

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-1432



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Other Names/Site Number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & Number: 2230 Carondelet Street
City or town: New Orleans State: LA County: Orleans
Not for Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 at the following level(s) of significance:
 national state local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Kristin P. Sanders

6/16/17

Signature of certifying official/Title: Kristin Sanders, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
(Deputy)

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title:

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: _____

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

8-3-2017

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1 (the building is located within the boundaries of the Garden District National Register Historic District)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Religion: religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Religion: religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.):

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: concrete

walls: brick

roof: asphalt shingles

other: stone

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard, herein referred to as Anshe Sfard, at 2230 Carondelet Street is a three story Byzantine Romanesque Revival style Orthodox synagogue located within the boundaries of the Garden District National Register Historic District. Built in 1925, the synagogue is listed as part of the district, but it also meets additional criteria for individual listing on the National Register including for its historic significance under Criterion A. Furthermore, its distinctive and highly executed architectural style warrants additional listing under Criterion C, all of which is discussed in Section 8. The building was designed by Emile Weil (1878-1945), one of the South's premier architects, after his Touro Synagogue and Beth Israel commissions.¹ The building is clad in red brick veneer with accents of stone. It is anchored by a concrete foundation. Anshe Sfard is sits on an infill site facing Carondelet Street. The main thoroughfare of St. Charles flows by on the south side of the block. Dominant exterior features include two red brick towers, a recessed white stone entrance on the second floor, three sets of Byzantine doors framed by grouped Romanesque column, and concentric arches above the doors with Byzantine details. On the interior, the first floor provides auxiliary space. The second floor holds the sanctuary space and entry vestibule. The third floor opens up to a balcony for women and additional storage rooms in the towers. Anshe Sfard's most significant feature on the interior is a barrel-vaulted ceiling ribbed with beams studded with electric light bulbs. One-over-one double hung windows light the synagogue from the east and west sides. Tall, narrow, and non-operable stain glass windows allow light into the two towers. Despite the Eastern European congregation demographic, Anshe Sfard synagogue is designed as a Sephardic synagogue with the bimah in the center of the hall. After a brief but detrimental period of decay following the 1970s, the building required renovations including painting the synagogue's interior and adding a four pipe HVAC system and a 30-ton air handler, while leaving the intact structure and exterior untouched.² The synagogue retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, and association and is eligible for individual listing on the National Register.

Narrative Description

SETTING

¹ Lachoff, Irwin, and Catherine C. Kahn. *The Jewish Community of New Orleans*. Images of America. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005: 82

² Sandy Lassen. Personal Interview, October 11, 2016.

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Anshe Sfarad sits within the boundaries of the Garden District. The neighborhood is characterized by 19th and 20th century mixed ethnicity and income residential and commercial streets. The Garden District exemplifies upper class residences. Located at the end of the six rows of two story row houses stretching along Dryades Street from Howard to Jackson Ave, Anshe Sfarad was the center of Orthodox Jewish and cultural activities.³ Carondelet Street is a two-way street lined with deciduous trees and two story homes. The synagogue faces northwest, an orientation ideal for the hot humid climate of New Orleans. The northwest facing synagogue rests on a plot 70 feet wide by 110 feet deep. The building is set back 20 feet from Carondelet's eight-foot side walk and raised 3 feet above grade. Only the entrance stairs reach out to the sidewalk, inviting worshippers into the second floor sanctuary. A fenced off parking lot wraps around the southwest and southeast sides of the plot. A two story home sits 11.5 feet at its closest on the northeast side of the synagogue. There is only one building on the property, the Anshe Sfarad Synagogue. A seven story apartment building abuts the back of the site facing St. Charles Avenue. The two other Central City synagogues are Orthodox Beth Israel located at 1616 Carondelet Street and Conservative Chevra Thilim located 826 Lafayette Street.

EXTERIOR

The double entrance stairs dominate the view from Carondelet Street. Stone steps contrast the red brick façade, and the double six-foot-wide single run steps join six more steps in a landing before reaching the second floor. A thick Romanesque white hand rail follows the outside edges of each staircase, supported by shortened Romanesque columns. The interior edge of the stairs exhibits a new metal handrail replaced to satisfy code requirements. The entrance level, recessed 10 feet on the second floor between the two towers, emphasizes the primary doors. The stairs lead to three sets of Byzantine dark wood doors. Sets of three engaged and stepped white Romanesque columns frame each door. Stylized Byzantine column capitals support a trifurcated semi-circular tympanum of stain glass. Byzantine detailed voussoirs surround each tympanum, exemplifying the typical Romanesque style concentric arches. The spandrel above contrasts the highly ornate details with a simple scored stone surface. Two carved Jewish stars rest slightly above and between the doors. At the top of the white designated entrance, Hebrew words tell the viewer, "Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God; for unto Thee do I pray."

A large Jewish star, laid over a stained glass window depicting Torah scrolls, articulates the brick pediment formed between the rectangular entrance way and the gable roof. Painted in white and adorned with small blue diamond tiles, the cornice wraps around the front façade and around the two towers. In addition to the blue diamonds, prominent modillions further emphasize a metering along the top edge of the building. A stone Torah rests at the apex of the gable roof.

Beyond the projecting stairs, the square red brick towers reach up to the height of the gable roof. The towers anchor the sides of the synagogue, visually dividing the façade into thirds. The side elevations decrease in ornamentation. Simple tan colored brick extends to the end of the building. While the towers are constructed of dark red brick, the color shifts to a light brown brick for less publically viewed sides. Anshe Sfarad stands at an average building height of the block, and historically fits into the context of the New Orleans Jewish population.

INTERIOR - SANCTUARY

The Anshe Sfarad Synagogue's grand exterior stairs lead into a five-foot rectangular vestibule where men take a yarmulke from the table and speak amongst themselves before entering the quiet sanctuary. Wooden doors mirroring those of the entrance reveal the double height sanctuary behind. Historically men filled the downstairs pews while the women climbed the stairs off the vestibule to the balcony above. Currently, a white curtain bisects the pews dividing men and women, right and left. Those wishing to donate to the synagogue bought their seat and the pew received a metal name plaque. A wide barrel vault ribbed with beams studded with electric light bulbs adorns the ceiling as Anshe Sfarad's most noteworthy feature. Each light bulb screws into an ornate metal fixture. Despite the artificial lighting, fenestrations puncture large swaths of the walls, not including the entrance wall, on both sanctuary levels. In sets of threes, fours, and fives, one-over-one double hung windows, framed in dark wood, bring sunlight to the double height space. The floor is diagonal wood strip

³ "Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities - Orthodox Congregations - New Orleans, Louisiana."

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flooring with paths delineated in faded red carpeting. The wood flooring as well as the entrance exposed wood are experiencing significant termite damage. The synagogue is designed as a Sephardic temple with the bima in the center of the sanctuary. Despite the lack of Sephardic Jews in New Orleans, many of the other Orthodox synagogues exhibited similar Sephardic design tendencies. Rabbis and canters exclusively use the central bima at Anshe Sfarid, although the Torahs are housed at south end on the traditional Ashkenazi bima.

INTERIOR – FIRST FLOOR

The secondary entrance, located centrally below the grand exterior stairs, opens into the first floor hallway. Low ceilings and minimal windows characterizes this lower floor as a basement space. Immediately adjacent to the hallway are smaller offices and storage rooms. The large reception hall follows a set of doors at the end of the hallway. The room is typically used for after service meals and meetings. A mechanical room in the southwest corner of the room contains the new 30-ton air handler and four pipe HVAC system. The floors of the first level are also wood strip flooring.

INTEGRITY

Anshe Sfarid underwent three renovations focused primarily on restoring the surfaces to their previous glory. Post-Katrina, the damaged roof was patched. In 2007, the entrance way and sanctuary were repainted and repaired for Amos’s Bar Mitzvah. In 2013, the men’s and women’s bathrooms on the first floor were redone, leaks in the sanctuary were fixed and repainted, and the downstairs social hall floor was repaired. The renovations did not negatively affect the synagogue’s integrity. The updates did not significantly alter the strong visual integrity of Anshe Sfarid as an Orthodox Synagogue done in the popular Byzantine Romanesque Revival style. The synagogue still retains the majority of its original materials dating to 1925. Some notable features include pews, Neo-Byzantine doors, bimas, balcony handrails, stain glass windows, and diagonal wood flooring. As the synagogue retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship, it is eligible for listing on the National Register.

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.)

X	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.
X	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:

X	A	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
	B	Removed from its original location
	C	A birthplace or grave
	D	A cemetery
	E	A reconstructed building, object, or structure
	F	A commemorative property
	G	Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.): Architecture, Ethnic Heritage: European

Period of Significance: Criterion A: 1925-1960; Criterion C: 1925

Significant Dates: 1925

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

Architect/Builder (last name, first name): Weil, Emile

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance is 1925, the year of construction, through 1960, the years that correspond to the synagogue's architectural and historic significance within New Orleans. 1960 was the year that Orthodox Judaism, such as those Eastern Europeans associated with the congregation at Anshe Sfarid, reached its height.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): The synagogue falls under Criteria Consideration A as it is owned by a religious institution and is used for religious purposes. However, its primary significance is not religious. It is significant architecturally and historically for its association with the wave of Jewish immigration to the United States and New Orleans between 1880 and 1924 as well as its importance within the social life of New Orleans' Jewish community.

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

Anshe Sfarid is nominated under Criterion A and C for its significance at the local level as a Byzantine Romanesque Revival synagogue popular in the post-World War I trend of Orthodox Jewish Synagogues around the country.⁴ Moreover, Anshe Sfarid is nominated for its integral role in New Orleans' Jewish community life. In 1896, Hasidic Jews from Russia, Poland, and Lithuania established Agudath Achim Anshe Sfarid as an Orthodox congregation.⁵ Pushed out of Europe by overpopulation, oppressive governance, and poverty, the first wave of Eastern European Jews brought 2 million Jews to America between 1880 and 1924. Built in 1925, Anshe Sfarid was the third synagogue Emil Weil designed in New Orleans.⁶ Anshe Sfarid synagogue followed the building tradition established by the Sephardic Jews first to immigrate to America. The synagogue embraces the popular Byzantine Romanesque Revival style. Built of red brick veneer over a steel structure, the synagogue's sanctuary holds 1,200 members beneath the light bulb studded beams of the barrel vault ceiling.⁷ Weil designed a grand entrance stair for the front of Anshe Sfarid Synagogue. Anshe Sfarid was located in the heart of the vibrantly diverse Garden District neighborhood, and stands as one of the few remnants left of the historic area. The synagogue was built as a religious structure and continues to support the local Orthodox congregation today. The synagogue saw its largest congregation in the 1950-60s with a

⁴ Ira Robinson. "Anshe Sfarid: The Creation of the First Hasidic Congregations in North America." *American Jewish Archives Journal*, 2005, 53-66.

⁵ Eugene Normand. *A Tale of Two Cities' Jewish Architects: Emile Weil of New Orleans and B. Marcus Priteca of Seattle*.

⁶ Joellyn Zollman. "Jewish Immigration to America: Three Waves." *My Jewish Learning*. Accessed October 26, 2016.

⁷ *ibid*

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membership between 300-400 people.⁸ The period of significance begins with the date of construction, 1925, and ends with 1967, the fifty-year cutoff.

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

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage – European

MEANING OF “AGUDATH ACHIM ANSHE SFARD”

Hasidic congregations in Eastern Europe were often identified by the name of the movement or its spiritual leader, for example the “Gerrer Shtibl” of Warsaw. In North America, Hasidic congregations found it necessary to identify themselves with the designation Anshe Sfard or Men of the Sfard liturgy. At times it stood alone, as in Anshe Sfard, while other times it is combined with another title, such as Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard, to act as a “code word”.⁹ A general pattern emanated across America. The first Eastern European congregations would be founded as non-Hasidic, and then, as the demographic growth of the immigrant Jewish population shifted, a Sfard congregation was founded.¹⁰ New Orleans followed this pattern, beginning first with the reform Gates of Mercy in the early 1800s and then in the early 1900s, the Orthodox Touro Synagogue and Beth Israel. Scholars know little about pre-WWII Hasidic communities. One of the reasons stems from the fact that until recently, Hasidim tended not to record their history. Early records exist primarily from Jews who had consciously broken with Jewish Orthodoxy, and understood the historical nature of their culture.¹¹

SPREAD OF JUDAISM TO AMERICA

Historians have traditionally divided American Jewish immigration into three geographically distinct periods: Sephardic, German, and Eastern European. Sephardic Jews arrived first in 1654, and tended to settle in American colonial port cities including Newport, New York, Charleston, and Savannah. By 1730, Ashkenazi Jews outnumbered the Sephardic communities, yet the character remained Sephardic through the American Revolution.¹² Early American synagogues followed Sephardic ritual customs and administered all aspects of Jewish religious life. American synagogues did not govern the economic activities of its mostly mercantile congregation. This was a significant departure from the Old World, where synagogues in places like Amsterdam, London, and Recife, taxed commercial transactions, regulated Jewish publications, and instituted punishments.¹³ American colonial synagogues set a precedent of compartmentalization – defining a division between religion and worldly domains. Colonial American Sephardic synagogues also sought to unite aesthetics with tradition, developing congregations that were rational and refined. There was increasingly an emphasis on deference and decorum within the framework of services and meetings. An example of this is assigned seats for men and women so everyone knew their place in the congregation.¹⁴ This not only minimized seat arguments, but established a congregational hierarchy. Seats for men were assigned based on the membership fees, resulting in the best seats going to the most prestigious families. In Europe, few women attended services; American women, in contrast, attended regularly. American congregations began designating seats for women as well.¹⁵

German Jews began arriving in significant numbers in the 1840s. The waves of immigration stemmed from persecution, restrictive laws, economic hardship, and the failure of political movements. At this time, America was seen as the antidote to all problems – a place of economic and social opportunity. By the outbreak of WWI, 250,000 German-speaking Jews had settled in America, particularly in the Midwest, West, and South.

⁸ Sandy Lassen.

⁹ Robinson., 56

¹⁰ ibid

¹¹ ibid

¹² Zollman. "Jewish Immigration to America: Three Waves."

¹³ ibid

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ ibid

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German immigrants often started as peddlers and settled along their route. The adventurous lifestyle of German Jewish immigrants helped disperse American Judaism nation-wide.¹⁶

Eastern European Jews began immigrating to America after the 1880s. Continuing a trend established by the Germans, Eastern European Jews were pushed out of Europe by overpopulation, political oppression, and poverty. They looked to America as a place of financial and social advancement. Between 1880 and the implementation of restrictive quotas in 1924, over two million Eastern European Jews immigrated to America.¹⁷ Once again, American Jewish demographics changed, as Eastern Europeans became the majority. These immigrants tended to settle in the poorer neighborhoods of major cities including New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and Chicago. Yiddish flourished in American Jewish immigrant neighborhoods, and the plight of the immigrant worker became a common cultural theme. Eastern Europeans brought with them different ideological principles; many workers supported socialism or communism as a means of securing equality and brought with them enormous support for Jewish nationalism. The wave of Eastern European Jews cemented a more religiously diverse American Jewish citizenry. Eastern Europeans strictly maintained tradition, infused Orthodox Judaism with new energy, and contributed to the establishment of Conservative Judaism.

Lithuanian Jews, the founding ethnic group of Anshe Sfarad Synagogue, began migrating to the United States at the beginning of the Eastern European Jewish wave. Lithuanians began arriving in the late 1860s, after the Civil War. Between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, an estimated 300,000 Lithuanians migrated to America.¹⁸ Similar to the overarching Eastern European migration, the flow halted with the united effects of WWI, the established immigration quota of 1924, and the 1918 Lithuanian independence. There were several important factors spurring the first surge of Lithuanian immigration; the abolition of serfdom in 1861 led to a rise in Lithuania's free population, the growth of transportation – especially the railroad, and the 1860s country-wide famine were the primary influencers.¹⁹

ESTABLISHMENT OF JUDAISM IN AMERICA DURING THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

The lower class peddlers and tailors of the Eastern European Orthodox immigrant synagogues who defined the turn of the 20th century yielded, by 1920, to a different demographic. The leaders, as well as a substantial number of members of what was by now primarily second generation, had shifted into the lower-middle or middle class.²⁰ Orthodox Jews were now salesmen, clerks, and abundantly, owners of small shops offering tailoring, cobbling, jewelry, textiles, notions, and dry goods; they were the employers of the workers, not the workers as had been the case a generation earlier. Following WWI and the second generation's increasing affluence, many of the small immigrant congregations were able to build their own synagogues. By the 1920s, a synagogue building boom spread across the United States. Byzantine Romanesque Revival and Alhambra-Moorish proved the most popular architectural styles. These styles were primarily studies in spatial geometry that emphasized qualities of the building material (most often brick and tile) and limited decoration to flat surface ornament.²¹

NEW ORLEANS JUDAISM

Sephardic Jews, the first to arrive in New Orleans, came from Curacao in 1757. They built a successful trading business, but did not pursue spreading Judaism. It wasn't until the 19th century that New Orleans' Jewish community started in earnest. Judah Touro, a Sephardic Jew and wealthy New England merchant, migrated to New Orleans where he donated to numerous charity efforts. When he died in 1854, his will outlined a \$100,000 donation to Jewish causes in New Orleans, making him the first great American Jewish philanthropist.²² New

¹⁶ Zollman. "Jewish Immigration to America: Three Waves."

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ Mark A. Granquist. "Lithuanian Americans." *Countries and Their Cultures*. Accessed November 01, 2016.

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ "Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities - Orthodox Congregations - New Orleans, Louisiana."

²¹ Stephen R. Sennott, ed. *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture*. Vol. 3. P-Z Index. New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004: 1296.

²² "Louisiana New Orleans Encyclopedia." Institute of Southern Jewish Life.

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Orleans Jews maintained a close relationship with businesses in the northeast, and a steady stream of entrepreneurial Jews moved to the prosperous South. In 1860, 2,000 Jews lived in New Orleans. By the end of the 19th century, the population grew to over 5,000. The population change is due to the third and last significant wave of Jewish immigration, the Eastern European Jews.²³ The Eastern European Jews formed several small ethnic-based congregations in the Central City neighborhood including a Galitzianer shul, a Litvak shul, and a Polish shul.²⁴ Most lacked a permanent building, and by 1904, many merged to create a modern Orthodox congregation. Beth Israel, the Polish shul, is still operational today and is housed in a building built in 1971. Next, the Galitzianer congregation built Chevra Thilim Synagogue, which was later heavily damaged in Hurricane Katrina and demolished in 2011. The Lithuanians founded Anshe Sfarid Synagogue followed in 1925, and desperate for a larger gathering space, the congregation moved from their cramped, rented Rampart Street space to their first owned synagogue on Carondelet Street. The synagogue is still functioning today.

CONGREGATION

The congregation was founded by Lithuanian Jews in 1896 as an Orthodox congregation. Initially, the small congregation rented a storefront gathering space. The congregation grew exponentially, and in 1900, they rented a building on Rampart Street. As the numbers continued to increase, the congregation hired Emile Weil in 1925, after his successful completion of the Beth Israel synagogue, to build them a new synagogue at 2230 Carondelet Street. Jews demographically monopolized the immigrant neighborhood in the area, to which the new site for Anshe Sfarid synagogue belonged. Anshe Sfarid Synagogue acted as the primary gathering space for its congregation, and played an integral role in fostering community engagement and development. The early 1900s Byzantine Romanesque Revival structure and its congregation turned a blind eye to the Garden District, and embraced the vibrant immigrant culture along Dryades Street. Anshe Sfarid administration continued in the American Jewish tradition of only controlling non-secular life and allowing Jewish commerce to flourish up and down Dryades Street unregulated. Dryades Street, in the beginning of the 20th century, was a lower class Eastern European Jewish and African American neighborhood where the clothing was informal and the shopping cheap. By the 1920s, the area was characterized by shop filled streets and bustling consumers.²⁵ By the late 1800s, the Dryades Street neighborhood had evolved into the nexus of Orthodox Jewish life. The main street was filled with Jewish kosher delicatessens and bakeries, wafting aromas and Yiddish phrases down the block.²⁶ The early 1900s marked a golden era for the neighborhood. Many newly arrived immigrants succeeded as peddlers, butchers, tailors, coopers, clerks, and merchants. The Orthodox community used their increasing economic success to support a wider range of congregational activities. For example, Beth Israel founded the "Talmud Torah", a communal school at the corner of Clio and Josephine Streets that attracted both reform and orthodox attendees.²⁷

At the height of Orthodox Judaism in New Orleans in the 1950-60s, Anshe Sfarid housed 300-400 members under its incandescent ceiling. Chevra Thilim, the closest neighboring Orthodox synagogue, maintained a close relationship. Often children would run between the two during services to meet friends in the other synagogue.²⁸ Many Orthodox synagogue constitutions from the first decade of the 20th century show the importance of "dignity and decorum" emphasized by the Reform synagogues. The tradition of decorum became intrinsic to the congregations. Despite the blurring decorum ideals, the Eastern European Orthodox Jews maintained limited contact with the already established German Reform Jews. New Orleans is unusual in that despite the burgeoning Jewish population, Orthodox Eastern European Jews never outnumbered Reform "German Uptown" Jews, who dominated New Orleans Jewish communities well into the 20th century. The Anshe Sfarid congregation held annual events and took part in Orthodox Jewish community activities.

²³ "Louisiana New Orleans Encyclopedia." Institute of Southern Jewish Life.

²⁴ "Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities - Orthodox Congregations - New Orleans, Louisiana."

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ *ibid*

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ Sandy Lassen.

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A rigid dividing line separated Orthodox Eastern European synagogues in Central City from already established Reform German synagogues Uptown. Touro and Temple Sinai synagogues facilitated German Reform Jewish life, while Anshe Sfard, Beth Israel, and Chevra Thilim acted as the largest congregations for Orthodox Jewish life. All three major Orthodox synagogues originated as small ethnically diverse congregations. The Jewish population sharply increased between 1858 and 1924 as the Eastern European wave of immigration continued to accelerate. Over time, the nuances of specific regional divisions softened, and during the early 1900s, the numerous small Orthodox groups consolidated to form three congregations: Beth Israel, Chevra Thilim, and Anshe Sfard. Today, of the three congregations once in this area related to the wave of Eastern European immigration from 1880-1924, only Anshe Sfard is still in this neighborhood (Beth Israel moved to a more suburban New Orleans location).

Criterion C: Architecture

ARCHITECT/ ARCHITECTURE

Emile Weil was born in New Orleans on 20 January 1878 to parents descended from German Jews. He studied architecture locally at Tulane University. While there, he was influenced by artist William Woodward. Weil began his career as a draftsman for several local architecture firms until he finally opened his own office in 1899. His career truly began in 1907 when he won a contest to design Touro synagogue on St. Charles Avenue. Weil went on to design Beth Israel, Anshe Sfard, and the entrance to Temple Sinai in New Orleans. Weil married Marie Rose Newman two years later in 1909. Weil was raised in a reform Jewish family, but designed mostly Orthodox synagogues. Later in his career, he shifted building types and became one of several architects the Saengers used to design movie theatres. He designed nine theatres for the Saenger Theatre chain, as well as two for different clients. The largest theatre he designed had a capacity of 3,400 occupants.²⁹ There are currently at least 5 National Register listings in the state of Louisiana that Weil designed including the Strand Theater in Shreveport, the Saenger Theater, buildings at Tulane University, Union Bethel AME Church, and the Bohn Motor Company Automobile Dealership, all in New Orleans.

The Byzantine-Moorish-Romanesque architectural style used for synagogues emerged as early as 1858 with the erection of St. Louis's Orthodox B'nai El synagogue. "Such buildings, which looked like mosques, were rare in the 1850s, but were found everywhere in the decades following 1858."³⁰ Before long, Byzantine-Romanesque and Moorish-Alhambra styles dominated the largest synagogues east to west. Some notable examples from around the country include the 1866 Philadelphia Rodeph Shalom, the 1891 Salt Lake City B'nai Israel with an 88 foot tall dome, and the 1899 Denver Temple Emanuel with two minarets 150 feet tall each. By the 1920s, 'Byzantine' was the key word in almost every architect's description of his synagogue. Architects drew inspiration from precedents including the Hagia Sophia, the Great Synagogue in Florence, and San Vitale of Ravenna among many other Middle Eastern, Spanish, and Venetian structures. Typical Byzantine and Moorish details include a symmetrical plan derived from Roman architecture, minarets, domed roofs, calligraphy, keyhole arches, horseshoe arches, and other rounded shapes.³¹ Romanesque developed in response to Islamic architecture as a fusion of Roman, Carolian, Byzantine, and Gothic styles.³² Character defining Romanesque features include masonry as material, arched openings, three to four story towers, semi-circular arches, and low pitched roofs.³³ "This Byzantine Revival style, usually with both Moorish-inspired and Romanesque elements, was everywhere in the 1920s and became known as 'the Jewish style of architecture'."³⁴

All of the historic Orthodox synagogues and many of the Reform and Conservative synagogues in New Orleans share the same post-WWI Byzantine-Romanesque style, which rebranded the face of Judaism across the country. New Orleans synagogues reflected the square massing, prominent entrances, towers either

²⁹ Eugene Normand.

³⁰ Marc Lee Raphael. *The Synagogue in America: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

³¹ "Byzantine Architecture." Encyclopaedia Britannica.

³² "Romanesque architecture." Encyclopædia Britannica.

³³ "Romanesque Revival." Buffalo as an Architecture Museum. Romanesque Revival. Accessed February 17, 2017.

³⁴ Raphael. *The Synagogue in America: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

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heightened or depressed, masonry construction, domed or low-pitch roofs, and mosaic ornamentation of the typical Byzantine-Romanesque Revival. Emile Weil designed the majority of Orthodox synagogues including Touro in 1909, Beth Israel in 1924 and Anshe Sfarid in 1925 to match the prevailing style of synagogue design popular in the 1920s.

NEW ORLEANS' JEWISH ARCHITECTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The Anshe Sfarid congregation and synagogue in New Orleans fits seamlessly into the Orthodox Jewish history in America, providing an example with mostly original material. Built after WWI, the new synagogue was constructed by the more prosperous second generation in the economically improving neighborhood around 2230 Carondelet Street. The synagogue was built in the popular Byzantine Romanesque Revival Style with the typical Sephardic central bimah. The building accentuates the materials with the exterior clad in red brick veneer and cast stone details. The sanctuary walls hold as many windows as space allowed. Natural light enters from both sides and levels in the vast sanctuary space. The open floor plan, created by a steel structure, allows for the large spaces required for a growing congregation both in the prayer space as well as the auxiliary spaces downstairs. The Byzantine style addressed the modern concerns of adjustable space and incorporation of multiple functions--including social halls, kitchens, libraries, schools, and offices--within a single complex structure. American synagogues combined architectural styles in new ways and steadily these styles dominated the largest synagogues from east to west.³⁵ Although never required, many members donated higher dues and received a name plaque on their chosen seat.³⁶ Anshe Sfarid remains a pristine example of the synagogue design trends sweeping the country after the First World War and the changing immigrant demographic of American Jewish life. It is the last remaining Central City neighborhood synagogue.

CONCLUSION

Anshe Sfarid and Beth Israel continue to serve the more traditionally minded New Orleans Orthodox community with only Anshe Sfarid remaining in its original historic location. Anshe Sfarid maintains its history of split seating despite the court ruling in favor of allowing mixed seating within the Orthodox congregations.³⁷ The economic success that facilitated the colorful vibrancy of the surrounding neighborhood ultimately resulted in its downfall, as the children and grandchildren of the Eastern European immigrants gradually moved toward the suburbs. The area has lost the cultural diversity once renowned. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the Jewish population was steady numbering around 10,000 members. New Orleans Jews have mostly shifted from the retail industry into professional fields. Hurricane Katrina devastated the Jewish community in New Orleans. By 2007, only 70% of the Jewish population had returned. All the synagogues escaped serious damage with the exception of Beth Israel. Proving a larger problem, the Jewish community struggles to maintain all their institutions.³⁸ Anshe Sfarid stands as a monument to the past glory of Jewish life in New Orleans.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

See above.

9. Major Bibliographical Resources

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

"Byzantine Architecture." Encyclopedia Britannica. January 3, 2009. Accessed February 16, 2017.

"Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities - Orthodox Congregations - New Orleans, Louisiana." Institute of Southern Jewish Life. 2014. Accessed October 20, 2016.

³⁵ Raphael. *The Synagogue in America: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

³⁶ Sandy Lassen.

³⁷ "Louisiana New Orleans Encyclopedia." Institute of Southern Jewish Life. Accessed November 01, 2016.

³⁸ *ibid*

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
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Granquist, Mark A. "Lithuanian Americans." Countries and Their Cultures. Accessed November 01, 2016.

Lachoff, Irwin, and Catherine C. Kahn. *The Jewish Community of New Orleans*. Images of America. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.

Lassen, Sandy. Personal Interview, October 11, 2016.

"Louisiana New Orleans Encyclopedia." Institute of Southern Jewish Life. Accessed November 01, 2016.

Normand, Eugene. *A Tale of Two Cities' Jewish Architects: Emile Weil of New Orleans and B. Marcus Priteca of Seattle*.

Raphael, Marc Lee. *The Synagogue in America: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

Robinson, Ira. "Anshe Sfard: The Creation of the First Hasidic Congregations in North America." *American Jewish Archives Journal*, 2005, 53-66.

"Romanesque architecture." Encyclopædia Britannica. September 13, 2016. Accessed February 16, 2017.

"Romanesque Revival." Buffalo as an Architecture Museum. Romanesque Revival. Accessed February 17, 2017.

Sennott, R. Stephen., ed. *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture*. Vol. 3. P-Z Index. New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004. pgs. 1296-1298

Society, National Geographic. "Moorish Architecture." National Geographic Society. November 09, 2012. Accessed February 16, 2017.

Stiefel, Barry. *Jews and the Renaissance of Synagogue Architecture, 1450-1730*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014.

Zollman, Joellyn. "Jewish Immigration to America: Three Waves." My Jewish Learning. Accessed October 26, 2016.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than an acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 29.934337 Longitude: -90.081881

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

The synagogue faces northwest and sits on a plot 70 feet wide by 110 feet deep. The building is set back 20 feet from Carondelet's eight-foot sidewalk and raised 3 feet above grade. A fenced off parking lot wraps around the southwest and southeast sides of the plot. A two story home sits 11.5 feet at its closest on the northeast side of the synagogue. Per the Orleans Parish Tax Assessor, the synagogue sits on SQ 235 Lot 9 or 10 or Lot A. See submitted boundary map for clarification.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected are the historic boundaries associated with the synagogue.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Teva Kaplan
organization: Tulane University
street & number: 6823 St. Charles Ave.
city or town: New Orleans state: LA zip code: 70118
e-mail: tkaplan1@tulane.edu
telephone: (603)991-9095
date: 20 February 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Anshe Sfard Synagogue

City or Vicinity: New Orleans

County: Orleans Parish

State: Louisiana

Name of Photographer: Teva Kaplan

Date of Photographs: October 15, 2016

- 1 of 29: Looking towards the pews in the center row of the sanctuary. Camera facing north.
- 2 of 29: Looking up at the southern bimah to the concentric arches over the Torah case. Camera facing up.
- 3 of 29: Looking up at the southern bimah to the ornate column capitals.
- 4 of 29: Looking downwards towards the entrance to the sanctuary at the carpeted paths. Camera facing northwest.
- 5 of 29: Standing on the southern bimah and looking back towards the three entrance doors to observe the double height space. Camera facing northwest.
- 6 of 29: Looking at a name plaque on a pew in the last row of pews in the center.
- 7 of 29: Looking at the golden Menorah located on the central bimah. Camera facing northwest.
- 8 of 29: Looking at one of four memorial plaques on the northern wall of the sanctuary. Camera facing southwest.
- 9 of 29: Looking at an added handrail per code requirements during renovation. Camera facing southeast.
- 10 of 29: Looking at the third floor tower room entrance threshold corner detail. Camera facing west.
- 11 of 29: Looking at the third floor northern wall at one of six memorial stained glass windows. Camera facing west.
- 12 of 29: Looking down from the third floor balcony to the sanctuary below towards the southern wall. Camera facing southeast.
- 13 of 29: Looking at the corner steps on the balcony to the upper levels of pews. Camera facing south.
- 14 of 29: Looking at the worship space from the balcony. Camera facing south.

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Name of Property

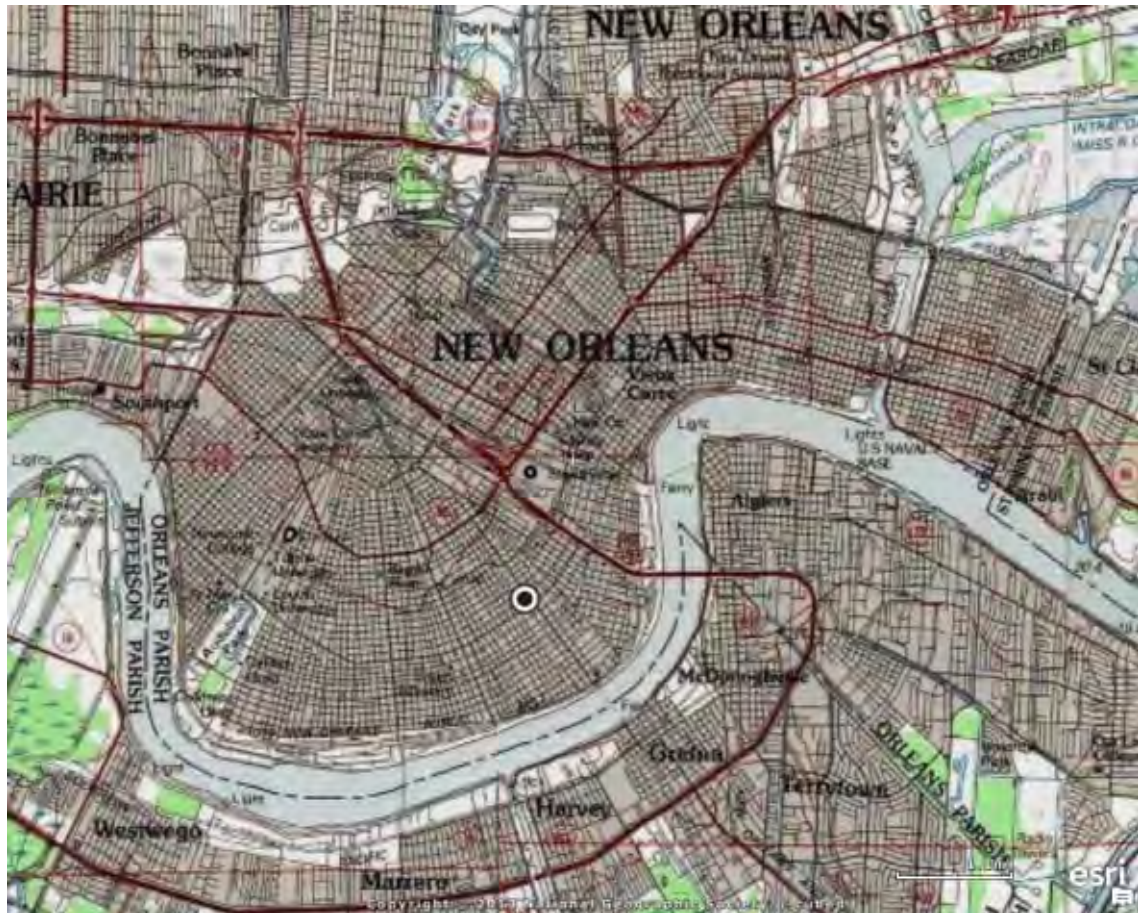
Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

- 15 of 29: Looking up from the third floor balcony at the light bulb studded barrel vault beams. Camera facing south.
- 16 of 29: Looking northwest from the third floor balcony back towards the entrance. Camera facing northwest.
- 17 of 29: Looking west from the third floor balcony at the rows of fenestrations. Camera facing southwest.
- 18 of 29: Looking up from the third floor balcony at the ornate light bulb mount.
- 19 of 29: Looking in the first floor tower storage room and the only remaining exterior stained glass window. Camera facing northwest.
- 20 of 29: Standing on the sidewalk looking towards the lower entrance of the building. Camera facing southeast.
- 21 of 29: Standing on the sidewalk looking towards the right tower. Camera facing southeast.
- 22 of 29: Standing on the sidewalk, looking at the Romanesque handrail. Camera facing east.
- 23 of 29: Standing on the sidewalk, looking up at the front elevation. Camera facing southeast.
- 24 of 29: Standing on the second floor entrance porch looking at the engaged columns framing the door. Camera facing southeast.
- 25 of 29: Standing in front of the second floor entry door, looking up at concentric arches. Camera facing southeast.
- 26 of 29: Looking at east elevation from the sidewalk. Camera facing southeast.
- 27 of 29: Looking at front façade. Camera facing southeast.
- 28 of 29: Looking at west side of the building from the sidewalk. Camera facing east.
- 29 of 29: Standing in the social hall downstairs looking towards eastern wall. Camera facing east.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue, Orleans Parish, LA

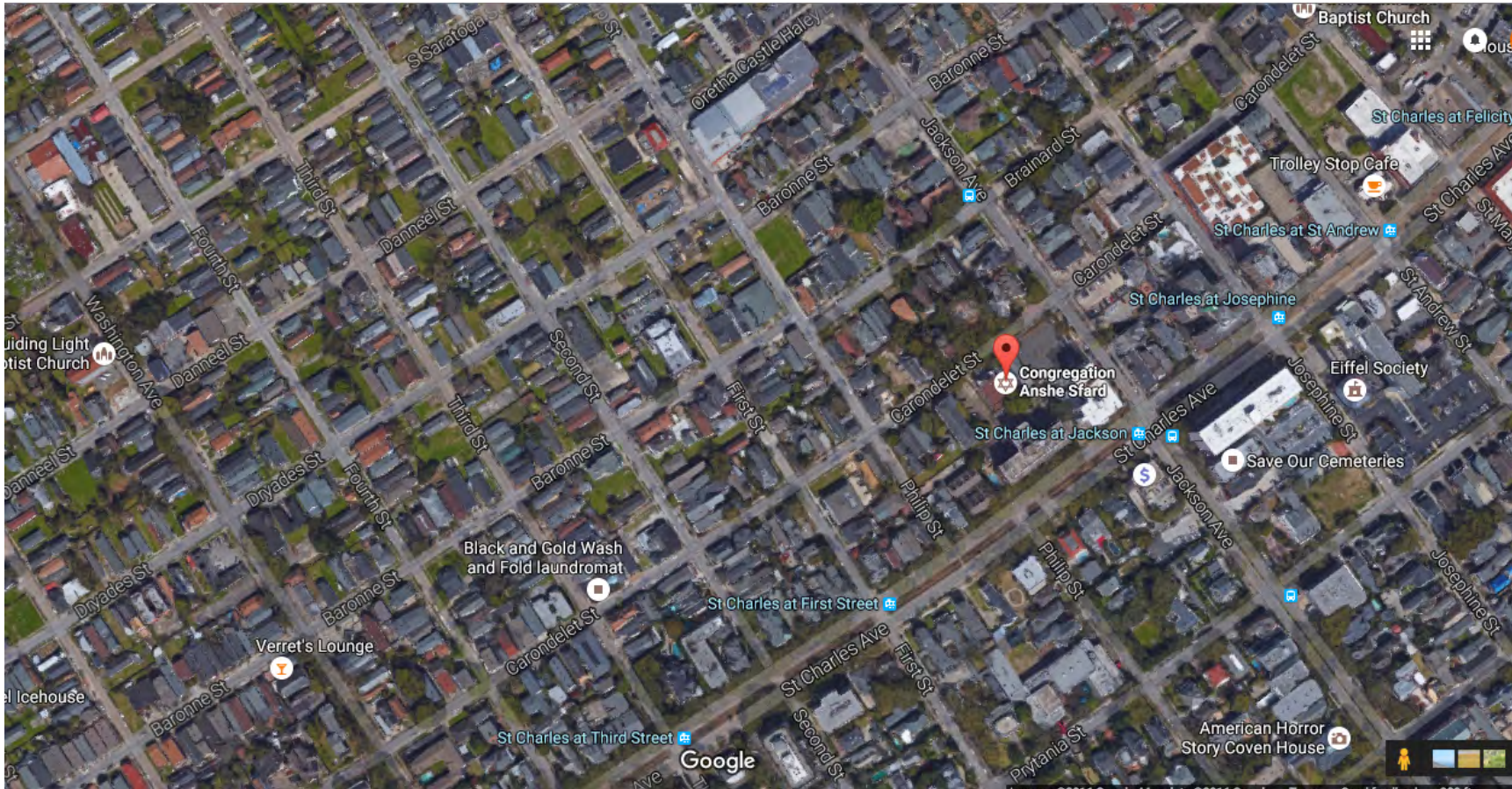


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Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue, Orleans Parish, LA

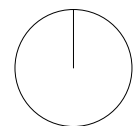


Latitude: 29.934337 Longitude: -90.081881



Coordinates: Latitude: 29.934337 Longitude: -90.081881

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Orleans Parish, LA
Location Map





Lakes/Rivers from US Census Dept, may not match parcels exactly

0 48 96 144 192 ft

Boundary

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue, Orleans Parish, LA - Plat Map

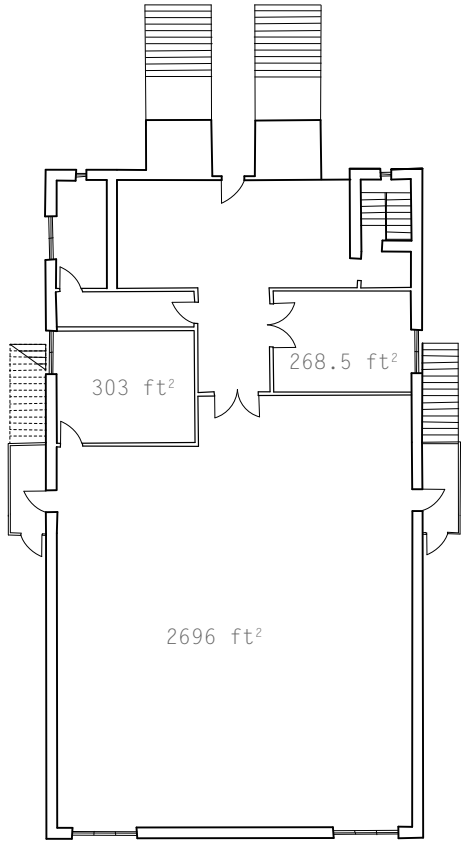
Parcel: 2228-CARONDELETST Acres: 7521

Name:	CONGREGATION AGUDATH ACHIM ANSHE SFARD	Land Value:	
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Sale:		Total Value:	
Mail:	2230 CARONDELET ST NEW ORLEANS, LA 70130		

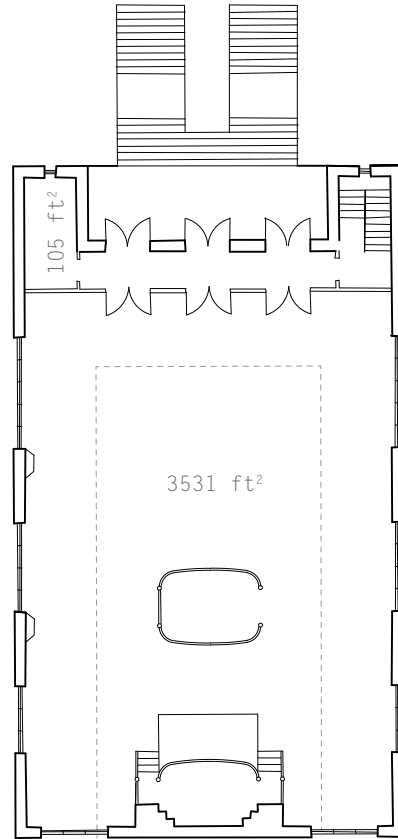


Orleans Parish makes every effort to produce the most accurate information possible. No warranties, expressed or implied, are provided for the data herein, its use or interpretation. The assessment information is from the last certified taxroll. All data is subject to change before the next certified taxroll.

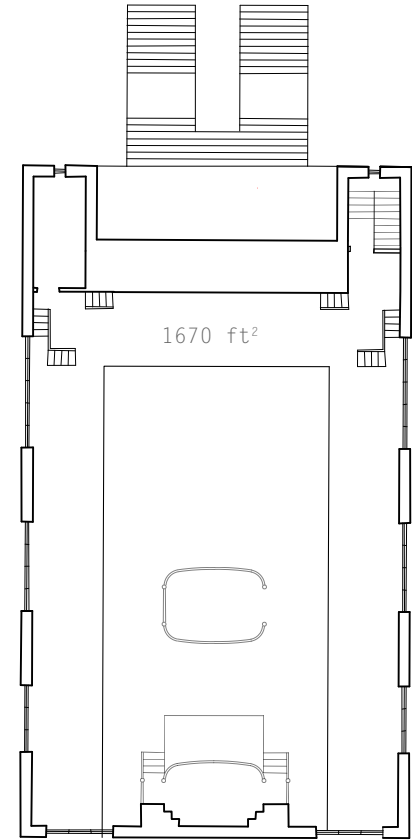
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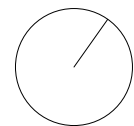


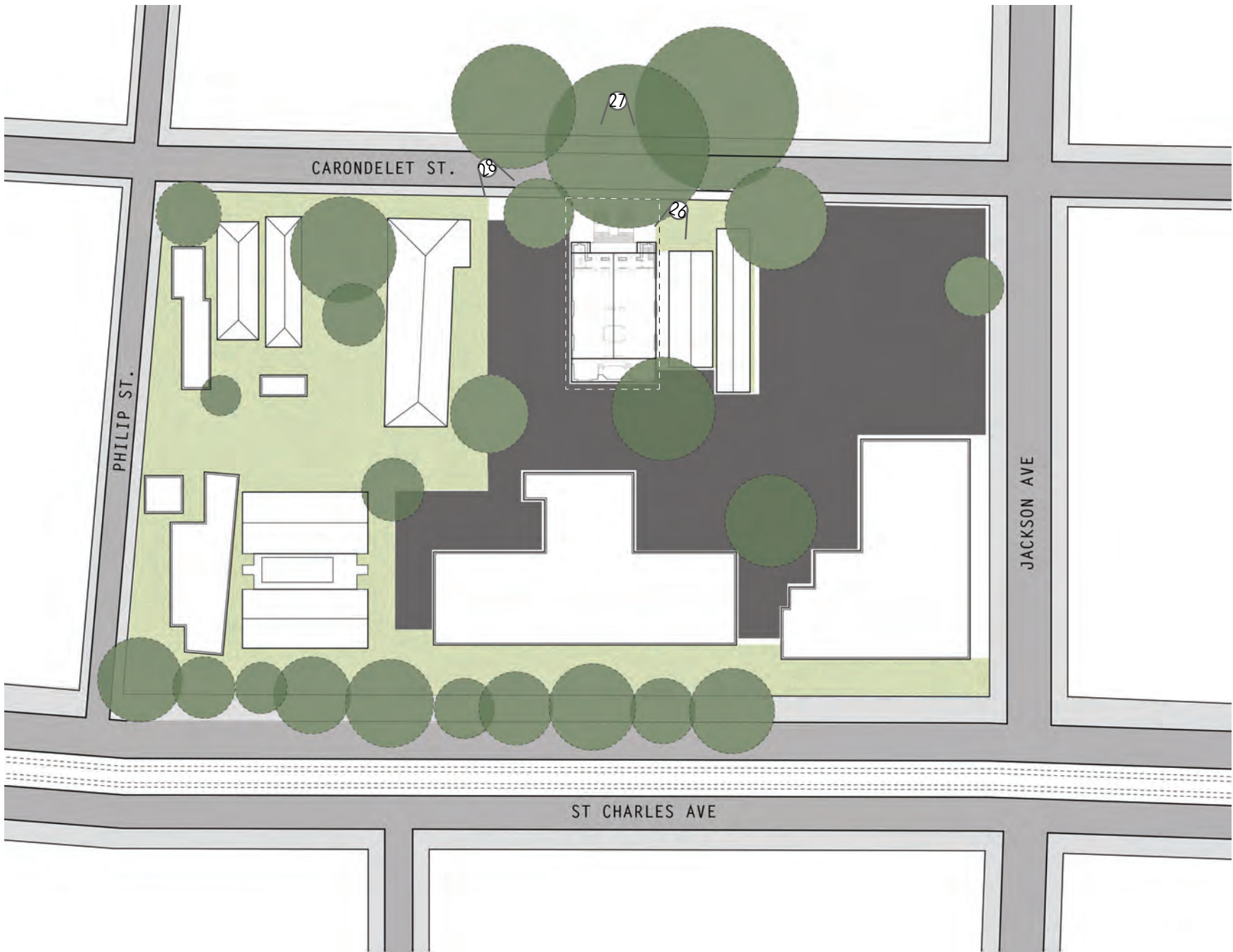
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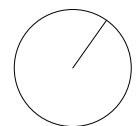
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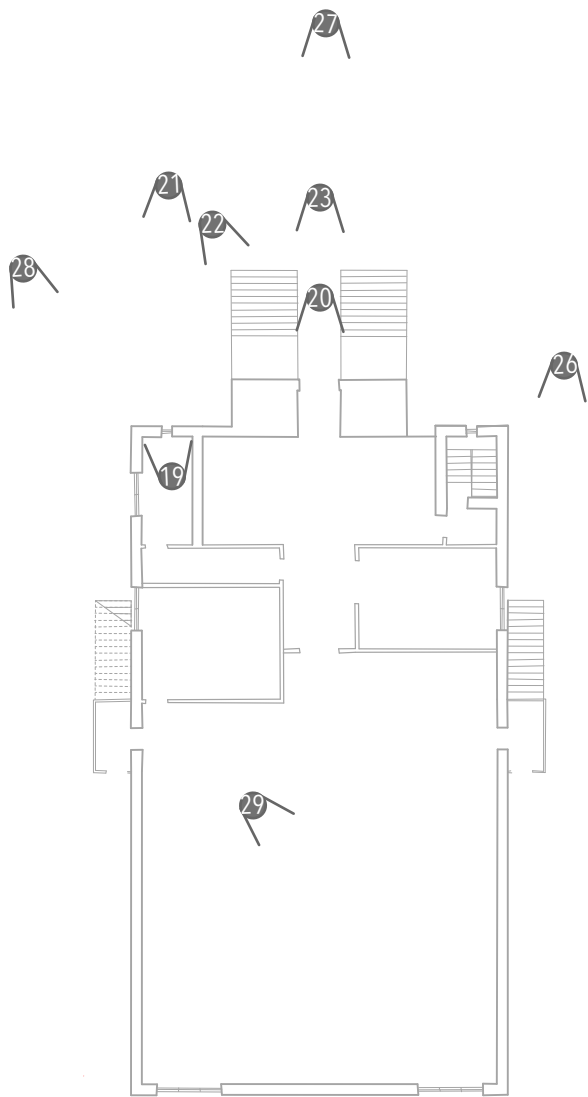
Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Orleans Parish, LA
Existing Plans



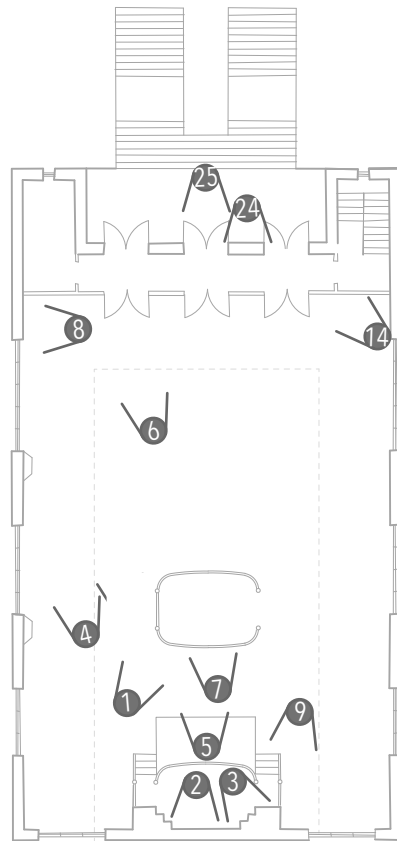


Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue
Orleans Parish, LA
SITE MAP

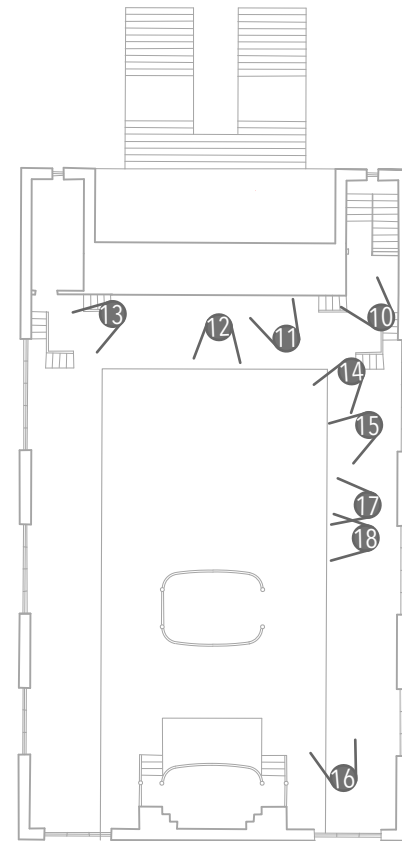




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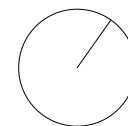


2 SECOND FLOOR
Scale 1' = 1/4"



3 THIRD FLOOR
Scale 1' = 1/4"

Agudath Achim Anshe Sfarad Synagogue
Orleans Parish, LA
PHOTO MAP AND KEY







לא תרצה
לא תנאף
לא תננב
לא תענה
לא תחמד

אנכי ה'
לא יהיה
לא תשא
זכור את
טבר את

















MESCHULIM & CHAI
BLIMA LAUFER

















18m x 18m x 24m
45.7cm x 45.7cm x 60.9cm







הקשיבה לקול שועי

CONGREGATION
SHAARE TEFILA
א א א ספרד
1926 - 5686





• הקשיבה לקול שועי מלכי ואלהי כי אליך אתפלל •







כ"ל יום

אשר

אשר

כ"ל יום









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 6/23/2017 Date of Pending List: 7/18/2017 Date of 16th Day: 8/2/2017 Date of 45th Day: 8/7/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 8/3/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

RENNIE S. BURAS, II
DEPUTY SECRETARY

June 21, 2017

TO: Mr. James Gabbert, National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228, 1849 C St, NW, Washington, DC 20240

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue, Orleans Parish, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Agudath Achim Anshe Sfard Synagogue to the National Register of Historic Places. The second disk contains the photographs of the property in TIF format. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595 or jrichardson@crt.la.gov.

Thanks,

Jessica

Enclosures:

- CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- CD with electronic images (tif format)
- Physical Transmission Letter
- Physical Signature Page, with original signature
- Other:

Comments:

- _____ Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
- _____ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- _____ The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do _____ do not _____
- _____ constitute a majority of property owners.
- _____ Other: