entrance and staircase to upper levels, looking SW.
- Photo 15 of 31     Detail of south stair hall looking down from third floor.
- Photo 16 of 31     Main level of the sanctuary on second floor, looking E.
- Photo 17 of 31     Detail of bimah on east wall of sanctuary, looking E.
- Photo 18 of 31     View of rear of sanctuary, looking W.
- Photo 19 of 31     View from balcony in the sanctuary (on third floor), looking east.
- Photo 20 of 31     Detail of ornamental wrought iron rods that support the balcony, looking SE. Photograph provided by USH [n.d.].
- Photo 21 of 31     View of band of three stained glass windows at the rear of the sanctuary (second floor of building), looking W.

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- Photo 22 of 31 Interior view of the rose window at the third floor of the building, looking W.
- Photo 23 of 31 View of the NW corner of the sanctuary showing location where addition joins the original building, looking NW.
- Photo 24 of 31 One of two large chandeliers in the center of the sanctuary that appear to be original, looking NE.
- Photo 25 of 31 Detail of ornamental metal canopy covering the connections of one of the larger chandeliers in sanctuary, looking NE.
- Photo 26 of 31 One of four smaller chandeliers at the rear of the sanctuary, looking NE.
- Photo 27 of 31 Typical wall sconce found in the sanctuary, looking S.
- Photo 28 of 31 Detail of ceiling mural in the sanctuary.
- Photo 29 of 31 Composite: Detail of murals found on north wall of the balcony in the sanctuary, looking N.
- Photo 30 of 31 View of east side of Park Avenue, looking NE.
- Photo 31 of 31 View of west side of Park Avenue, looking N.

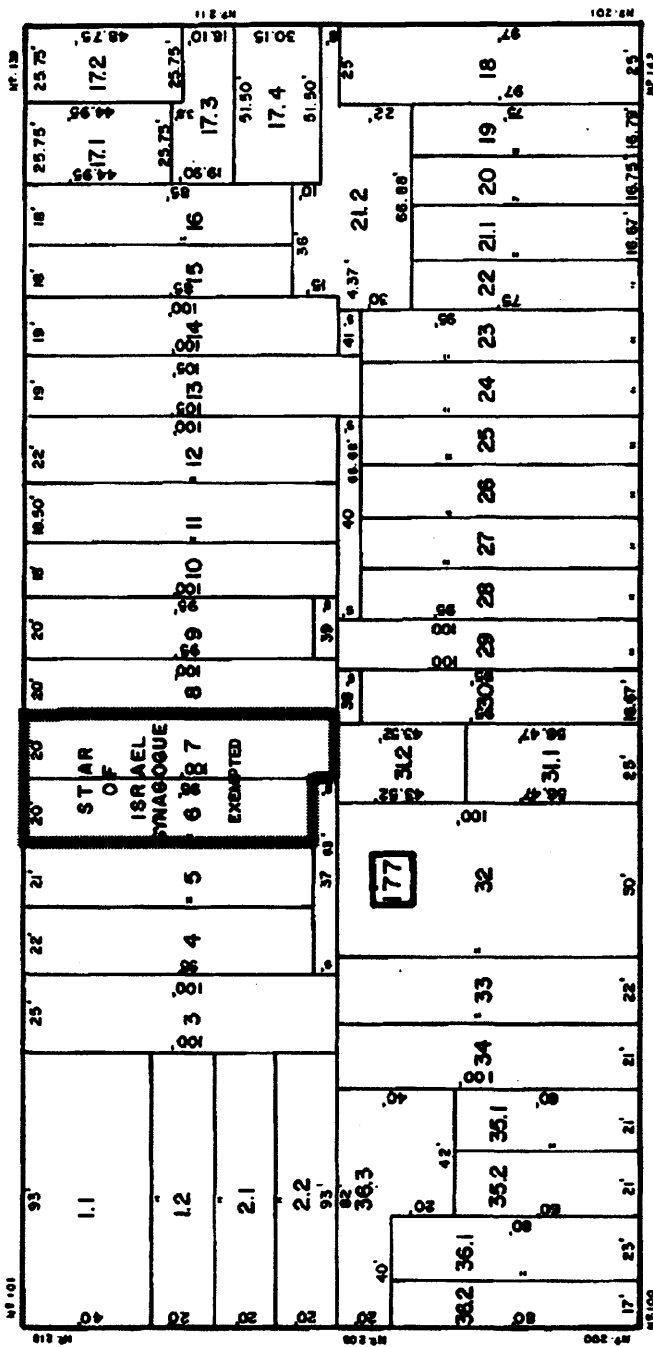


UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF HOBOKEN  
115-117 Park Street  
City of Hoboken Hudson County, New Jersey



**Location Maps**

SECOND



FIRST

The National Register boundary for the United Synagogue of Hoboken property follows the outer lot lines that encompass Lots 6 and 7 on Block 177, on the Tax Map of the City of Hoboken, in Hudson County, New Jersey, as shown above.

**National Register Boundaries**

**MEP ENGINEER**  
 PAUL DEMS ASSOCIATES  
 201 CROCCOLA PLACE  
 WESTFIELD, NJ 07090  
 T: (908) 317-9022  
 F: (908) 317-9022

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**  
 ISRAEL A. SENJUK, P.C.  
 ONE WOODBRIDGE CENTER, SUITE 400  
 WOODBRIDGE, NJ 07095  
 T: (732) 634-1700  
 F: (732) 634-3645

**ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT**  
 HARMONIC DESIGN LLC  
 110 CORALHUS AVENUE  
 RIDGEWOOD, NJ 07093  
 T: (201) 925-4911

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**  
 TRILITHION DESIGN ASSOCIATES  
 40 WORTH STREET, SUITE 1400  
 NEW YORK, NY 10013  
 T: (212) 475-7740  
 F: (212) 475-7824

**ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATOR**  
 DARLA H. OLSON  
 720 HONORCE STLENO C13  
 HOBOKEN, NJ 07030  
 T: (201) 643-9890  
 F: (201) 643-9893

**SPECIFICATIONS CONSULTANT**  
 WILLIAM JACQUETTE ARCHITECT  
 100 WEST 94th STREET, 20G  
 NEW YORK, NY 10024-7013  
 T: (212) 463-3147  
 F: (212) 465-4447

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**UNITED SYNAGOGUE  
 OF  
 HOBOKEN**

115 PARK AVE  
 HOBOKEN, NJ 07030  
 T: (201) 659-4000  
 F: (201) 659-2614

**ALEXANDER GORLIN  
 ARCHITECT LLC**

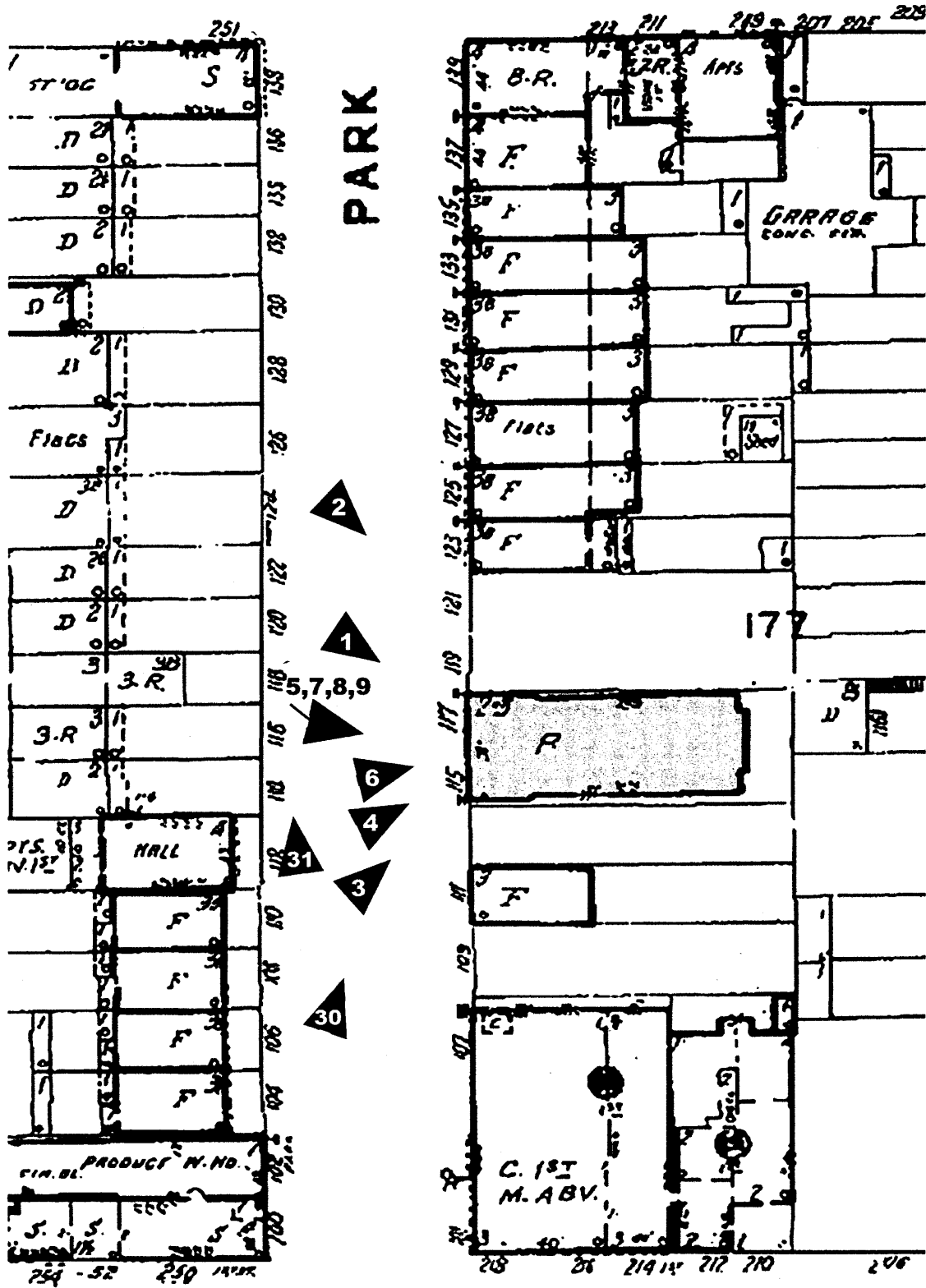
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SITE PLAN

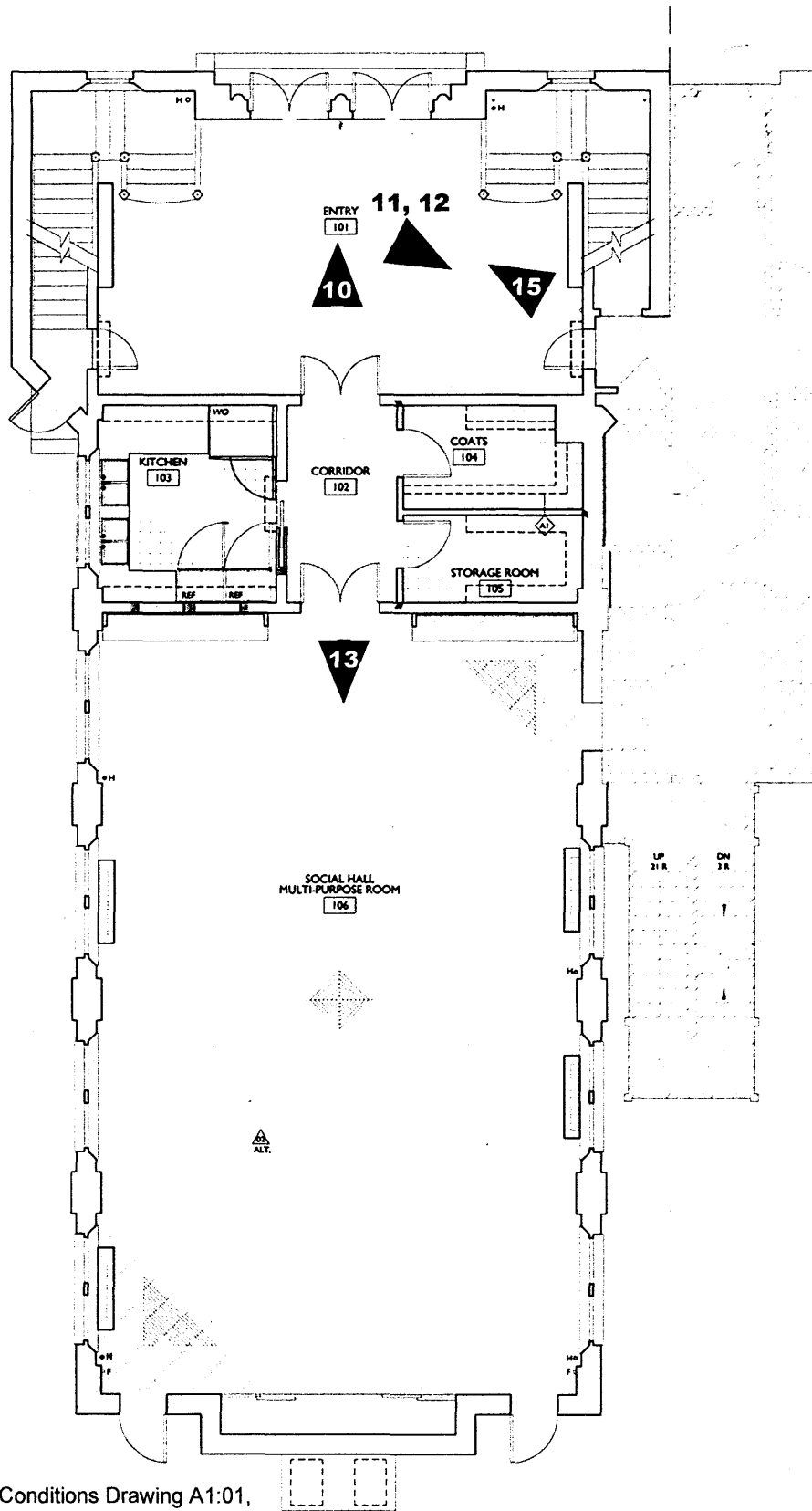
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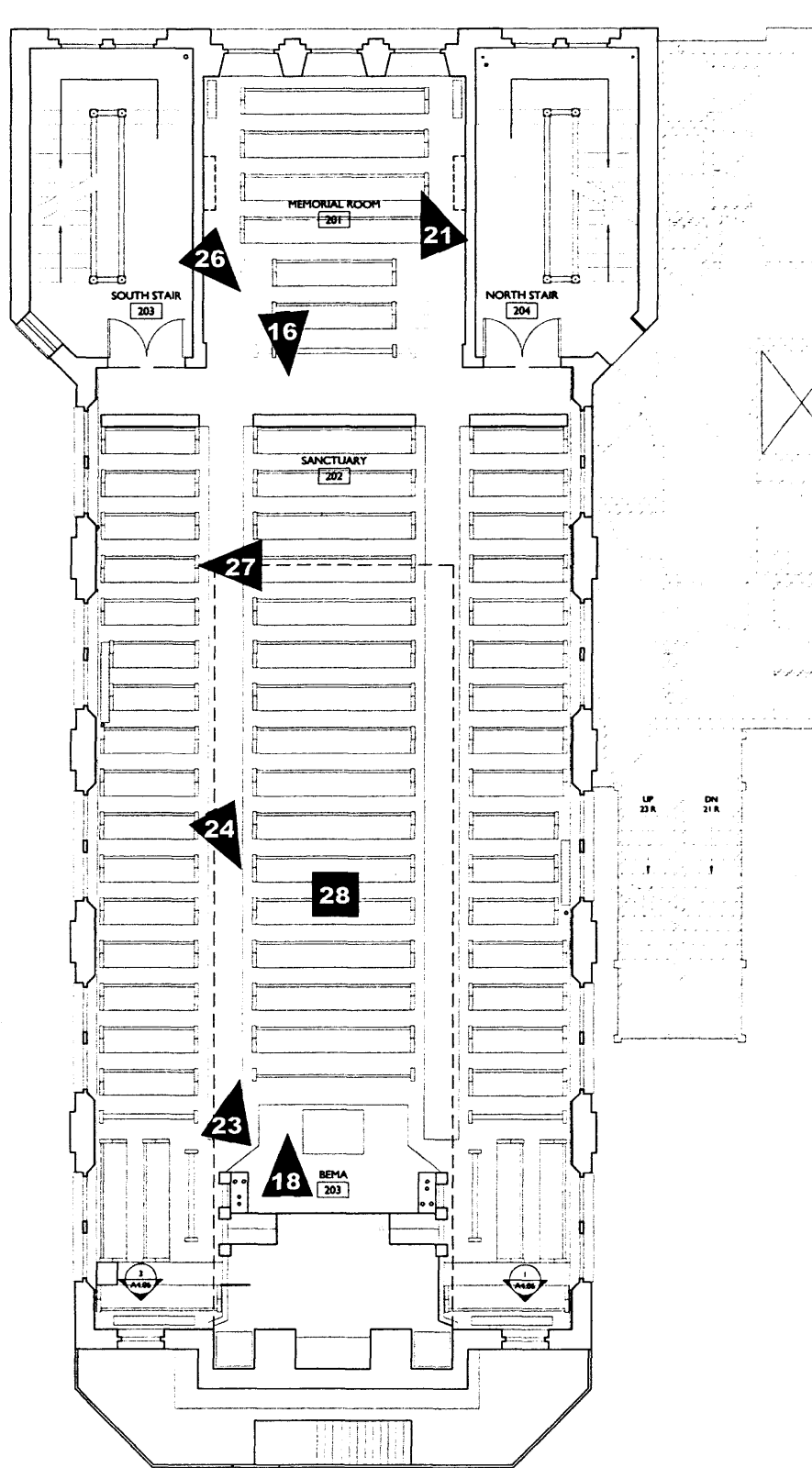
Based on 1995 Sanborn Map.

**Photo Orientation  
Exterior**



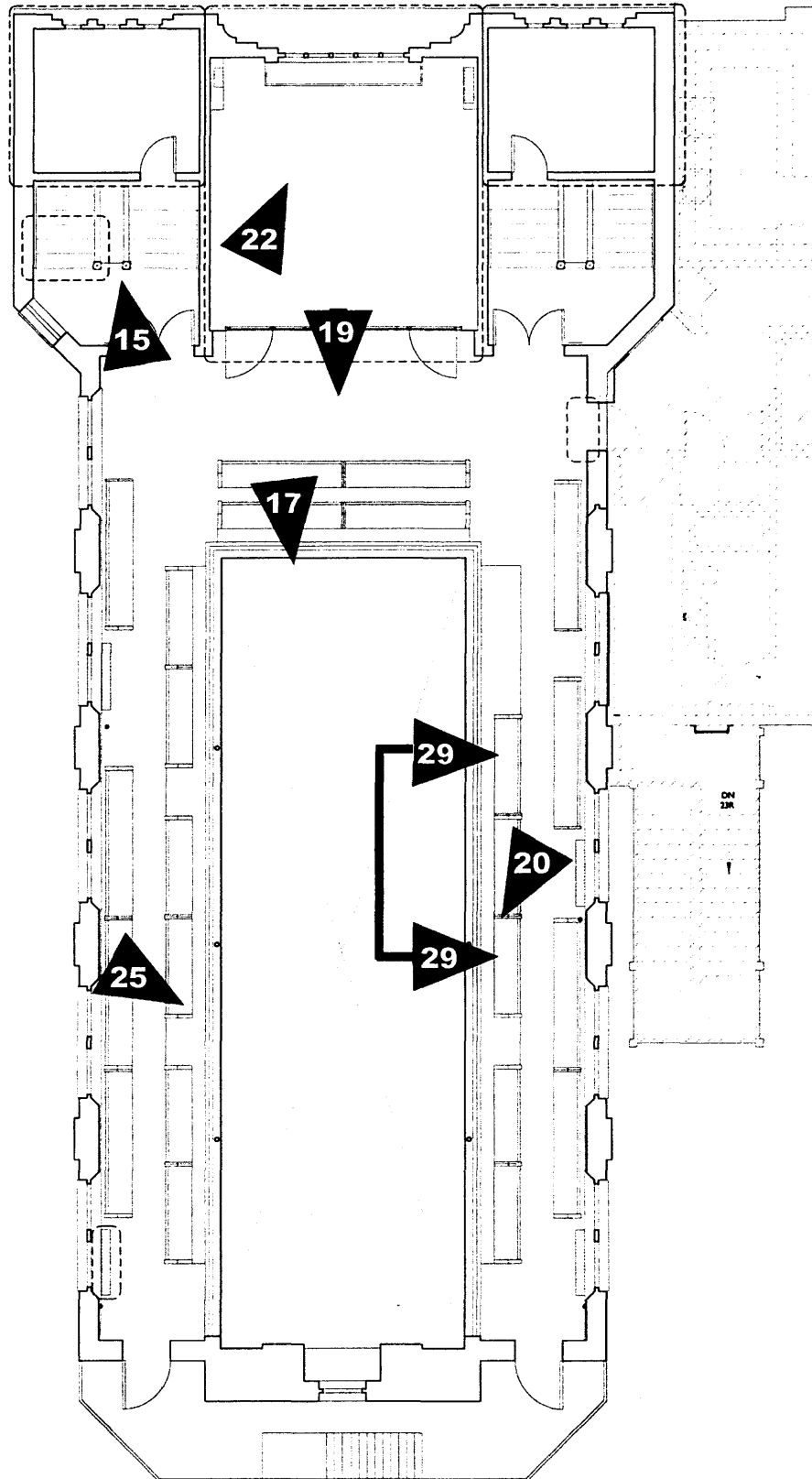
Based on Existing Conditions Drawing A1:01,  
Alexander Gorlin Architects, LLC.

**Photo Orientation  
First Floor**



Based on Existing Conditions Drawing A1:02  
Alexander Gorlin Architects, LLC.

**Photo Orientation  
Second Floor**



Based on Existing Conditions Drawing A1:03  
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**Photo Orientation  
Third Floor**

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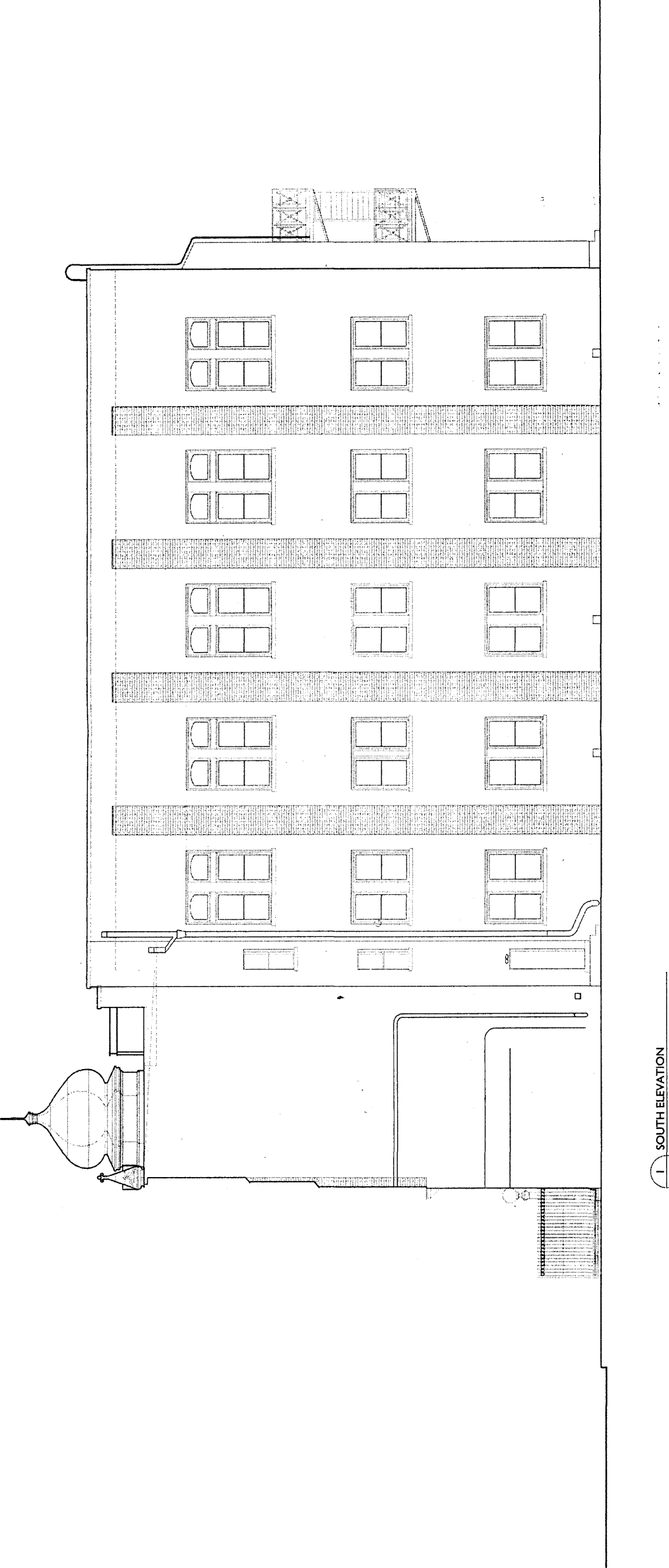
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EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS SOUTH	

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1 SOUTH ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"



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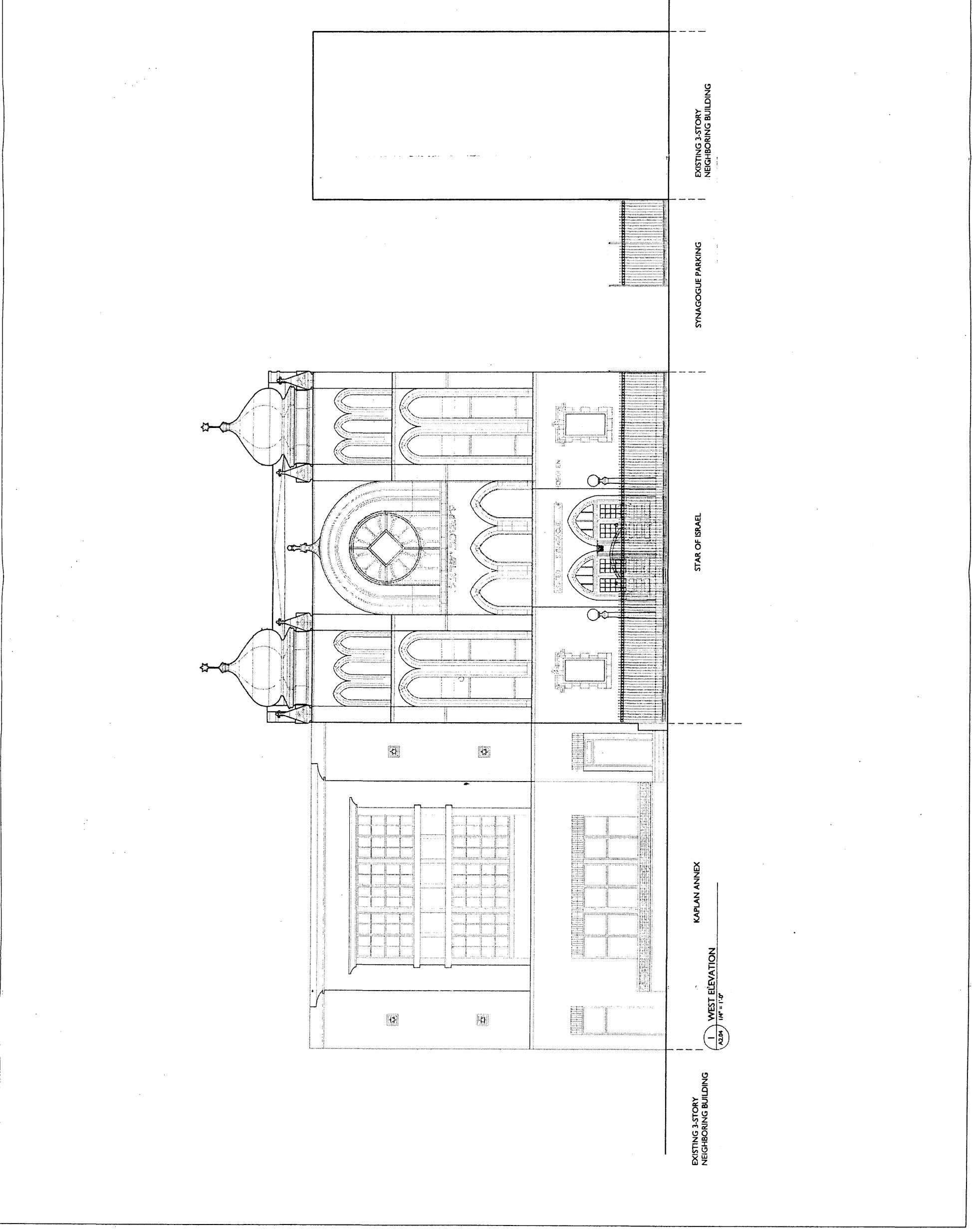
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A2.04



1 WEST ELEVATION  
 1/4" = 1'-0"

EXISTING 3-STORY NEIGHBORING BUILDING

KAPLAN ANNEX

STAR OF ISRAEL

SYNAGOGUE PARKING

EXISTING 3-STORY NEIGHBORING BUILDING

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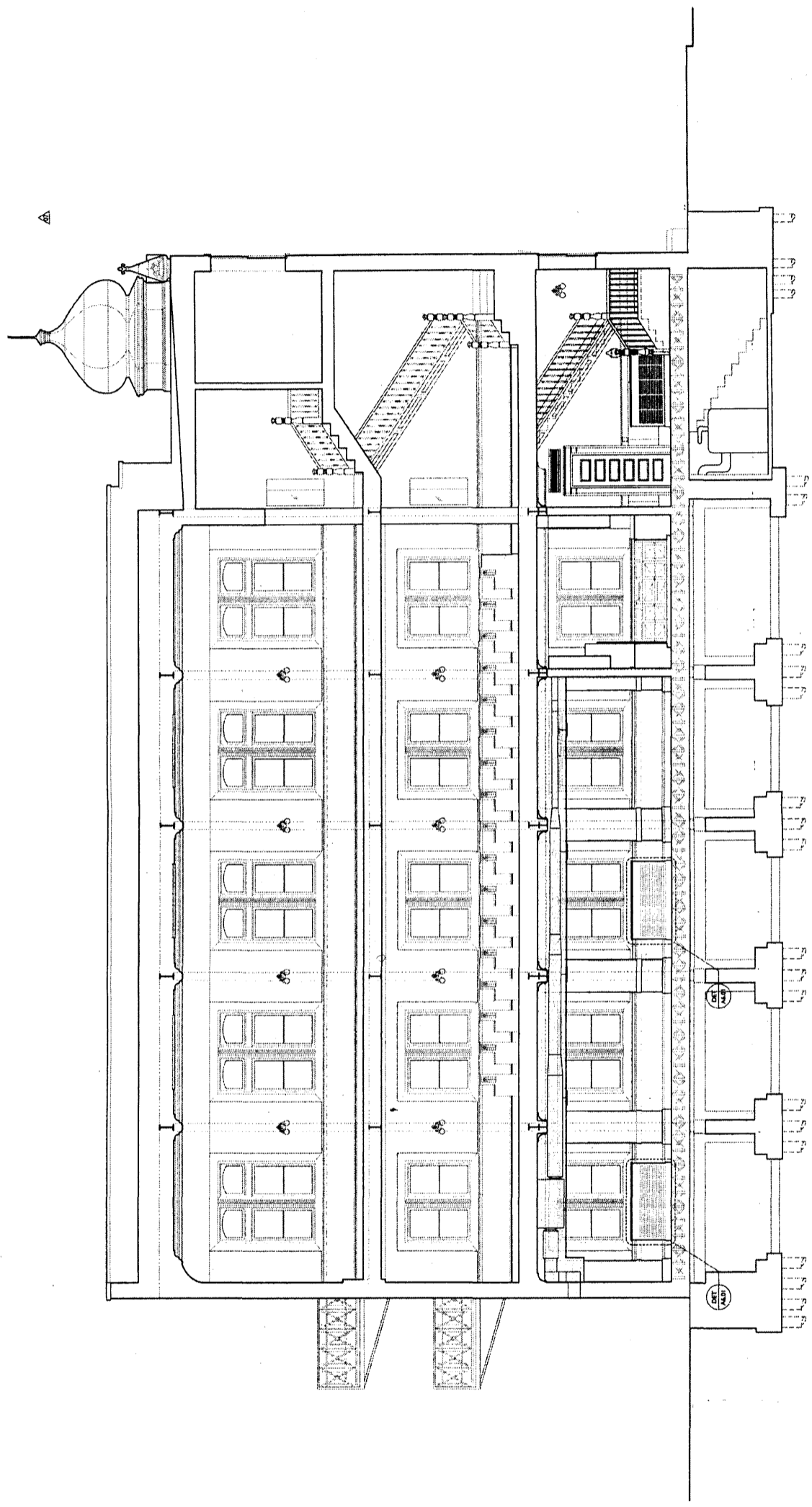
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**A3.01**



1 LONGITUDINAL SECTION AA  
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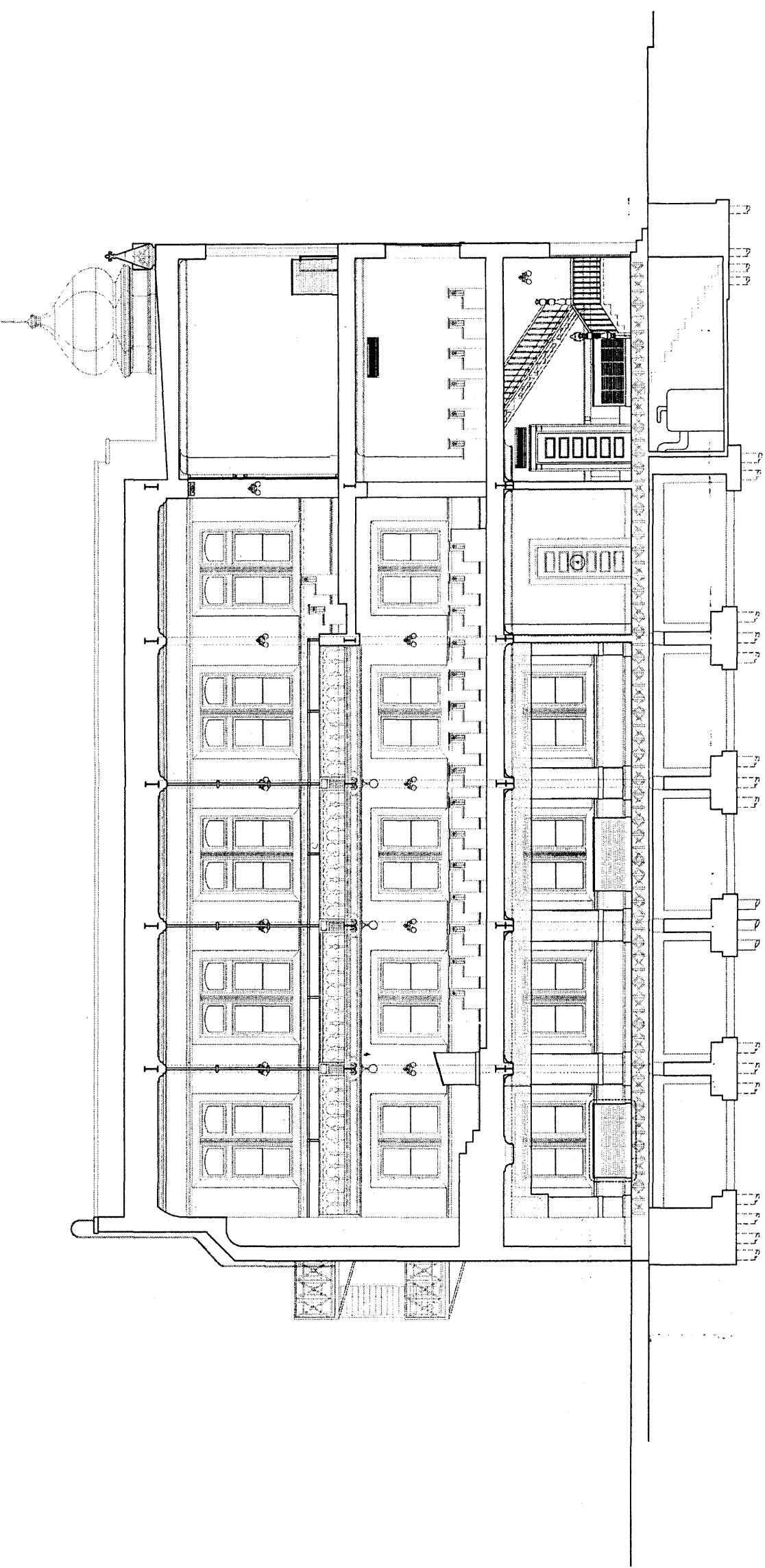
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**A3.02**



I LONGITUDINAL SECTION BB  
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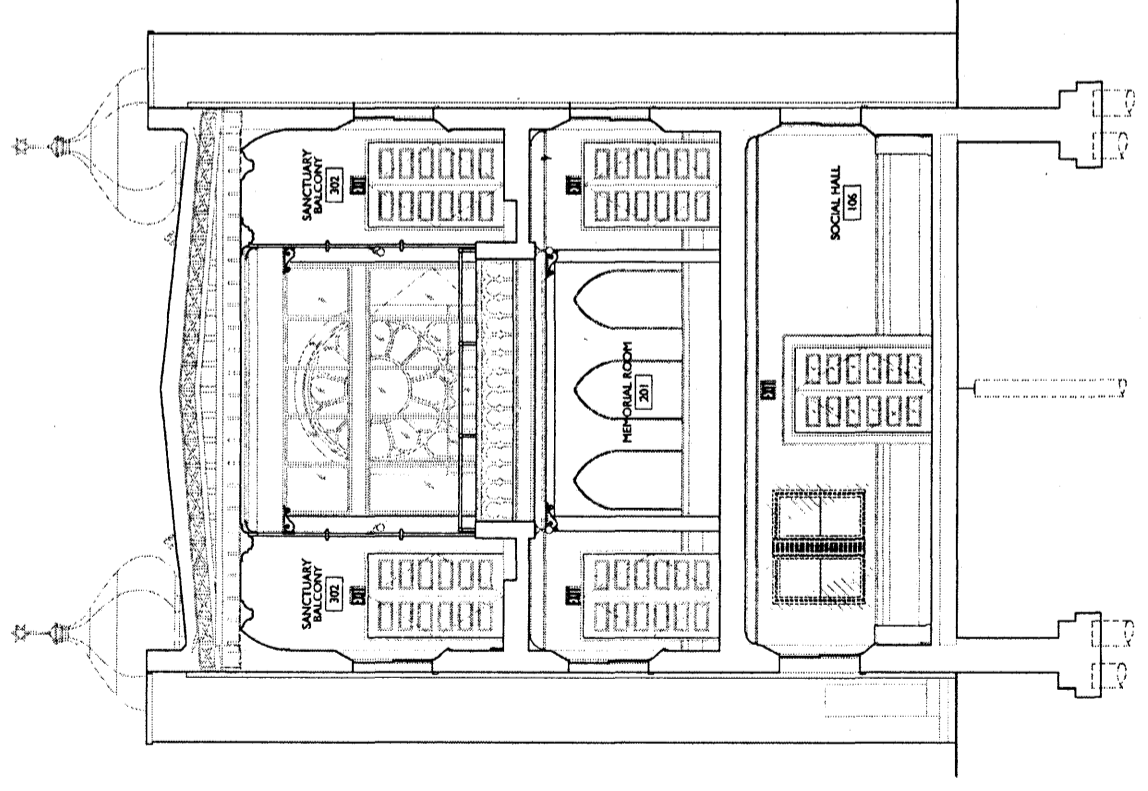
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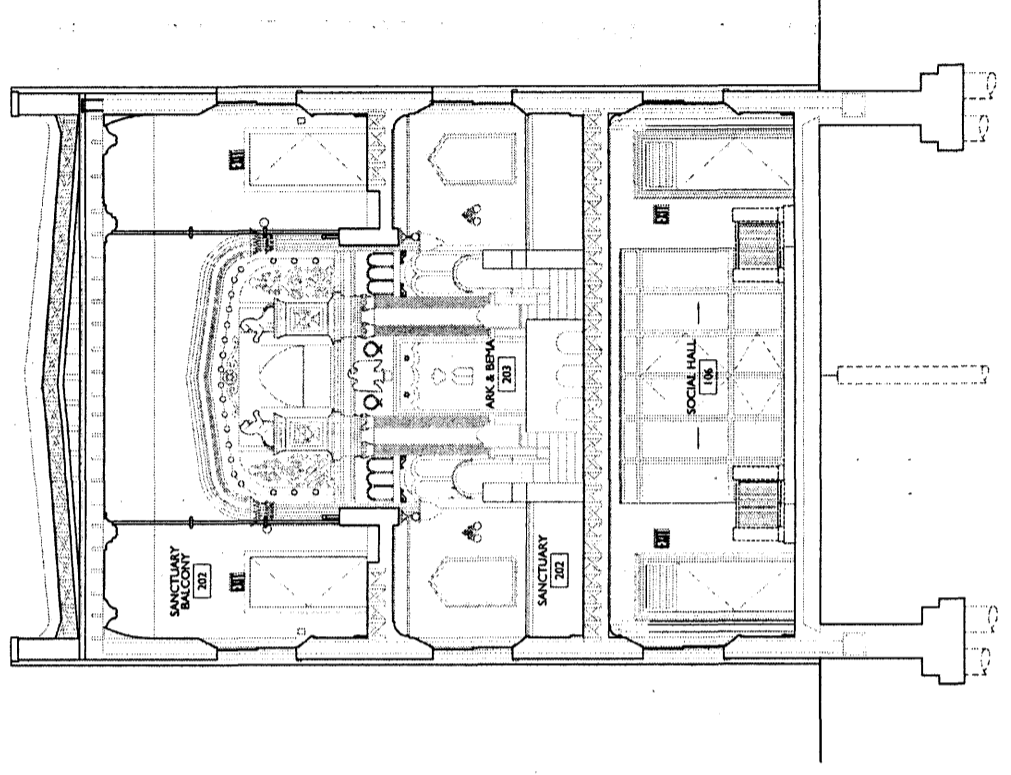
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A3.03



1 TRANSVERSE SECTION CC  
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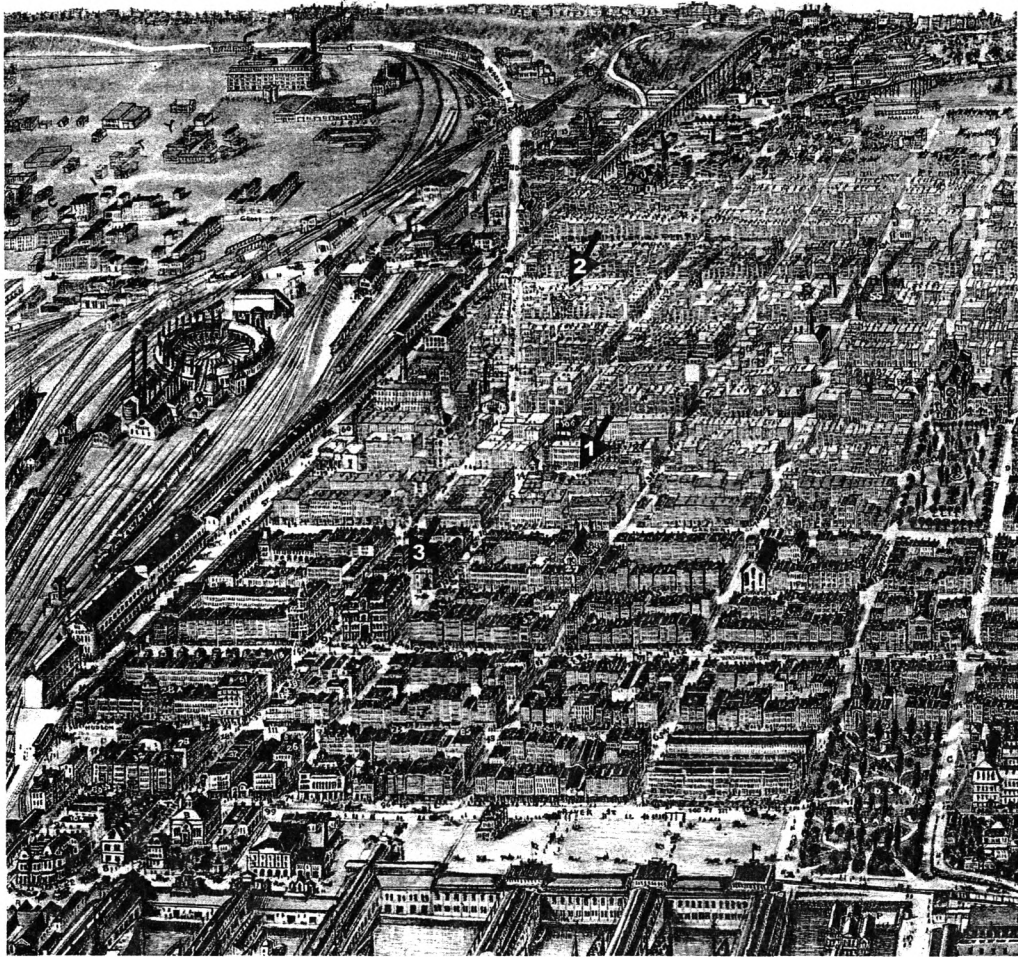
2 TRANSVERSE SECTION DD  
 A3.03 1/4" = 1'-0"





Vicinity of the future site of the Star of Israel Synagogue (now United Synagogue of Hoboken).  
O. H. Bailey and A. Ward, *The City of Hoboken, New Jersey, 1881*, Bird's eye view (Boston: O. H.  
Bailey & Co., 1881).

**1881**



Vicinity of the future site of the Star of Israel (1), showing also Moses Montefiore synagogue (2) and City Hall (3). Hughes and Bailey (1904).

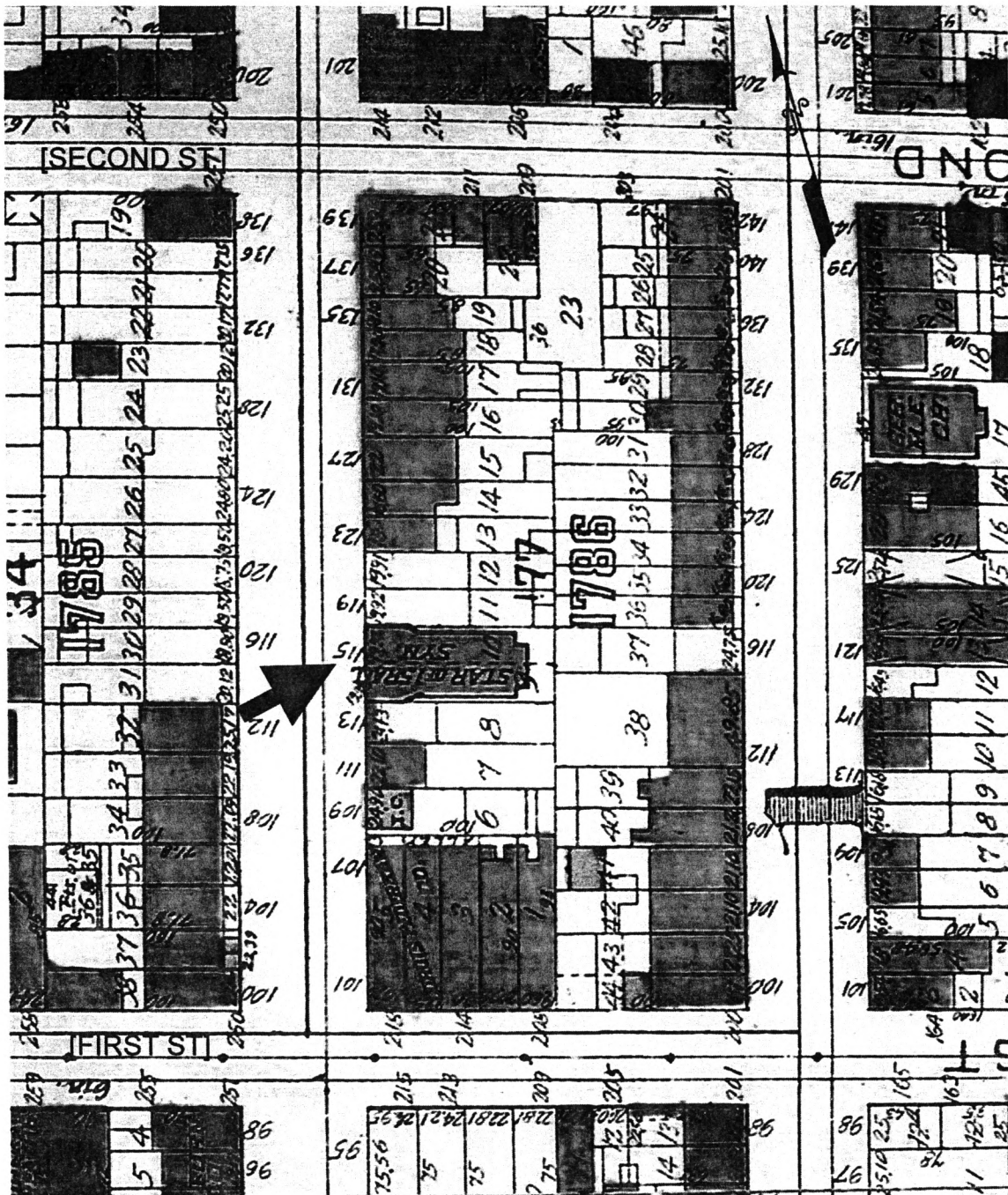


Detail: Moses Montefiore synagogue at 76-80 Grand Street (not confirmed by photographic evidence).



Detail: Future site of Star of Israel synagogue at 115-117 Park Avenue.

**1904**

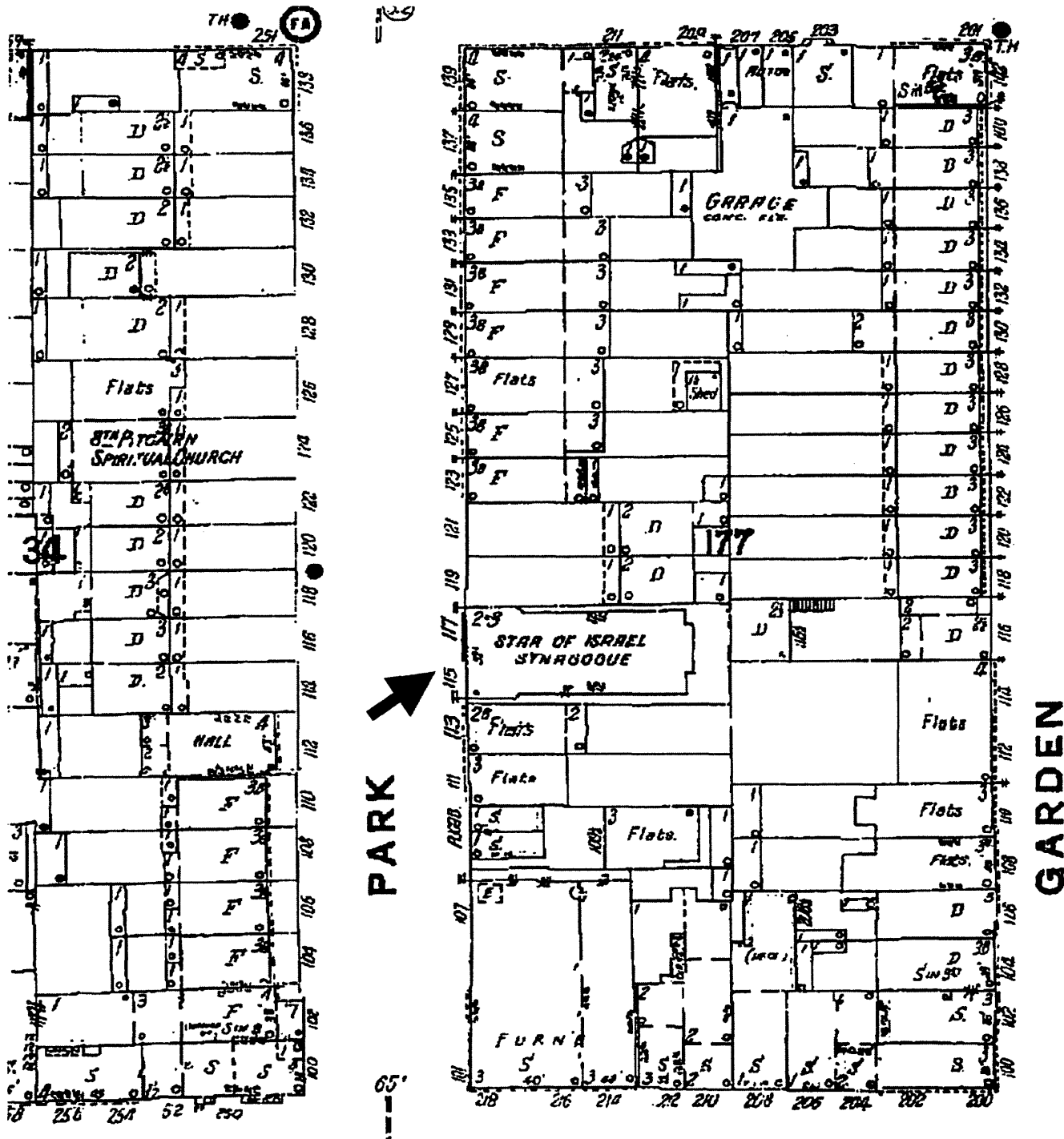


Vicinity of the future site of the Star of Israel Synagogue (United Synagogue of Hoboken).  
G. M. Hopkins, Surveyor, "Hudson County, Part of Hoboken," *Atlas of Hudson County, N.J.*  
Vol. 2 ([N.p.]: G. M. Hopkins & Co., 1923).

**1923**

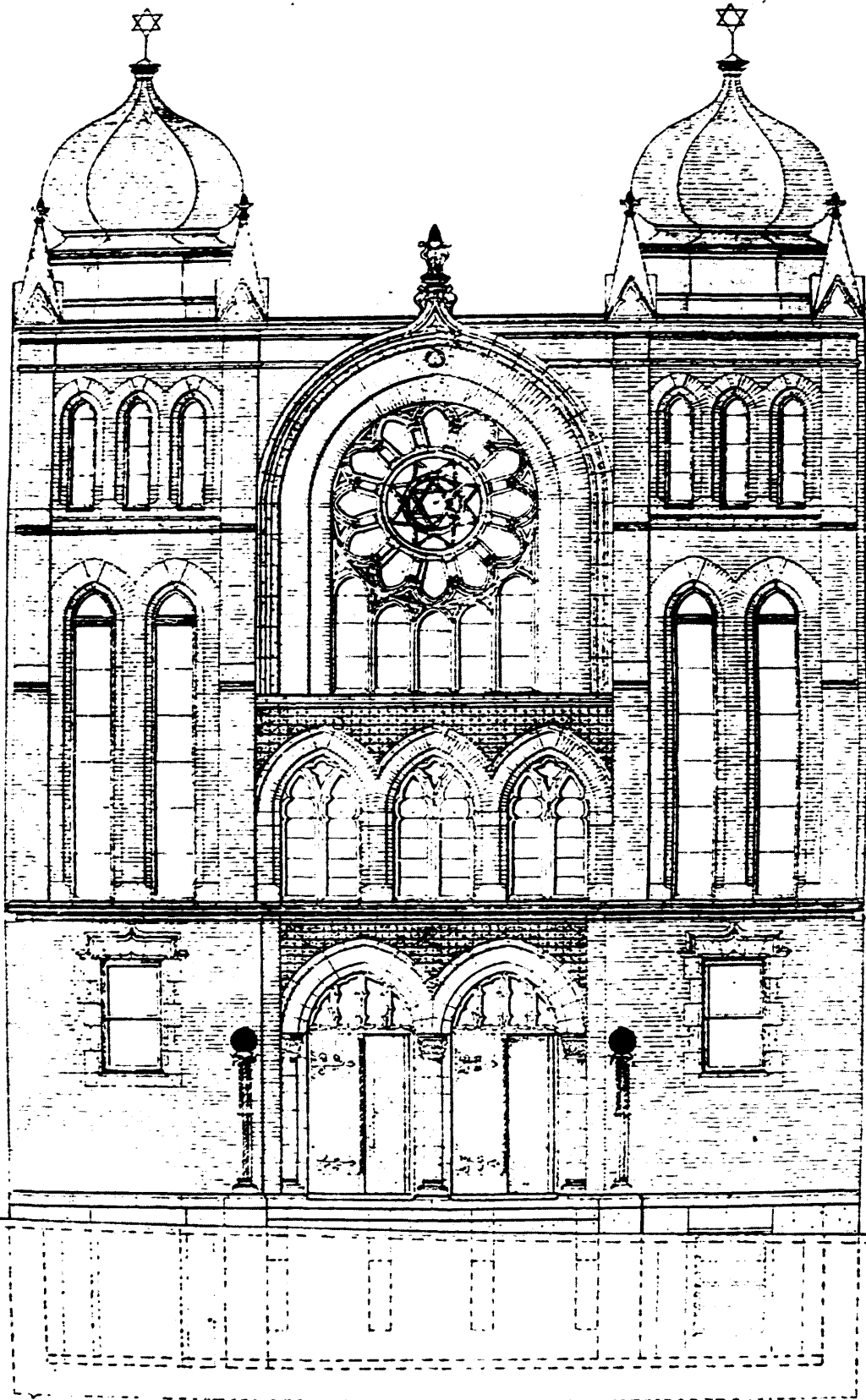


UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF HOBOKEN  
 115-117 Park Street  
 City of Hoboken Hudson County, New Jersey



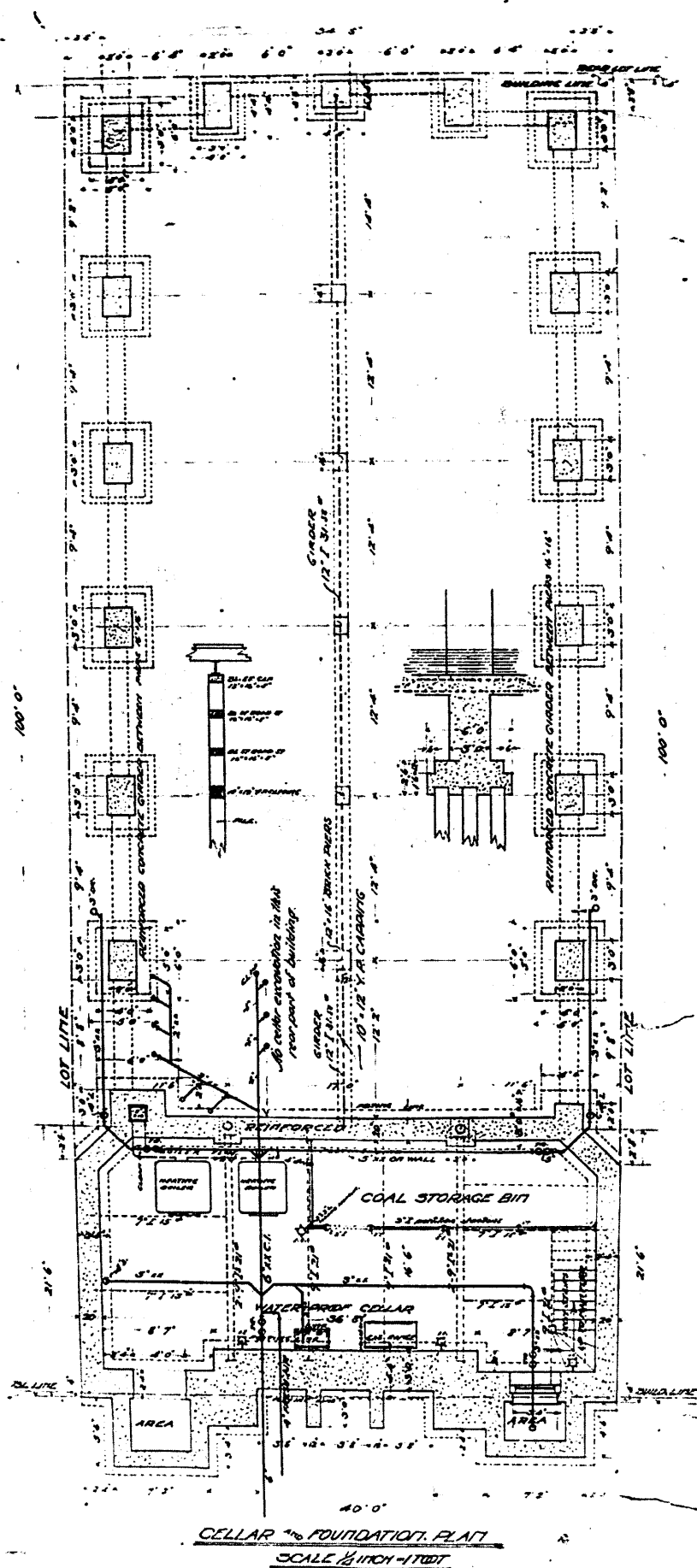
Detail of the 100 block of Park Avenue showing location of the Star of Israel Synagogue (now the United Synagogue of Hoboken). 1937 Map, Sanborn Map Company.

**1937b**



Proposed facade, original 1914 plans for Star of Israel synagogue (Max J. Beyer, Arch.).

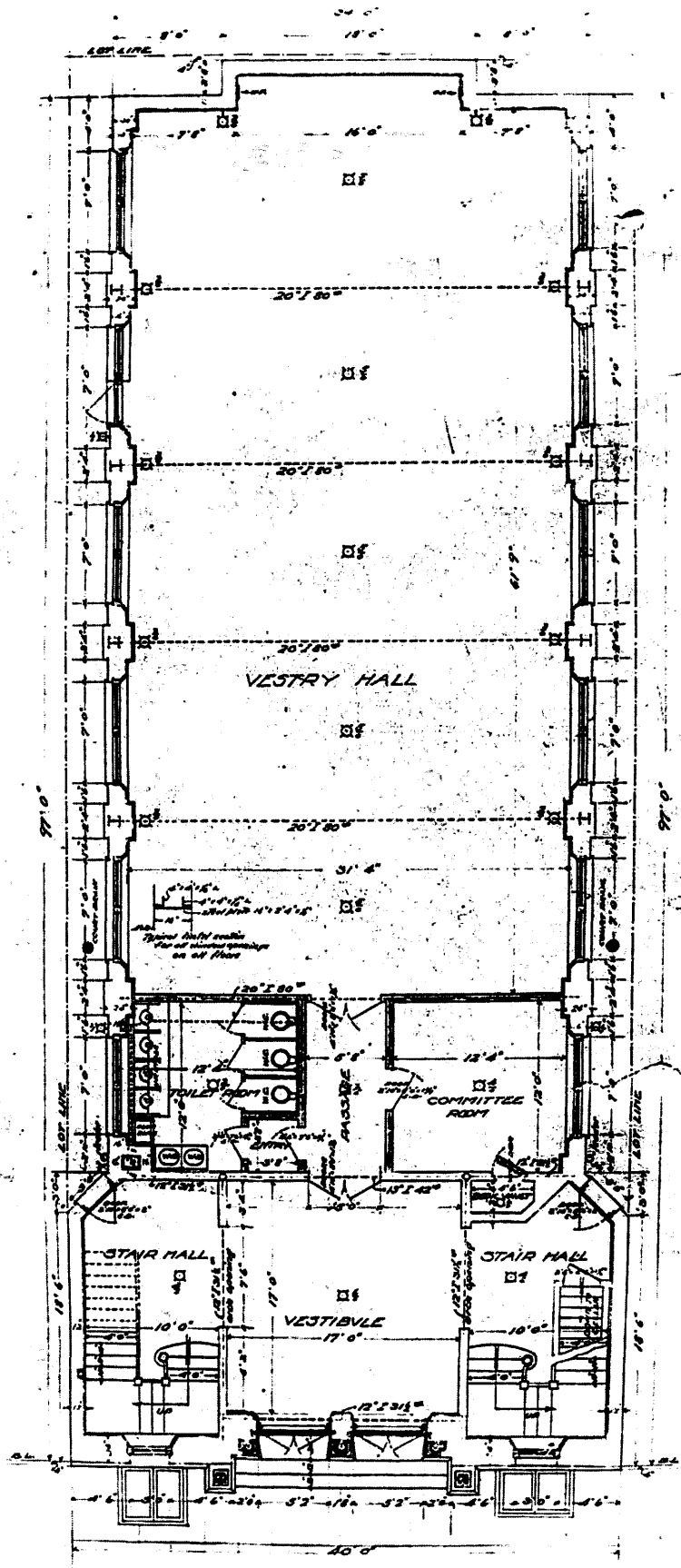
**Figure 1**



Cellar and foundation,  
 original 1914  
 plans for Star of Israel  
 synagogue (Max J.  
 Beyer, Arch.).

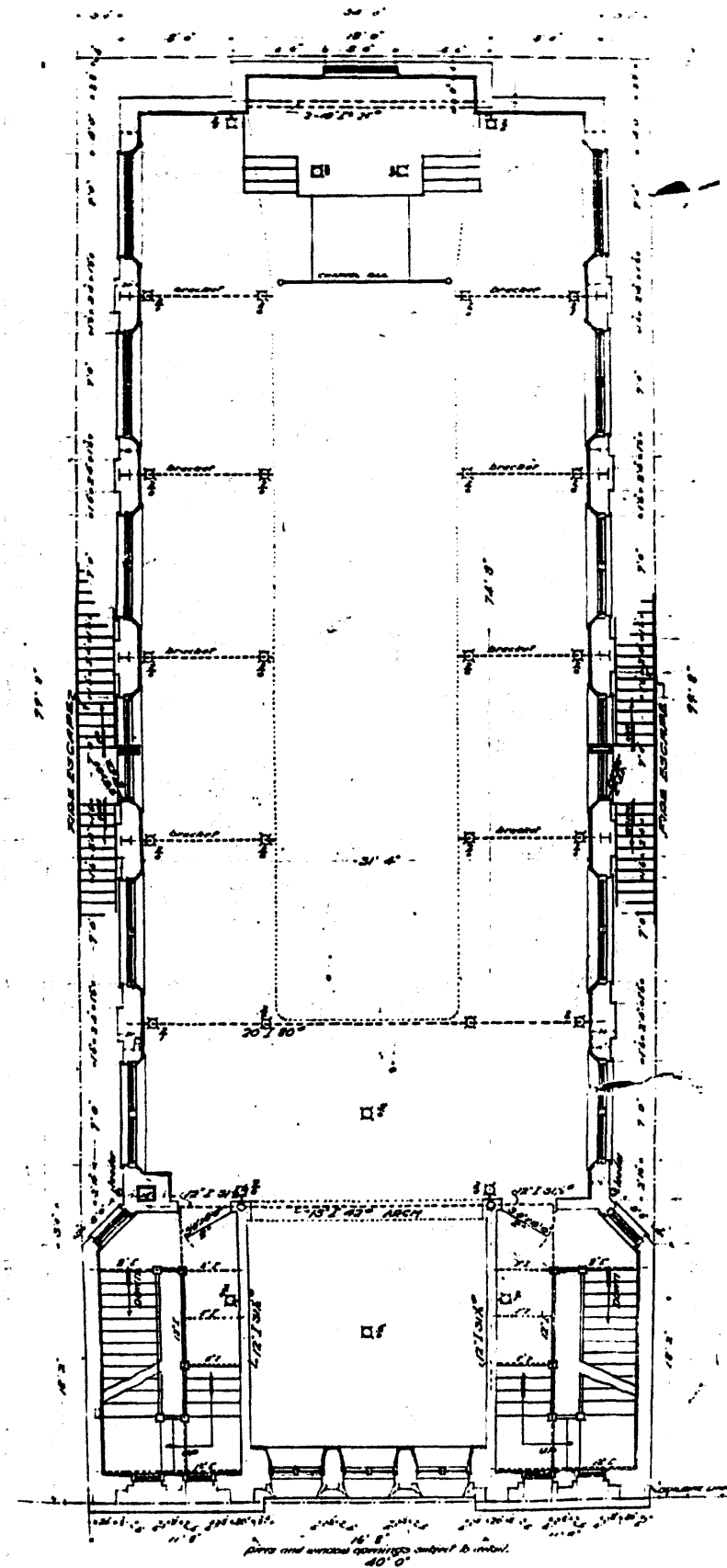
(Contrast has been  
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**Figure 2**



First Floor, original 1914 plans for Star of Israel synagogue (Max J. Beyer, Arch.).

FIRST STORY PLAN

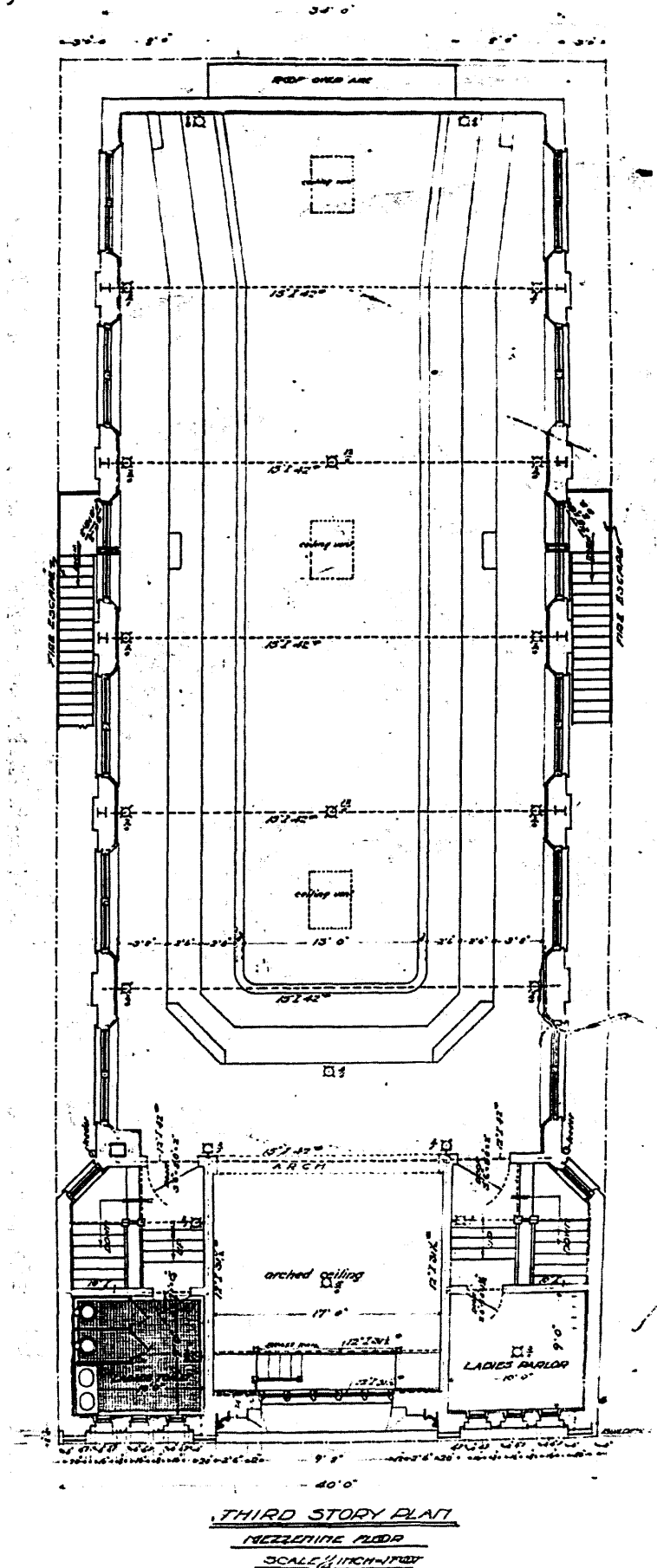


Second Floor, original 1914 plans for Star of Israel synagogue (Max J. Beyer, Arch.).

(Contrast has been inverted for better clarity.)

SECOND STORY PLAN  
CHURCH FLOOR  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

Figure 4



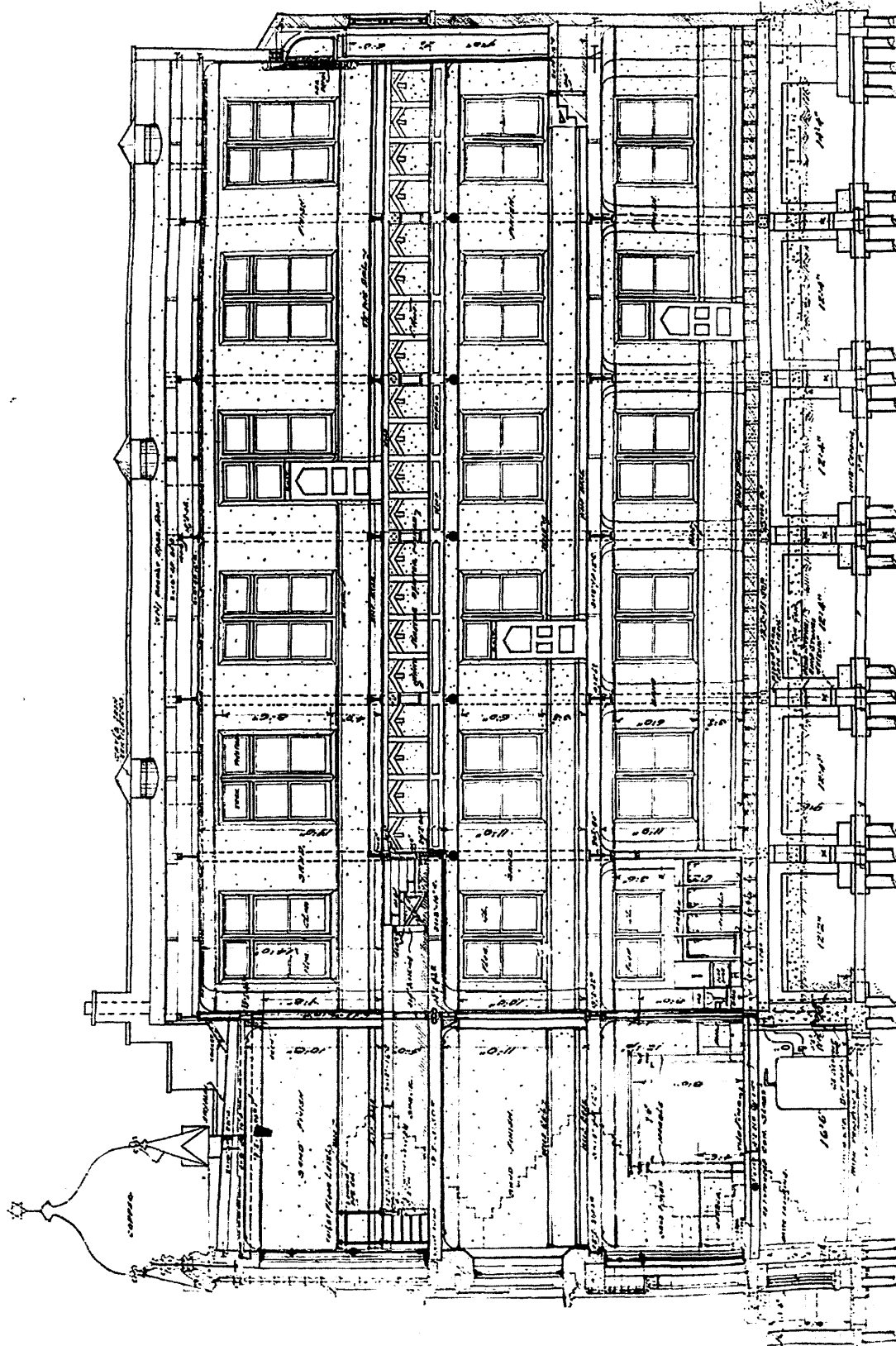
Third Floor, original 1914 plans for Star of Israel synagogue (Max J. Beyer, Arch.).

(Contrast has been inverted for clarity.)

THIRD STORY PLAN

NEZELINE FLOOR

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

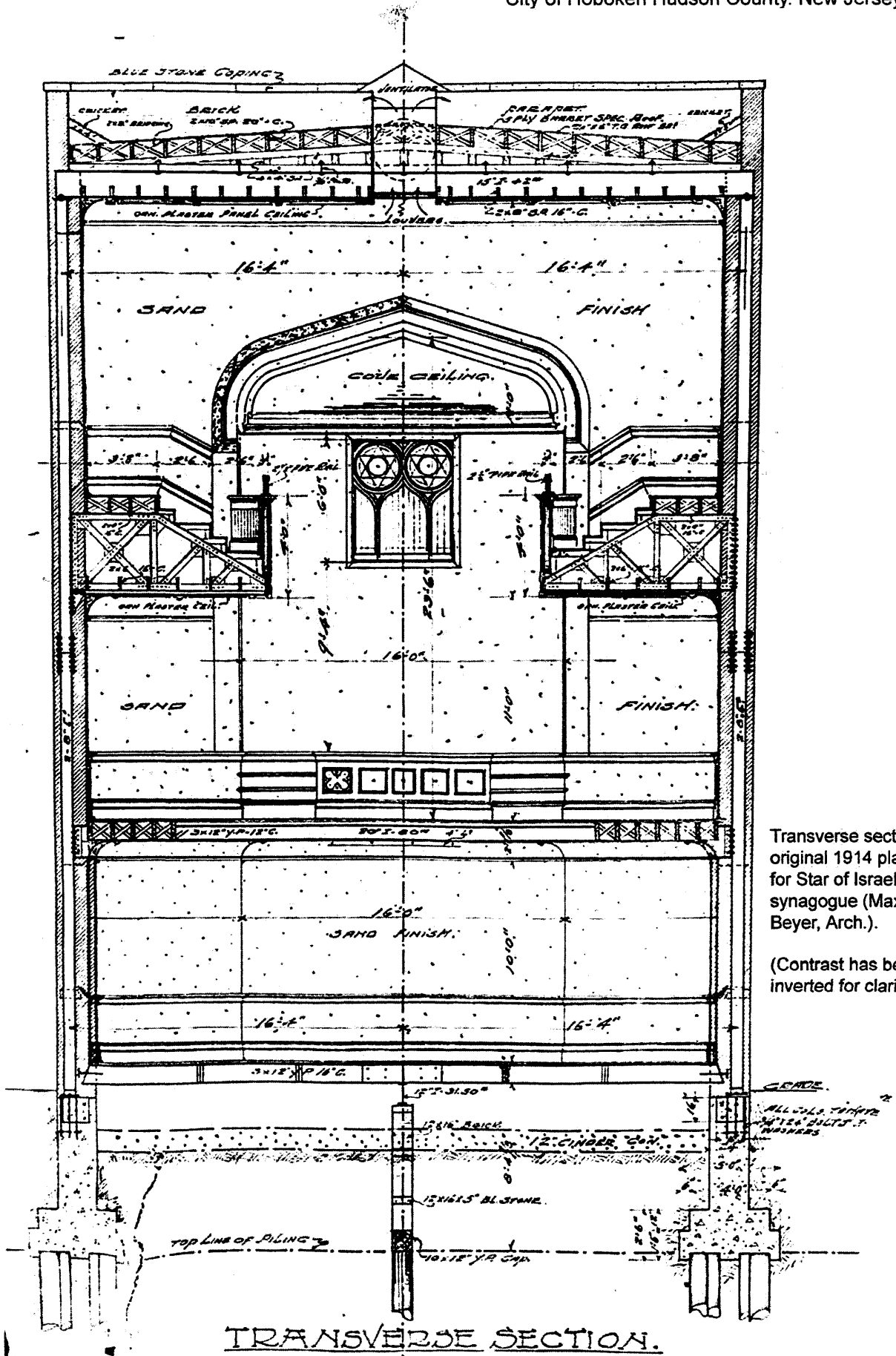


MAX J. BEYER,  
ARCHITECT  
210 PARK ST., HOBOKEN, N.J.  
SECOND FLOOR PLAN, 1914

LONGITUDINAL SECTION  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

Longitudinal section, original 1914 plans for Star of Israel synagogue (Max J. Beyer, Arch.).

Figure 6



Transverse section,  
 original 1914 plans  
 for Star of Israel  
 synagogue (Max J.  
 Beyer, Arch.).

(Contrast has been  
 inverted for clarity.)

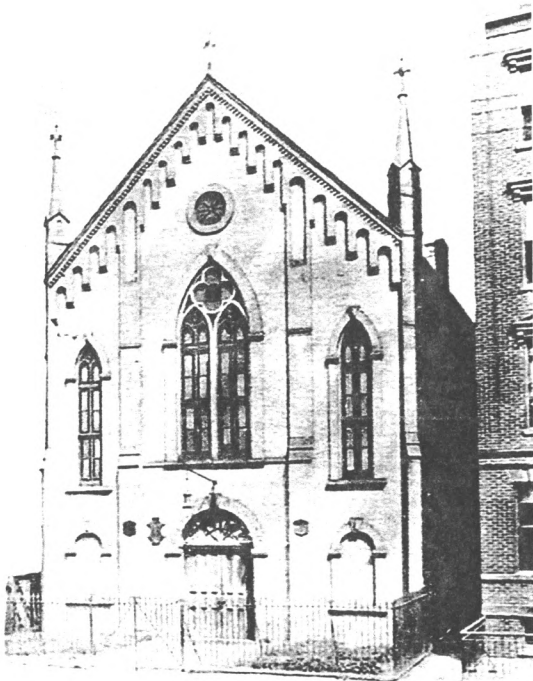
Figure 7





8

Synagogue of Reform Congregation Adas (Adath) Emuno (1871), 637 Garden Street, Hoboken, NJ, taken ca. 1975.



9

St. Matthew Baptist Church, 131 Garden Street (ca. 1870).

Views of two religious buildings in Hoboken built around the same period. John J. Heaney, *The Bicentennial Comes to Hoboken* (Hoboken NJ: Hoboken American Revolution Bicentennial Committee, 1976).

**Figure 8**  
**Figure 9**



Facade of the Hauptsynagoge  
(High Synagogue) in Judengasse,  
Frankfurt-Am-Main, Germany, ca.  
1900.

10



A colorized view of the  
Hauptsynagoge (High Synagogue)  
in Judengasse, Frankfurt-Am-Main,  
Germany, ca. 1885.

11

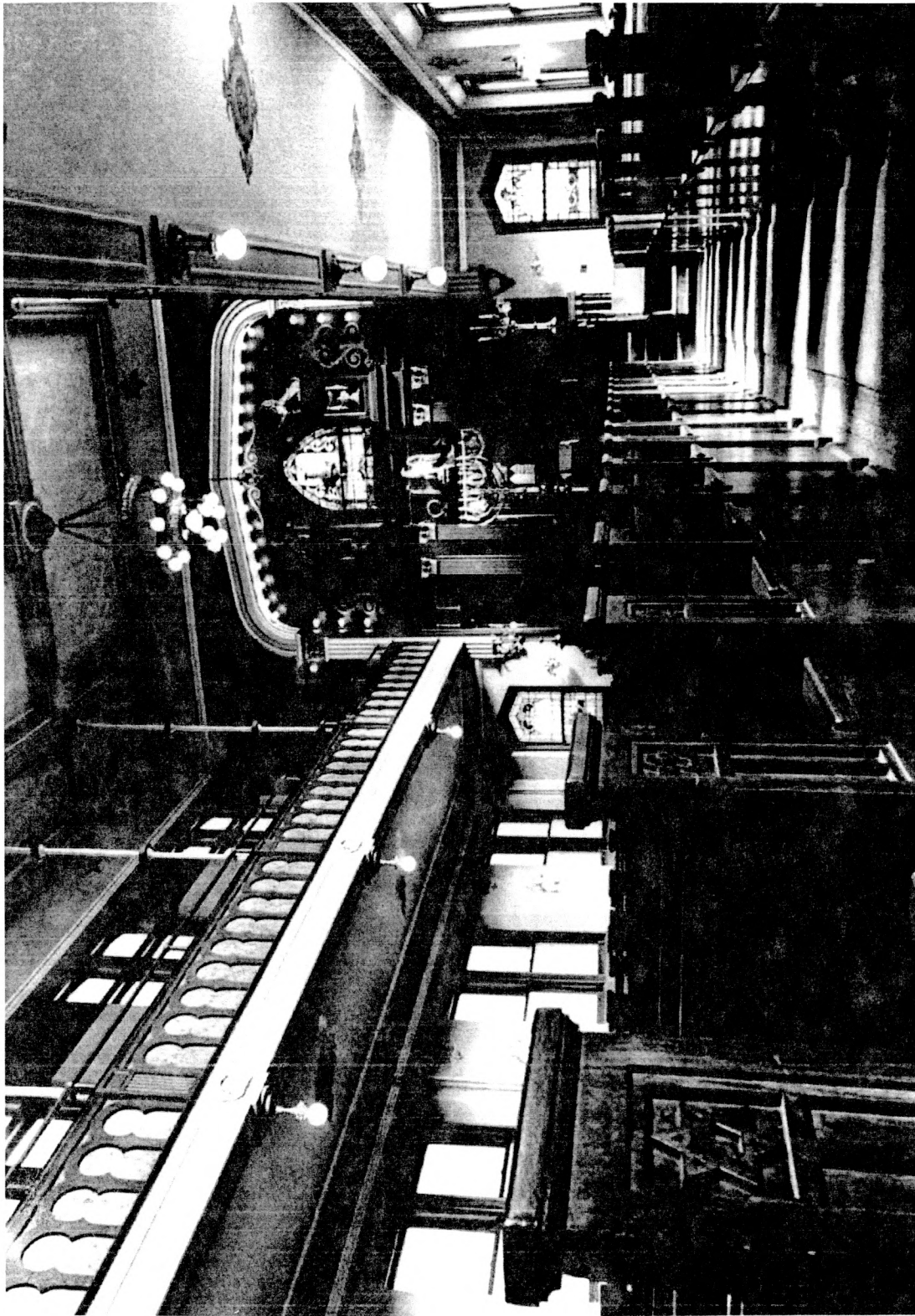
**Figure 10**  
**Figure 11**



**H-1**

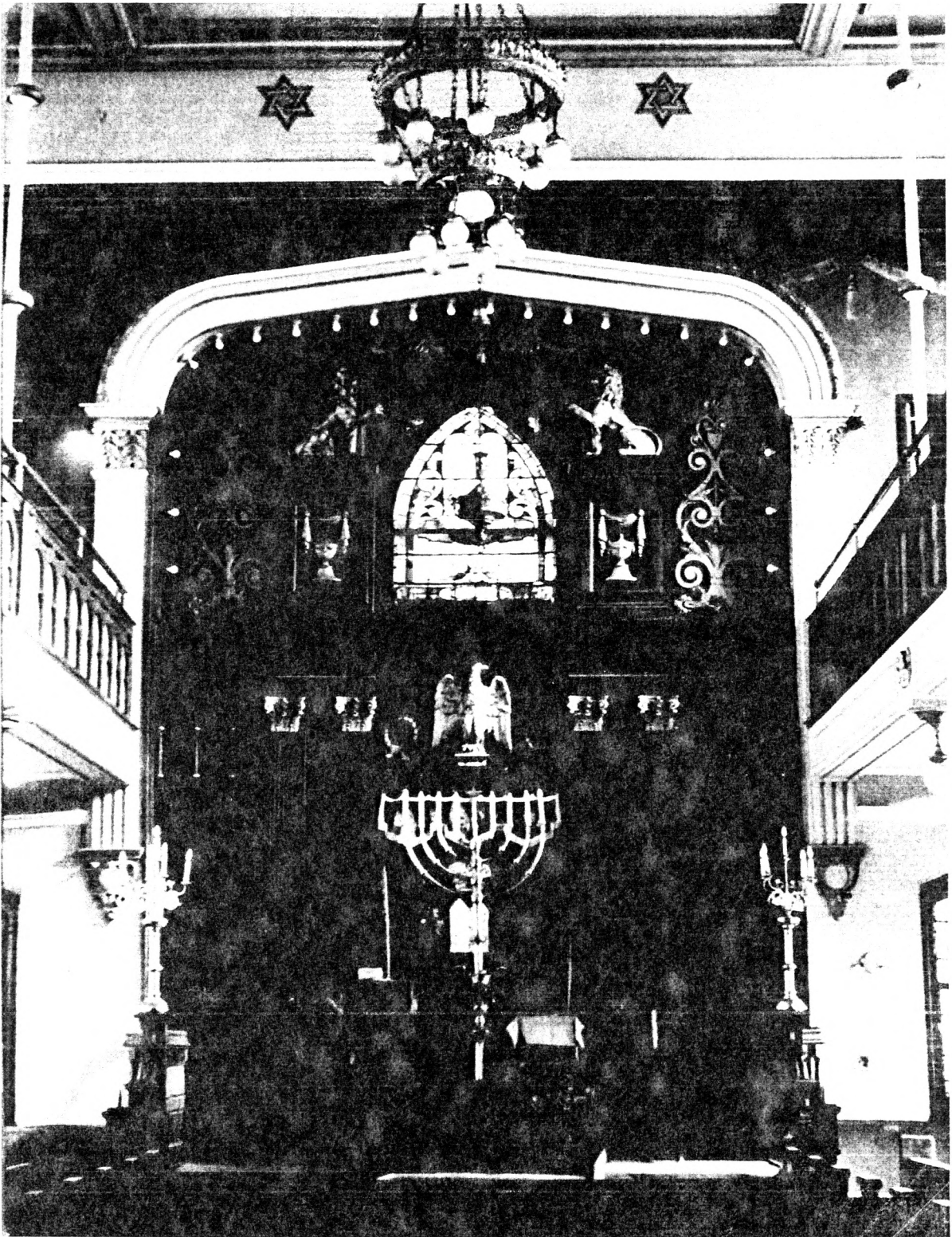
Facade of Star of Israel synagogue ca. 1920. Collections of United Synagogue of Hoboken.

**Photo H-1**



Interior of Star of Israel synagogue ca. 1970, looking E. Collections of United Synagogue of Hoboken.

H-2



Interior of Star of Israel synagogue ca. 1970. Collections of United Synagogue of Hoboken.

H-3