

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic The Temple

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 1589 Peachtree Street N/A not for publication

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Georgia code 013 county Fulton code 121

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Hebrew Benevolent Congregation  
William A. Frankel, President, Board of Trustees/The Temple

street & number 1589 Peachtree Street

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of state Georgia 30367

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Fulton County Courthouse

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date N/A federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records None

city, town state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Temple is a Reform Jewish Synagogue, composed of a sanctuary with a rectangular three-story extension of office, education and social rooms to the rear. The structure is of brick with a pedimented portico and flat roof with a colonnaded drum dome. The classically inspired sanctuary and original support facilities date from 1931; a large rear addition was completed in 1949. The Temple is located on a hill, set back from Peachtree Street, in Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia.

The original portion of the Temple, completed in 1931, is built of red brick laid in Flemish bond on a foundation composed of a combination of limestone and cement-stucco. The sanctuary is approximately square with front corners cut off above the ground floor level and an altar area extending to the rear. The front facade has an enclosed full-height pedimented portico with Ionic columns and a denticulated entablature that wraps around the entire sanctuary. A smaller semi-circular porch topped by a large lunette window extends from the central bay of the portico. This porch features an elaborate sculptured frieze with iconographic significance and is surmounted by a large shell-shaped ornament which supports two tablets inscribed in Hebrew with the Ten Commandments. The portico, porch and entablature are all constructed of the same combination of limestone and cement-stucco as the foundation. Paneled double doors are located in each of the three front entrance bays, the largest being under the semi-circular porch. A large colonnaded drum dome with stained glass windows in the drum surmounts the sanctuary's flat roof. The Temple has three large round-arched stained glass windows on each side of the sanctuary. In the original three-story office and education area to the rear, which wraps around the altar area on the first floor, three varieties of double hung sash are set in various brick surrounds. In 1959 a three-story brick education building of contemporary design extended the building to the rear.

The Temple sanctuary is entered through a vestibule with marble pilasters, a terrazzo floor and stairs leading to a small balcony. Bathrooms with black and white hexagonal floor tiles are located in the front corners of the vestibule. In the sanctuary three banks of pews face the central altar area which is raised and set in a semi-circular apse supported by black marbleized-wood Ionic columns. The focal point is the Ark, made of carved gilded wood, above which hangs one of four red globes, the Eternal Light, which were brought from the original 1875 temple. This globe is suspended from a gilded eagle on the ceiling which represents the Great Seal of the United States and symbolizes Jewish freedom in America. The saucer-domed ceiling is supported on pendentives with an oculus opening into the drum of the upper dome. Coffered barrel vaults surround the dome and a magnificent chandelier hangs from its center. The frieze, cornice, ceiling and dome are highly ornamented with intricate plaster work, some with standard classical motifs such as the anthemion and egg and dart and much with iconographic significance relating to the Jewish faith. The frieze features circular medallions with symbols of the early history of Judaism alternating with floral motifs; the pendentives depict the four seasons; and the dome decoration relates to the twelve tribes of Israel. Interior doors have elegant classical surrounds highlighted with gilding and topped with a cornice supported by consoles. Behind the sanctuary is the

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received  
date entered

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original three-story office-education area and the 1959 education building. The original offices were remodeled in 1959 at the time of the addition and following a 1958 bombing that damaged the northwest corner of the building. At this time, among other changes, a first floor central social hall was converted to a chapel and the original rabbi's study on the first floor west side, which still has its original wood detailing, was converted to a library. The second and third floor classrooms in the original part of the building are intact with their plaster walls and wood paneled doors with four lights and transom above.

The Temple grounds are minimally landscaped with a few shrubs, a large magnolia tree and a large grassy area in front that slopes down to Peachtree Street. A "U"-shaped drive provides access to the front sanctuary entrance, another drive encircles the entire complex, and parking areas flank both sides. On the west side of the Temple, much closer to the road, is a modern office building which was recently purchased by the Temple for future expansion. On the east side is a ca. 1920 apartment complex. Peachtree Street in this area is of mixed use and is lined with a combination of churches, office and apartment buildings and other commercial structures.

BOUNDARY

The boundary of the nominated property, outlined with a heavy black line on the enclosed plat map, consists of the historic lot associated with the Temple since its construction in 1931. The adjacent property to the northwest which includes a parking lot and office building purchased by the Temple in 1958 has no historic significance and has not been included.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs, taken in August, 1981 still represent the character and the appearance of the property. No significant changes have been made since that date.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1931, 1959      **Builder/Architect** Philip T. Shutze, Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Temple is historically significant in the areas of architecture, religion and social/humanitarian history. Architecturally, the Temple is significant as a fine example of a classically inspired religious building designed by Philip T. Shutze, an important early twentieth century Atlanta architect whose significance has been nationally recognized. The design is particularly noteworthy for its elaborate interior decorative scheme worked out by the architect in consultation with the Temple's rabbi which combines classical motifs with Jewish iconography. In terms of religion the Temple is significant as the home of Atlanta's oldest Jewish congregation which began as the Hebrew Benevolent Society in 1860. The Temple is significant in terms of social/humanitarian history because of the congregations's history of community involvement and support for the civil rights movement. In addition, the Temple has served as a center for Jewish cultural, educational and social activities in Atlanta. The above areas of significance support property eligibility under National Register Criteria A and C.

**Architecture.** The Temple, built in 1931, is a finely proportioned, classically inspired building with a pedimented portico, drum dome and vaulted and domed sanctuary. Its rich finishing details include terrazzo floors, black marbleized-wood columns and gilded woodwork. Of particular significance is the intricate plaster relief work on the interior of the sanctuary's frieze, cornice, vaults and dome. This complex iconographic program, worked out by Shutze in consultation with the Temple's rabbi, Dr. David Marx, was executed by an Atlanta craftsman, Mr. Birchey.

Phillip T. Shutze (1890 - ) is an Atlanta architect who designed many classically inspired residences, churches, office buildings and apartment buildings in Atlanta and throughout the Southeast. Shutze, whose career ended a number of years ago, has been nationally recognized by architectural historians as a master of the classic idiom. Shutze received his training at Georgia Institute of Technology and Columbia University and in 1915 was awarded the Prix de Rome for architecture, allowing him to study at the American Academy in Rome. Shutze became a partner in the highly influential Atlanta firm of Hentz, Adler and Shutze in 1926. A number of his Atlanta buildings, including the Swan House (1926-28), the Academy of Medicine (1940) and the Citizens and Southern Bank Building (Shutze remodeled the first three floors of the 1901 building in 1929) are listed on the National Register.

**Religion** - The Temple is the third home of Atlanta's oldest Jewish congregation, founded in 1860 as the Hebrew Benevolent Society. This organization was established to serve the needs of the local German-Jewish immigrants. Operating at first from various rented rooms and halls, the congregation built its first permanent synagogue in 1875 in the heart of downtown Atlanta. Twice, first in 1902 and again in 1930-31, overcrowded facilities prompted the congregation to build a new home. The present Peachtree Street location has

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Lordi, Robert Paul. "Historic Property Information Form - The Temple" March, 1981. On file, Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Approximately three acres

Quadrangle name Northwest Atlanta, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The boundary description and justification are included in Section 7.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carolyn Brooks, National Register Researcher  
Historic Preservation Section

organization Georgia Department of Natural Resources date June 20, 1982

street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone 404/656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Elizabeth A. Lyon*  
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/26/82

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Thomas Lee Dwyer*

date 9/9/82

Keeper of the National Register

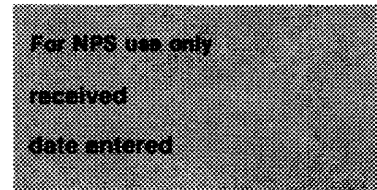
Attest: *Patrick Andrews*

date 9/9/82

Chief of Registration

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significance as part of the migration of many of Atlanta's religious congregations away from their downtown locations out along the Peachtree Street corridor in the wake of the residential development in that direction. A number of other churches dating from this same period are located nearby along Peachtree Street. The fifty year old Temple is the oldest existing synagogue in Atlanta. At the time of its construction, it was one of only a few synagogues in the state which, in 1926 had only twenty-two Jewish congregations and thirteen synagogues. Dr. David Marx, during whose tenure the current Temple was constructed, was instrumental in solidifying not only the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, but the strength of local interfaith ties as well. In 1900 he formed the Unity Club, a group consisting of Unitarians, Universalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists and Jews. Several years later he inaugurated what was to become a tradition, Thanksgiving interfaith service held at the Temple.

Social/Humanitarian- The Temple, as an organization, has since its inception strived to help not only its own people, but also those in need throughout the community at large. In 1869 the first rabbi of the Temple founded the English-German Hebrew Academy which is generally recognized as the direct forerunner of the Atlanta public school system. In 1895, Temple members formed the Council of Jewish Women, a social arm, which in addition to serving the needs of Atlanta's growing immigrant Jewish Community, was very active in campaigning for the eight hour work day and the abolition of child labor. The Federation of Jewish Charities, the Young Men's Hebrew Association and the Council of Jewish Women all operated from the Temple. The role of active community involvement established by Rabbi David Marx was carried on by his successor Rabbi Jacob Rothchild who was very outspoken for the cause of civil rights and a personal friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., two factors which led to the Temple's 1958 bombing.

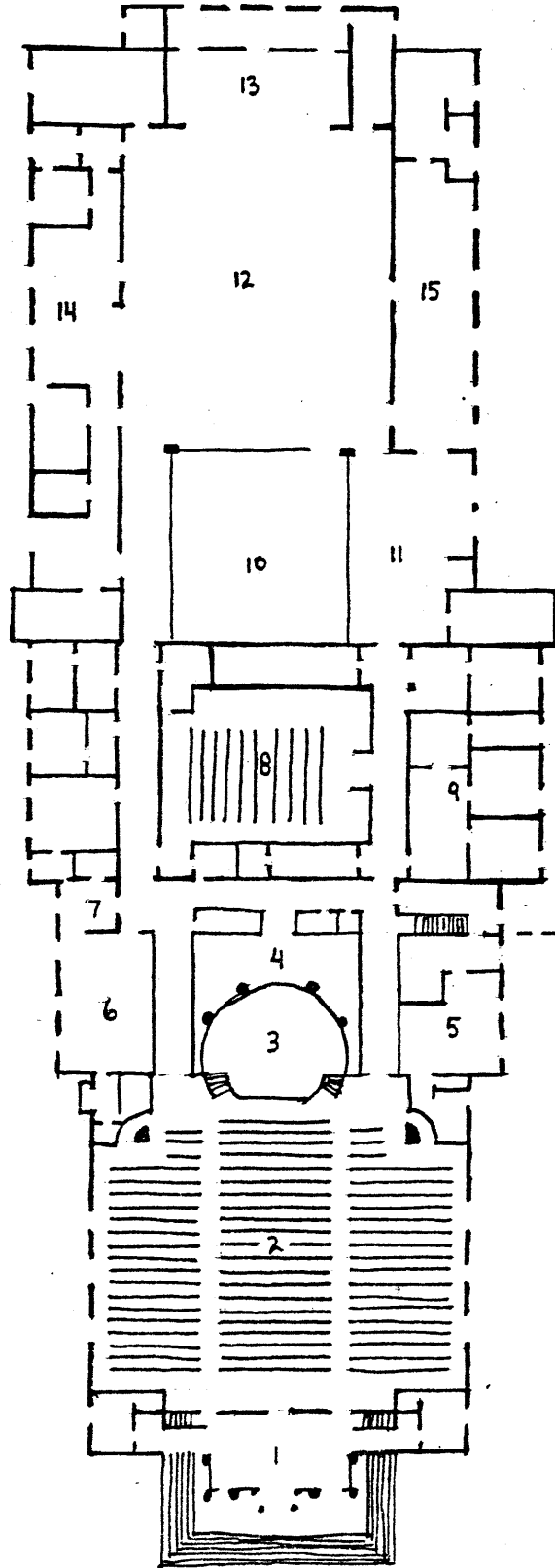
THE TEMPLE  
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

FLOOR PLAN/ FIRST FLOOR

Scale: 1":40'

North: ↗

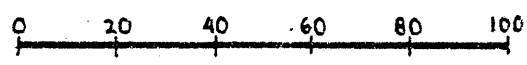
- 1. VESTIBULE
- 2. SANCTUARY
- 3. ARK
- 4. CHAIR LOFT
- 5. RABBI'S STUDY
- 6. LIBRARY / BOARD ROOM
- 7. READING ROOM
- 8. CHAPEL
- 9. OFFICE SPACES
- 10. LOUNGE
- 11. LOBBY
- 12. AUDITORIUM
- 13. STAGE
- 14. KITCHEN
- 15. YOUTH LOUNGE



↑ NEW ADDITION  
↓ ORIGINAL (ALTERED)

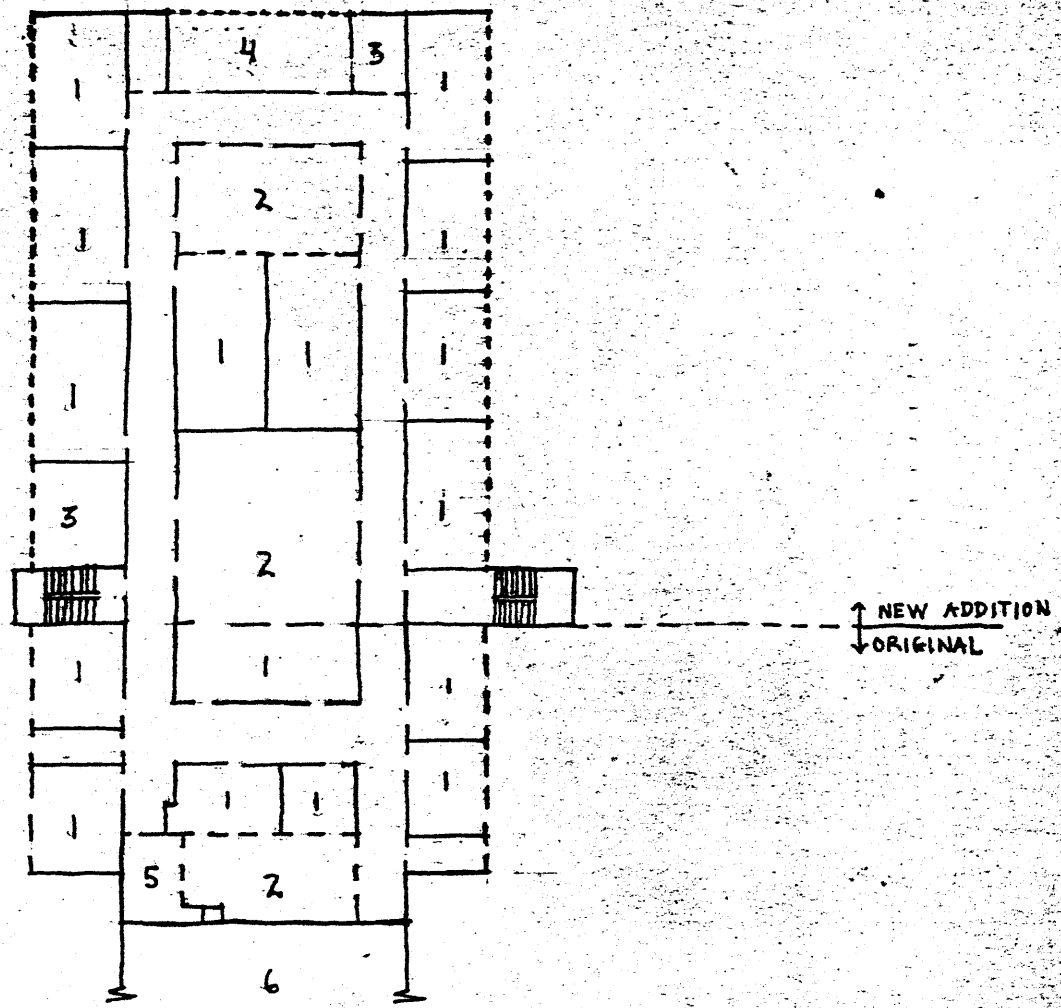
↑ ORIGINAL (ALTERED)  
↓ ORIGINAL (UNALTERED)

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



THE TEMPLE  
PLAN DRAWN 3/12/81  
BY ROBERT P. LORDI

- 1. CLASSROOMS
- 2. LIGHT COURT
- 3. OFFICE
- 4. ARTS & CRAFTS
- 5. LIBRARY
- 6. SANCTUARY



THE TEMPLE  
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

FLOOR PLAN/SECOND FLOOR

Scale: 1"=40'  
North: ↑

*Similar 3d floor above*  
UPPER FLOOR PLAN

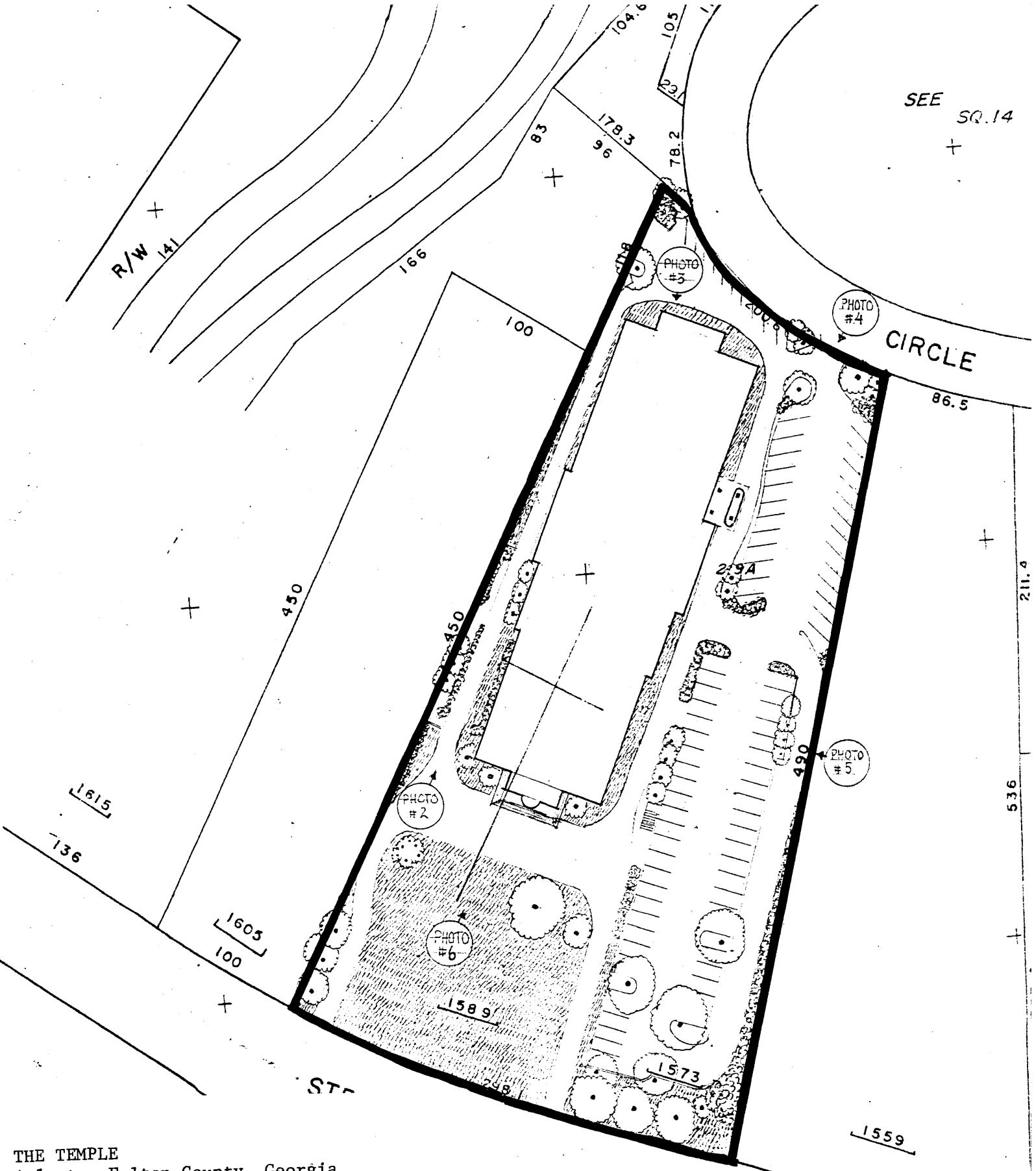




SEE SQ. 14

R/W 141

CIRCLE



THE TEMPLE  
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

PROPERTY/SKETCH MAP

North: ↑  
Property Boundary: —————