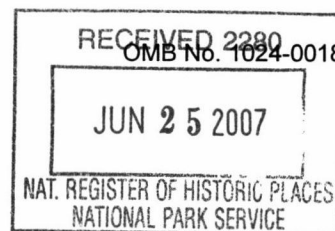


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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. 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 Rodeph Shalom Synagogue

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 607-615 N. Broad Street

not for publication N/A

city or town Philadelphia

vicinity N/A

state Pennsylvania

code PA

county Philadelphia

code 101

zip code 19123-3210

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Carol Lee
Signature of certifying official
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum commission

June 19, 2007
Date

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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 National Register

 other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
name of property

Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
county and state

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-state
☐ public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

roof Synthetics

walls Limestone

other

Narrative Description

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

See attached.

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Section number 7 Page 1 Rodeph Shalom Synagogue,
Philadelphia County, PA

Physical Description:

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, an outstanding building with Byzantine Revival and Art Deco influences, stands at 607-615 N. Broad Street in the North Philadelphia neighborhood of Philadelphia at the southwest corner of Broad and Mt. Vernon Streets. Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, constructed from 1926 to 1928 and five stories in height, is faced in light gray limestone with white terra-cotta and polychromatic marble accents on the publicly-visible elevations and buff brick on the secondary elevations. The form of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue follows traditional synagogue plans, while the design reflects a strong Byzantine influence that is interpreted within the framework of the Art Deco style. The synagogue occupies a rectangular parcel and is bordered with concrete sidewalks enhanced by a few small street trees. The rest of the block is owned by Rodeph Shalom Synagogue and is used for parking.

Despite the changes and restoration work made to Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, the synagogue retains integrity and continues to clearly convey the historic, spiritual and architectural message of the original design.

Exterior

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's rectangular box form consists of connected block-like shapes with roofs hidden behind parapet walls. The ornate west section of the synagogue, housing the sanctuary, is three stories in height and has a shallow hipped roof (over the interior dome) that is hidden from the street view by a stepped parapet wall (Photo #3). The east section, housing a two-story auditorium at the basement and 1st floor levels and classrooms above, is comprised of two, flat-roofed blocks: a three-story block at the north end and one-story block at the south end (Photo #6).

The synagogue resembles a historic fortress in its form and execution of the publicly-visible elevations. At the west end, the three-story block serves as the outer wall of the fortress. A stepped parapet wall with a stylized crenellated roofline reminiscent of ancient defense buildings serves as the keep of the fortress (the innermost tower). In keeping with the fortress theme, the synagogue has several blocks of varying heights simulating towers. At each corner of the west façade is a squat, three-story section, defined by heavy vertical piers and raised corner caps of terra cotta, which mimic watch towers (Photo #1). A three-story tower marks the northeast corner of the synagogue (Photo #3). A five-story tower looms over the entire structure at the juncture of the west and east sections of the synagogue. Although not a formal tower, a utilitarian fire stair of buff brick provides a vertical accent on the south elevation.

The west elevation, the primary façade of the synagogue, aligns with Broad Street and is largely clad in limestone with terra-cotta accents (Photo #1). A narrow strip of buff brick

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is just visible on the inner set-back above the outer wall. The base, steps, and entrance door sills are all gray granite. The five-bay wide elevation is symmetrical in design, with a central entrance area dominated by an arcade of three round arched niches housing three door openings. The outer bays, within the watch tower element, contain narrow 1/1 wood windows with blind arched transoms resembling arrow loop windows¹ of medieval architecture on the 2nd floor and slightly larger 1/1 wood windows with the same architrave appearance on the 3rd floor.

The roofline on the west elevation is comprised of a stepped parapet wall with each level delineated by a decoratively carved terra-cotta block cornice. The lower tier, which embraces the tops of the end towers, features a terra-cotta cornice with courses of stylized modillions, dentils and a shaped Art Deco-style terra-cotta cap with an engraved abstracted leaf-and-dart pattern. A foliated bell-shaped form in bas-relief is centered in the terra-cotta caps of the end towers. The upper tier, built of buff brick with a terra-cotta cornice, has a crenellated appearance with a foliated bell-shaped form in bas relief on each of the shaped terra-cotta crenels. A series of raised round terra-cotta plaques, a typical ornament of the Art Deco style, punctuate the frieze below the crenels. Large raised piers of terra cotta punctuate the corners of the cornice.

Each of the three door openings on the west elevation contains a paneled double-leaf bronze door separated by two-story engaged columns (Photo #2). The four entrance columns are pink and gray veined marble with Byzantine-style cushion capitals having a floriated design comprised of leaf work and small corner volutes.² Polychromatic archivolts sit on the capitals. The architraves are limestone with marble mosaic panels featuring geometric designs. The limestone architraves for the doors terminate in shaped crests with different Judaic symbols, including torah scrolls in the northern bay, Mitzvot tablets in the center bay, and a menorah at the southern bay. The doors each bear a limestone panel carved with a part of the inscription "My House Shall Be Called A/ House Of Prayer/ For All Peoples." Above the three door openings are deeply recessed arched panels of multi-colored mosaics, marble and gold-leafed stones, depicting various symbols of Judaism.

The north elevation along Mt. Vernon Street (Photos #3, 5) is fifteen bays wide with asymmetrically placed fenestration. The façade has a base of gray granite and is largely sheathed in limestone with white terra-cotta accents at the cornice. A narrow strip of buff brick is visible on the inner parapet wall, in the west section, below the terra-cotta cornice. The north elevation contains three entrance openings: a double-leaf paneled

¹ Arrow loop or loophole windows are vertical slits for archers in medieval fortification walls with jambs deeply splayed toward the interior.

² Specifications for Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, 5 May 1927, Rodeph Shalom Archives, Jewish Archives, Box #1, Folder 4.

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wood door with a wood transom set in a round arched opening is located at the easternmost bay; the second door is located at the base of the 5-story tower at the center of the elevation; and the third door stands directly below the stained glass windows, a newly-installed double-leaf paneled metal fire door (2005) with granite steps leading up to it.

The west section, housing the sanctuary, is ornate in appearance. The watch tower features on the west elevation continue around to the north elevation. The westernmost bay of the north elevation contains narrow 1/1 double-hung wood windows at the 2nd and 3rd stories of the tower that are identical to those on the west elevation. The front, west, half of the synagogue is dominated by five round arched openings that span the 2nd and 3rd stories, each containing a doublet window of stained glass by D'Ascenzo Studios (Photo #4). Narrow stone columns with volutes on the capitals support the double arched openings; polychromatic marble and gold leaf mosaics infill the lunettes above the windows. The intrados of the windows is distinguished with dentils. The area above the arched piers extending to the cornice line is filled with bas relief stonework that features shallow stylized buttresses set between wider pilasters that have floriated carving and leafed capitals. In this western half of the north elevation, the stepped terra-cotta cornice introduced on the west elevation turns the corner and terminates at the 5-story tower in the center of the elevation. The two bays flanking the stained glass windows on the 1st floor have blind rectangular doublet openings with a blind round-arched transom.

A five-story tower occupies the center of the north elevation, establishing the location of the fire stairs and secondary entrance into the synagogue. The tower entry consists of a double-leaf glazed wood door with a single-light transom. Granite steps with a wrought iron railing lead up to the door. A recessed lunette above the entrance is filled with a marble and gold leaf mosaic. The fenestration above the entrance graduates in width from the 2nd to the 5th floors, from a single narrow doublet window with a round arch on the 2nd and 3rd floor, to a group of four round arched windows, and then a double-wide paired window with blind arched transoms. The top of the tower features shaped piers of terra cotta imprinted with the same bell-shaped design as the towers on the northwest and southwest corners of the synagogue.

The east section of the north elevation, housing the religious school and auditorium, is less ornamented than the west half. A modest tower block bookends the northeast corner of the synagogue. Like the west section, there is a setback in the elevation plane from the 2nd to 3rd floors. The 1st floor fenestration consists of paired 1/1 metal windows with blind round arched transoms flanking large three stained glass windows with blind round arched transoms. The 2nd story has five bays of paired 1/1 metal windows with blind round arched transoms, with a 6th bay of paired windows, without the transoms,

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located at the easternmost bay. The top floor of the east section continues the same spacing with paired 1/1 metal windows but lacking the blind transoms except for the easternmost bay of the tower; this bay is distinguished by a wide corbelled stone sill. The cornice, visible at the two set backs, consists of a modest terra-cotta molding with a narrow dentil trim. The crown of the tower repeats the shaped corner piers of the other towers, but lacks the bas relief ornamentation.

Both the west section and east section of the synagogue are visible on the east elevation. This elevation is faced with buff brick and is the most modest façade of the synagogue (Photo #6). There are no entrance openings to the synagogue on this elevation. The east elevation of the front, west section of the synagogue, five stories in height, is just visible above the east section. On the 4th floor of the west section, the east elevation is five bays wide and contains paired and single 1/1 double-hung wood windows; the 5th floor is three bays wide with similar windows. Two-thirds of the east section is three stories in height over a raised basement; the southern third of the elevation is only one story high. The fenestration on the east section, three bays wide, consists of groups of 1/1 double-hung metal windows with cast stone sills. The cornice throughout the elevation, with the exception of the 5-story tower, consists of a narrow terra-cotta block cap.

The south elevation, visible from N. Broad Street, is separated from the adjoining parking lot by a high metal picket fence offset ten feet from the building. The south elevation is 16 bays wide and has an asymmetrical fenestration arrangement. There are two entrance openings on the west half of the south elevation: one is a double-leaf paneled metal fire door on the 2nd story, accessible via a metal fire stair; the second entrance (installed c. 2005) consists of a double-leaf paneled metal fire door, below the stained glass windows in the sanctuary, and provides a second means of fire egress from the sanctuary via a submerged ramp. A contemporary style vaulted canopy with a metal frame shelters this ground-level opening.

The west section of the south elevation is nearly identical to the west section of the north elevation in its materials and design (Photos #7, 8). This section has a base of gray granite and is largely sheathed in limestone with white terra-cotta accents at the cornice; a narrow strip of buff brick is visible on the inner parapet wall below the white terra-cotta cornice. The rest of the south elevation is constructed of buff brick. Like the west and north elevations, the roofline is comprised of a stepped parapet wall with the same Art Deco style patterns inscribed in the lower terra-cotta cornice and crenellated upper cornice with the bas relief bell-shaped arabesque designs in the terra-cotta blocks. The westernmost bay on the south elevation continues the watch tower design of the west elevation with the same 1/1 double-hung metal windows with the arrow loop-style architrave on the 2nd and 3rd stories. A group of five narrow round arched openings filled

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with louvers are located at the 3rd story level just east of the end tower, providing ventilation for the HVAC system on the interior. At the center of the façade, the five doublet windows filled with stained glass are identical to those on the north elevation, but the lunettes above the windows lack the decorative mosaic treatment of the north elevation. In addition, the friezes above the windows are devoid of the stylized pilasters found on the north elevation.

The midsection of the south elevation immediately to the east of the sanctuary is buff brick, but continues the ornate molded white terra-cotta cornice at the roofline (Photo #6). This midsection features a group of tripartite round arched windows on the 1st floor, corresponding to the rabbi's private study on the interior. The windows above on the 2nd and 3rd stories consist of paired and single 1/1 double-hung metal windows devoid of ornate architraves. The 5-story brick fire stair tower in the center of the elevation has one 4/4 double-hung metal window on nearly every floor. At the ground floor the staircase projects out to form a 1-story brick cube with no fenestration except for a single-leaf metal door that on its west elevation. The east section of the south elevation has a six-bay, unfenestrated one-story block at the south end, housing the auditorium, and a three-story block at the north end, housing offices and classrooms. A chain link fence runs along the perimeter of the flat roof of the one-story block, enclosing a roof-top terrace. The 2nd and 3rd stories of the north block have paired 1/1 double-hung metal windows.

Over the last 40 years, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue has gradually purchased the adjacent parcels for parking use between N. Broad, N. 13th and Mt. Vernon and Green Streets.³ A chain link fence follows along the perimeter of this L-shaped parking lot. There are two entrances to this lot on Mt. Vernon Street and two from Green Street. Rodeph Shalom Synagogue stands out from the surrounding buildings on N. Broad Street in terms of scale and materials. These buildings nearby range from early 20th century high-rise factories and commercial structures built of brick to low-rise modern buildings with glass curtain wall construction. Diagonally across N. Broad Street, the Gothic Revival style St. Matthew Church (1889) is similar in materials and scale to Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, but is very different architecturally. Several three-story brick row houses are located to the north of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue adjacent to a low-rise Classical Revival style substation of PECO that dates to the 1920s.

³ At the turn of the 20th century, two churches flanked Rodeph Shalom Synagogue: to the east was Ebenezer Baptist Church and to the south was Central North Broad Street Presbyterian Church; the rest of the block was filled with row buildings and twins. By 1950, according to the Sanborn Insurance Map, both churches had been replaced with other buildings and the residential buildings had been largely converted into apartments.

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Interior

The synagogue contains two large multi-story spaces that divide the interior of the building in half: a three-story sanctuary and a two-story auditorium. The sanctuary occupies the 1st three stories of the west section; the auditorium occupies the basement and 1st floor of the east section. In addition to these two major spaces, the 1st floor also contains a large formal foyer along the Broad Street side of the synagogue and a small vestibule centered on the Mt. Vernon Street side. Between the main sanctuary and the auditorium on the 1st floor are several smaller rooms. The basement level is divided into numerous small rooms in the western end of the synagogue, including maintenance spaces and public rooms; the auditorium fills the remainder of the basement. The 2nd and 3rd floors of the synagogue are divided up into classrooms and offices on the eastern half of the synagogue; the western half of the 2nd and 3rd floors is occupied by the sanctuary. The 4th floor is confined to classrooms; the 5th floor of the synagogue contains an apartment.

The circulation through the synagogue is achieved through several scattered staircases. At the western end of the synagogue are two stairs on the north and south walls that lead up to the sanctuary balcony and down to the basement level. The center of the synagogue contains an enclosed stair that extends from the basement level to the 4th floor; a fire stair is centered on the south wall of the synagogue. A short stairway on the east end connects the 4th and 5th floors. Finally, two narrow service staircases are located at the northeast and southeast corners of the synagogue to access the stage workings of the auditorium in the basement. The synagogue contains a single-cab passenger elevator near the center of the building with metal paneled walls.

1st floor

A large foyer with a barrel vaulted ceiling serves as the formal entrance into the sanctuary from the west elevation (Photo #9). The Broad Street doors are enclosed on the interior in small wood vestibules with glazing. The foyer is lavishly decorated with a marble mosaic tile floor of black, white, green, rose, and golden marble tiles. A guilloche mosaic design spans the floor from north to south with a diamond patterned border. A baseboard of Alps green marble wraps around the space, with a paneled Formosa wood wainscot above. The walls above the wainscot are painted plaster.

Lunettes are located at the north and south ends of the foyer and above the entrance doors to the sanctuary and are embellished with stenciled polychromatic arabesque patterns featuring diamonds, stylized floral motifs and zigzags. In each of the lunettes above the entrance openings to the sanctuary are stenciled drawings of hands in a splayed position, symbolizing the hands of a rabbi (traditionally of the Kohen or hereditary priest clan) when raised to bless a Jewish congregation.

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Several three-sided glazed wooden display cabinets are located between the doors to the sanctuary on the east wall of the foyer. Five double-leaf doors provide access to the sanctuary. The center door is a paneled and carved wood door with a raised guilloche design in the blind transom and round arched glazed openings with carved miniature pilasters mirroring the arched opening in the foyer. The other doors leading to the sanctuary retain part of the original stenciled leather-clad door at the top in the form of a blind transom, and have temporary contemporary double-leaf flush oak doors below. The original double-leaf leather doors are stored for restoration.

The northern and southern ends of the foyer are separated from the main foyer by arcades of round arched openings. Within these spaces are built-in wooden display cases for Judaica. The stained glass light fixtures in these spaces have a geometric prismatic design. The staircases that lead to the basement, located at the north and south ends of the display areas, feature gray Tennessee marble treads, risers, landings, and wall stringers.

The sanctuary consists of a large unobstructed three-story space with a curved balcony at the west end and a bima (platform) at the east end (Photos #10, 11, 12). The floor, carpeted throughout, is graded down from the entrance doors towards the bima. The room contains rows of wooden pews with individual upholstered seats. A break in the seating, which occurs where the balcony ends above, allows for barrier free access and fire egress. There are two sets of metal fire doors in the sanctuary centrally located on the north and south walls. An additional single-leaf paneled metal door at the northeast end of the space accesses an enclosed staircase. A large, shallow dome hangs above the sanctuary. The center of the dome is embellished with a stained glass starburst laylight (an artificially-lit skylight) with a Star of David in its center. The starburst shape is created with plaster ribbing. The north and south walls of the room are both pierced by five narrow arched doublet windows filled with stained glass, by D'Ascenzo Studios, that let jewel-toned suffused natural light into the sanctuary.

At the northwest and southwest corners of the sanctuary steps lead up to the balcony. These stairs have gray Tennessee marble treads, landings and risers. The rail cap, newel posts and wall strings are of Formosa wood. The balcony contains two levels of seating filled with pews; a cross-corridor with brass railings separates the seating areas. The acoustic felt ceiling has a starburst laylight that is similar, but smaller, than in the dome.

At the east end of the space is the bima or platform for the leader to stand on and read the Torah (Photos #11, 12, 13). The bima, raised about three feet off of the floor, has a wooden apron with metal screened panels. Several carpeted steps lead up to the bima; in addition, a ramp providing barrier free access is located at the southern end of the

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bima. A moveable carved wooden lectern stands at the edge of the bima. Several golden marble steps lead to the Ark that is centered on the east wall. The Ark, holding the Torah scrolls, is recessed behind an enameled and gilded bronze double-leaf door. An ornate domed limestone and marble portico with polished dark red and white veined polished Tavernelle marble columns hovers over the Ark; a surround of unpolished Tavernelle marble embellishes the area around the ark. Flanking the Ark are two niches with round arched openings that contain seating for the leaders of the service in the form of carved wooden chairs. Within each alcove is a shallow painted wooden arcade consisting of two narrow round arched openings supported by slender wooden columns. The walls behind each arcade are covered in gold-toned aluminum leaf. A brass candlestick with seven branches each, signifying the Sabbath, is located between each niche and the Ark portico.

The organ loft is located above the Ark in a narrow space partially hidden by a low wall. A decorative metal grille conceals the organ pipes.

Throughout the room, all of the wall and ceiling surfaces are covered with an acoustical felt or canvas and are decorated with a myriad of stenciled designs in a palette of jewel-tone colors and gold-toned aluminum leaf. The various shapes in the stencils include: arabesques, zigzags, coffered patterns, diamonds, diaper patterns and floral motifs. The room possesses an abundance of symbolism referencing Jewish heritage. Above the stained glass windows are six-pointed Stars of David set inside minaret-shaped designs. Hands raised in a blessing position are prominently featured above the niches where the rabbis sit during services on the bima. The twelve tribes of Israel are displayed across the arched surface around the bima; the painted metal organ grille above the Ark depicts the seven days of creation.

Several small rooms are sandwiched between the sanctuary and the auditorium on the 1st floor: offices, a vestibule, a stairway, a gallery, a chapel and the rabbi's robing room and private study. A small waiting room/vestibule is located off of Mt. Vernon Street on the north side of the synagogue. This room serves as a secondary entrance to the building. The floor is covered with gray marble; the plaster ceiling has a compound vaulted form. The walls in the foyer are painted plaster. A small reception window with a sliding glass panel on the east wall allows for visitors to check in with the staff. On the other side of the sanctuary's east wall is a long barrel-arched room used as a gallery that is accessible from the small vestibule. The space has carpeted floors and painted plaster walls. East of the gallery space is a large room used for offices; this room has contemporary finishes that include a dropped acoustical tile ceiling, carpeting and painted plaster walls.

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Immediately flanking the bima is a small robing room and a stairwell. The small robing room located to the south of the bima is modestly furnished with plaster walls and ceiling, painted wood trim and painted paneled wood doors. The staircase has a metal balustrade and railing; the steps between the 1st floor and basement are carpeted, above the 1st floor the treads are exposed.

To the south of the business office is a chapel that seats approximately 135 people (Photo #14). This space, recently reconfigured, has a low bima on the east wall. A paneled wood cabinet houses the Ark. The area around the Ark cabinet is highlighted with varnished wood trim with corner blocks; the trim continues as chair rail around the room. The bima also holds a decoratively painted wood lectern that dates to the former synagogue on this site and was designed by Frank Furness. The ceiling in this room is divided into coffers by stenciled wood beams. Glass and metal pendants hang from the coffered areas; glass and metal fixtures featuring seven-branched candelabras hang as sconces from the walls.

The remainder of the 1st floor, east of the business office and chapel, is the upper portion of the basement auditorium.

Basement

The basement includes the Teller Auditorium in the eastern half of the floor and various public and maintenance spaces in the other half. The staircase with carpeted steps and a metal handrail at the north end of the floor leads to a small foyer with a stenciled alcove (not original), painted plaster walls and ceilings and carpeted floors. A narrow space that serves as a ladies' restroom is located directly north of the basement foyer. The restroom features modern bathroom tile and gypsum board partitions. Through a paneled and glazed double-leaf wood door directly to the south of the basement foyer is a square room with a beamed ceiling that serves as a lobby and exhibit space. The lobby has contemporary light fixtures and carpeting. A set of three glazed double-leaf wood doors on the west end of the lobby leads to a small conference room with a beamed ceiling and carpeted floors. This room also has contemporary sconces on the walls and down-lighting in the ceiling.

On the west wall of the lobby, two pairs of double-leaf wood swinging doors with wood transoms lead to the Teller Auditorium. The auditorium, a two-story space, has a narrow overhang at the west end of the space (housing the projection room) that is supported by two plaster-clad columns (Photo #15). An original group of small windows, for movie projection, is centered on this wall. The painted plaster walls throughout the auditorium are broken up into horizontal fields: a grained wainscot (painted to look like wood) at the bottom, surmounted by a stenciled field with a diaper pattern, topped by a wide stretch of painted plaster that is crowned by a molded plaster cornice with a coved area that

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conceals up-lighting. The ceiling is divided into three large coffers by plaster beams. Plaster crown molding defines each coffer. Six large telescoped octagonal chandeliers installed c.2001 constructed of striped heavy paper suspend from the ceiling at regular intervals.

The north wall of the auditorium contains three large window openings that are filled with slightly recessed stained glass windows. The fenestration pattern on the south wall of the auditorium mirrors the northern wall, but contains three large blind windows that are filled with murals of Biblical figures. The east wall of the auditorium is divided into three parts: a stage dominates the center portion, flanked by angled walls that have large tripartite decorative metal grilles. The grilled openings are adorned with painted wood trim, paneled aprons, and sills. A double-leaf glazed and paneled wood door with a paneled wood transom is centered on the northeast wall adjacent to the stage.

The stage area is modestly finished with a shallowly-stepped painted wood proscenium arch and long curtains. Behind the curtain, the basement and 1st floor contain three small storage rooms finished with plaster walls on the south side that originally served as dressing rooms; the north side of the rear stage area retains a small room on each floor. Narrow metal staircases provide access between the floors. A small sub-basement storage room with a concrete floor is located beneath the stage, accessible from the south stairs.

A paneled double-leaf glazed and paneled wood door at the south end of the west wall leads directly into a small hallway that separates the auditorium from the kitchen/prep area. The hallway has light gray terrazzo flooring, painted plaster walls and ceilings, and painted wood trim. A modest metal staircase with a pipe railing is located off of this small hallway and leads up to the 1st floor.

The kitchen, along the south wall of the basement, is utilitarian in its finishes, with poured concrete floors, stainless steel counters and appliances, gypsum board walls with vinyl base and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling with fluorescent lighting.

A long double-loaded corridor with terrazzo floor and painted plaster walls and ceilings leads from the lobby and kitchen area to the west end of the synagogue. Maintenance, storage and boiler rooms flank the corridor. These rooms, utilitarian in finish, have concrete floors and are devoid of wall or ceiling finishes.

A large vestibule is located at the west end of the basement, accessed by two staircases that lead to the Broad Street foyer on the 1st floor. The vestibule has light gray terrazzo floor, painted plaster walls, and wood wainscot. A men's lounge and a bride's room, each with private toilet rooms, occupy the southwest and northwest corners of the

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basement, respectively. Both rooms have a carpeted floor, painted plaster walls with crown molding, and brass sconce fixtures that appear to date from the construction of the synagogue. Double-leaf glazed and paneled wood doors provide access to the lounges.

2nd and 3rd floors

The 2nd and 3rd floors share a similar floor plan with classrooms and offices on the north and south walls. On both floors, the corridor follows a Y-shaped design; a double-loaded corridor extends east to west before branching off to the north and south. The corridors have light gray terrazzo flooring and baseboard (the double-loaded corridor on the 2nd floor has been carpeted over the terrazzo), with painted plaster walls and ceiling, metal door trim, and flush single-leaf wood doors with a small light (Photo #16). Beside many of the classroom doors is a small door above the ground to allow for food or materials to be delivered to the classrooms without disturbing class activities. Separate toilet rooms for boys and girls, finished in ceramic tile floors, wainscot, and metal partitions, are located on the north end of the corridor extension. The southern corridor leads to an enclosed fire stair and small administrative rooms on the 2nd floor and a single classroom on the 3rd floor. Additionally, the south corridor accesses the choir loft on the 2nd floor via an unfinished utilitarian space.

The classrooms on the 2nd floor have been slightly altered and the use of some has changed to offices and meeting rooms. These rooms have dropped acoustical tile ceilings, painted plaster walls, and carpeted floors. Some rooms, however, retain their wood baseboard and chair rail. A small, modern office was created at the east end of the double-loaded corridor in the 1990s.

The 3rd floor has classrooms with their historic materials largely intact. The classrooms in general retain wood flooring, painted wood baseboard and chair rail, and blackboards. One pair of rooms retains the remnants of a wood track to divide the room. A few rooms retain wood cubbies at one side. The library, located in a double-wide classroom on the southwest end of the floor, has a black and gray patterned linoleum floor, painted wood baseboard and chair rail, and wood bookcases.

4th floor

The 4th floor, smaller than the lower floors due to the stepped profile of the synagogue, consists of four classrooms off of a T-shaped corridor. The corridor resembles the corridors on the lower floors, with terrazzo flooring and base, painted plaster walls and ceilings and flush single-leaf wood doors with small lights to the classrooms. Like the 2nd and 3rd floors, the classrooms feature wood floors, painted wood baseboard and chair rail, black boards, and marble thresholds (Photo #17). One classroom on this floor

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retains wooden cubbies for the students. The toilet rooms on the 4th floor are limited to two partitioned single water closets.

5th floor

A narrow staircase off of the 4th floor corridor leads up to the 5th floor apartment. This apartment, privately occupied by a tenant, was not accessible, but floor plans show a series of partitioned rooms and a small balcony off of the south end.

Integrity

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue has had regular maintenance and restoration performed inside and outside its walls since it was built in 1928. In the 1950s, the interior of the sanctuary was restored with the technology available at the time. In recent years, extensive work has been done to improve the safety design of the synagogue as well as restore and preserve the finishes that have been damaged over the years from improper sealants, dirt, and water infiltration. The impact of the alterations has been minimal, as the restoration work matches the original decoration exactly; however the cleaning of the finishes and new lighting has brightened the interior considerably. The additions to the building, such as ramps, have been sensitively designed to blend in with the existing architecture and do not affect the interpretation of the synagogue.

The auditorium, kitchen and conference areas in the basement level were rehabilitated in 2001. The auditorium was repainted a historically correct color and stenciling was added to the lower portion of the walls. In addition, new chandelier light fixtures were installed and a new carpet was installed. The kitchen, formerly located in the center of the basement, was moved to the south end of the basement. The former kitchen was transformed into the Gutman Conference Room; new carpet and lighting was installed at this time.

In 2002, the seating and orientation of the bima in the chapel was reconfigured. The bima was moved from the south wall to the east wall where it was recreated as a lower platform. The pews were removed and replaced with chairs. The Furness-designed lectern, found in the stage area of the auditorium, was carefully cleaned and refinished to its original color scheme and placed in the chapel. While the orientation and some of the fixtures in the room were changed, the room retains the integrity of its painted beamed ceiling and its use as a room for worship.

From 2004 to 2005, the sanctuary was closed to allow for repairs and alterations to be made. The major modifications made to the building are outlined below:

- Two double-leaf paneled metal fire doors were installed in the new openings on the north and south sides of the sanctuary beneath the five pairs of

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stained glass windows. New steel beam lintels were installed in the walls above the doors to support the walls above. New limestone panels were added to the exterior around the new openings. A contemporary style covered entrance was built on the south side of the synagogue to allow for barrier free access and fire egress from the sanctuary with a new concrete ramp. The addition of the two doors minimally affects the integrity of the design, as the doors occupy a small portion of the entire wall. The treatment and style of the new doors, painted with a warm gold hue to match the color scheme of the sanctuary, blends in with the room but is clearly modern and visible for safety. In the sanctuary, the patched plaster over the new steel lintel was stenciled to perfectly match the existing stenciling.

- Three rows of seats in the middle of the sanctuary were removed to allow for access to the new fire doors on the north and south sides of the sanctuary, thus creating a new cross-corridor through the sanctuary and a place for wheelchairs. In addition to providing egress, the removal of the rows also created a more intimate place of worship in the front of the sanctuary. The removal of the seats does not affect the overall perception of the room as a place of worship but better defines passageways for travel.
- A new, removable (dismountable) lower bima was built in front of the existing bima to create a more intimate setting during smaller services. In order to see the new lower bima, the floor was re-leveled with poured concrete (not visible beneath the carpet) in the front portion of the sanctuary. The change in the floor level does not affect the view from the back seats and does not affect the integrity of the sanctuary.
- All of the vertical stenciled plaster surfaces received in-painting of missing sections and overall cleaning where damage and deterioration were widespread. The signatures of the artisans who undertook the 1950's restoration were found and preserved. Other restoration work included cleaning and touch-up to the ornate radial organ screen and replacing the aluminum leafing in the bima seating alcoves and on the bima itself.
- All of the wood pews were removed, refurbished and reinstalled.
- The existing carpet in the sanctuary was removed and replaced with carpeting designed to match the original c.1928 carpeting in the balcony. The original carpeting remains in place in the balcony area.
- The acoustical felt ceiling on the dome and balcony ceiling and walls was

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carefully abated for asbestos and re-adhered. Areas of the dome damaged by water were infill painted to match the existing stencil pattern. The acoustical felt wall material along the sidewalls of the balcony that was within reach was removed; a new fire resistant and paintable material was affixed to the walls in these areas. The new wall material was carefully painted to match the existing patterns with the same color palette.

- The balcony and central "starburst" laylights were re-structured, re-glazed, re-lamped, and re-painted. In the dome laylight, secondary structural members were removed, Unistrut was installed in a regular pattern and the plaster ribs were tied off to it. Replacement ribs were fabricated by urethane and connections between ribs were reinforced with steel. Where there was non-original Plexiglass glazing in the laylights, fluted laminated glazing was installed to match the original. Original stained glass portions, such as the center star, were removed and re-leaded. The starburst laylights were refitted with new energy efficient halight lamps and new glass panels to match the existing.
- A new sound system with close to thirty concealed or unobtrusive speakers was installed in the sanctuary.
- New, larger sconces were installed in place of the existing sconces in the sanctuary. The exterior of the sconces were painted with stencils to match the existing stenciling.
- New ductwork returns were installed on the north wall below the stained glass windows. The new grilles were stenciled to match the surrounding stenciling.
- Asbestos abatement was performed on various ducts and pipes in the synagogue.

In summary, the many alterations to the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue have not greatly affected its historical appearance. The new fire doors added to the north and south elevations for safety concerns were designed sensitively and do not significantly impact or compromise the historic image of the building. The majority of the alterations to the synagogue have occurred on the interior, where the historic finishes have been painstakingly restored and stabilized, and the bima (platform) and seating plane of the sanctuary were carefully reconfigured to suit modern needs. Again, these changes have enhanced the interior and have allowed it to function for the needs of the 21st century.

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
name of property

Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
county and state

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.)

- ☒ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a 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

Period of Significance

1928

Significance Dates

1928

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Simon & Simon, architect

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 of 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: Philadelphia Jewish Archive Center

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Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, located at 607-615 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia, is notable for its aesthetic design and for its designers. Reflecting a fusion of the Byzantine Revival and Art Deco styles, the building is characteristic of many 1930s synagogues, both in city centers and the suburbs and has a great deal of architectural integrity. The synagogue was designed by the architecture firm of Simon & Simon, native Philadelphians who also built the Strawbridge Department Store (1929-1931) and the Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Bank Building (1927). D'Ascenzo Studios, also a local Philadelphia firm, was the other significant contributor to the decorative design of the building. Although primarily known for work in stained glass and mosaics, D'Ascenzo Studios executed decorative stenciling throughout the interior of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue; the studio also designed the elaborate marble flooring in the vestibule and the exterior entry door mosaics. Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's period of significance is 1928, the completion date of its original construction.

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue replaced an earlier synagogue built in 1868 on the same location by Rodeph Shalom Congregation. Lavishly decorated on the interior and exterior, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue qualifies for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its significance under Criterion C in Architecture as an outstanding local example of the Art Deco style with Byzantine Revival style elements. Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is also significant under Criterion C as an important work by the Philadelphia architecture firm of Simon & Simon and the outstanding decorative elements by the local firm of D'Ascenzo Studios. The building meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious resource deriving its significance from its architectural merit.

Brief History of the Building

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue was constructed from 1926 to 1928 on the site of an earlier synagogue designed for Rodeph Shalom Congregation by the firm of Fraser, Furness and Hewitt in 1868.

Prior to the construction of the new synagogue, Rodeph Shalom Congregation had grown to 1,388 members by the early 1920s, and was straining to accommodate its members with the 1,370 seats in the existing synagogue.¹ In order to teach its 440 religious school students, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue had purchased the Alexis Club (which would be renamed the Teller School) at the southwest corner of Broad and Jefferson Streets in 1908 to use as a separate schoolhouse for religious education.²

¹ Anndee Hochman, *Rodeph Shalom: Two Centuries of Seeking Peace*, "(Philadelphia, 1990), 2. Rodef Shalom's First Century," unidentified newspaper clipping, (21 December 1900) Temple University, Urban Archives, 36.

² Hochman, 30. This building is still standing and is located near Temple University's campus.

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After Rabbi Louis Wolsey was selected to lead Rodeph Shalom Synagogue in February 1925, the new rabbi stipulated that he would only take the position if a new synagogue was constructed with ample classroom space.³ Architect Grant Simon of Simon & Simon was retained to serve as an advisor to the congregation to explore the potential construction costs of a new synagogue.⁴ Simon's conclusion, after studying newly built synagogues in Cleveland and Detroit, was that the new synagogue could be built for approximately \$650,000. After much research, the building committee reported in June 1926 that the synagogue could either buy additional property on Mt. Vernon Street east of Broad Street or buy a new site at 16th and Allegheny Avenue in North Philadelphia.⁵ With the construction of the Broad Street subway underway, the board members and Rabbi Wolsey felt it important to remain on Broad Street, specifically because of the increased means for access via the subway. Shortly thereafter, the board decided to demolish the existing facility and rebuild it with increased space for educational, recreational and social work.⁶ Funding for the new building included \$29,000 for the additional property, \$2,000 to store the organ during construction, and \$30,000 in architects' fees.⁷ By November 1926, Simon & Simon was formally selected by the building committee to produce architectural drawings.⁸

The last service in the 1870 synagogue was held on June 11, 1927.⁹ The cornerstone for the new building was laid on December 23, 1927. During the period of construction, services were held at Rodeph Shalom's Teller School building at the southwest corner of Broad and Jefferson and the YMHA of Philadelphia at Broad and Pine Streets.¹⁰ The new synagogue was dedicated on September 14, 1928, finished at a cost of \$1.5 million.

In addition to spaces for religious services, the new Rodeph Shalom Synagogue included rooms for delivering social services and education. After construction, features of the building on the 1st floor and basement included: a Boy Scout room, a sewing room, a locker room with shower cubicles (no longer in existence) and storage rooms for stage scenery, apparatus and dining tables and an Assembly Hall with a stage and six

³ Hochman, 40.

⁴ Congregation Rodeph Shalom Archives, Board of Trustees Records Minutes for June 17, 1925, Jewish Archives of Philadelphia.

⁵ Hochman, 42.

⁶ "Men and Things: Rodeph Shalom, In the Dedication of A Million Dollar House of Worship, Marks a Further Advance In Its Notable Career," *Evening Bulletin*, 13 September 1928, Temple University Library, Urban Archives Collection.

⁷ Hochman, 42. The additional property was the previous site of the Ebenezer Baptist Church.

⁸ Congregation Rodeph Shalom Archives, Board of Trustee Records, Jewish Archives of Philadelphia.

⁹ "Bid Farewell to Synagogue," *Evening Bulletin* (11 June 1927), newspaper clipping, Temple University, Urban Archives, 21 December 1900.

¹⁰ By 1951, the Teller School had become the private Palmer School (which closed in 1990) and had no association to the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue.

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dressing rooms. The 2nd floor contained rehearsal space, locker rooms and ten class rooms; the 3rd floor also contained ten class rooms, and a library. The 4th floor had four classrooms. The 5th floor of the building had a small apartment for the caretaker of the building and penthouses for the elevators.¹¹

Several alterations were made to the interior and exterior of the building from fall of 2004 through the end of 2005 to allow for barrier-free access and improved fire egress, new lighting, repair of the existing decorative finishes, and the creation of a lower bima (platform) for weekly services. The Philadelphia architecture firms of Martin J. Rosenblum, RA & Associates and Becker Winston provided the design services for these alterations.

Rodeph Shalom Congregation, a brief history

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue houses Philadelphia's largest and oldest Ashkenazic congregation; the congregation also has the distinction of being the oldest group of Ashkenazic Jewish worshippers in the United States.

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is a monument to a long tradition of worship by Ashkenazic Jews (Jews originally from Germany, Poland, Austria, and Eastern Europe) in Philadelphia. Many of the nation's early Jewish immigrants were Sephardic, originating from Spain and Portugal. Philadelphia's first Jewish congregation was Mikveh Israel, founded in 1740 by Sephardic Jews. Ashkenazic Jews began meeting in Philadelphia in the late 1790s, placing the formation of Rodeph Shalom (which means "followers of peace") in or around 1795.¹² Rodeph Shalom Congregation was incorporated in Philadelphia in 1802 as the "German Hebrew Society Rodeph Shalom."¹³ By this time, there were 2,500 Jews in the American Colonies.¹⁴ The German Jews in Philadelphia accounted for a scant ten percent of the total number of Jews in Philadelphia; Philadelphia had between 30 to 40 families, so the number of German Jews ranged from about a dozen to two dozen people.¹⁵ When Rodeph Shalom incorporated in 1802,

¹¹ "Rodeph Shalom Congregation Dedicates New Synagogue," *The Philadelphia Jewish Times* (14 September 1928), 14-15, Temple University Library, Urban Archives clippings collection for Rodeph Shalom Synagogue.

¹² Hochman, 3.

¹³ Hochman, 2. Rodef Shalom's First Century," unidentified newspaper clipping, (21 December 1900) Temple University, Urban Archives.

¹⁴ "Rodeph Shalom Congregation Dedicates New Synagogue," *The Philadelphia Jewish Times* (14 September 1928), Temple University Library, Urban Archives

¹⁵ Assuming 35 families with five members per family, there were about 175 Jewish people in Philadelphia in 1800; ten percent of this number likely ranged between 12 and 20 people. "Rodeph Shalom Congregation Dedicates New Synagogue," *The Philadelphia Jewish Times* (14 September 1928), Temple University Library, Urban Archives

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Philadelphia became the first city in the nation to have two synagogues.¹⁶ For over two decades, Rodeph Shalom Congregation was the only Ashkenazic synagogue in the United States. The second Ashkenazic synagogue in the nation was B'nai Jeshurun, established in New York City in 1825.¹⁷

Rodeph Shalom's first house of worship occupied a small building in Pear Alley near 3rd and Walnut Streets in Philadelphia. During the first few decades of the 19th century, the congregation relocated to several other places within the Old City neighborhood of Philadelphia. In 1842, the Rodeph Shalom Congregation purchased a new building for use as the synagogue on Julianna Street (between 5th and 6th Streets) below Callowhill and remained in this location until 1870.¹⁸

With an influx of membership to the congregation, a new synagogue for Rodeph Shalom was finished in 1869 at the southeast corner of Broad and Mt. Vernon Streets. Fraser, Furness & Hewitt, an acclaimed architecture firm of the period, designed the new synagogue in the Moorish style.

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's historical role in the Reform Movement in Philadelphia
Through education and practice, Rodeph Shalom Congregation continues the traditions and customs of the Reform Judaism Movement and has served as a leader in Reform Judaism in Philadelphia since the late 19th century.

After Rodeph Shalom's new Moorish style synagogue was finished in 1870, Dr. Marcus Jastrow (the spiritual leader of the congregation, whose term began in 1866) introduced the philosophies of Reform Judaism Movement that are still in place today, including bilingual prayers and sermons, the use of a choir and cantor, and mixed seating for men and women.¹⁹ The Reform Judaism Movement began in Germany in the early 1800s. Philadelphia's first congregation to adopt Reform Judaism, then considered a radical experiment, was Keneseth Israel in 1855.²⁰ Formerly Orthodox in origin, Rodeph

¹⁶ Hochman, 3-4.

¹⁷ "Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, New York, NY Records," The Jewish Theological Seminary website, World Wide Web, accessed on January 4, 2006, http://www.jtsa.edu/research/ratner/conrec/inst_conbnainyny.shtml.

¹⁸ "Rodef Shalom's First Century," unidentified newspaper clipping, (21 December 1900) Temple University, Urban Archives, 21 December 1900.

¹⁹ "Men and Things: Rodeph Shalom, In the Dedication of A Million Dollar House of Worship, Marks a Further Advance In Its Notable Career," *Evening Bulletin*, 13 September 1928, Temple University Library, Urban Archives Collection.

²⁰ "History/Archives," of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, World Wide Web, accessed on January 4, 2006, <http://www.kenesethisrael.org/his.htm>.

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Shalom Congregation adopted Reform Judaism formally in 1892 under the leadership of Rabbi Henry Berkowitz who further promoted women's role within the congregation.²¹

Rabbi Harry W. Ettelson, leader of Rodeph Shalom Congregation from 1919 to 1925, advanced Reform Jewish education with the reorganization of junior congregations and the reconstruction of the religious school programs.²² The educational programs at Rodeph Shalom Synagogue continued to be an important component of its religious activities and the driving force in the creation of the new building. The Teller School accommodated 464 students in 1925 according to meeting minutes by the Board of Trustees,²³ and with religious celebrations such as Purim, more space was desperately needed for both the children and parents. Rabbi Wolsey's active interest in education led him to involve children in conducting services from start to finish after the new building opened in 1928.²⁴ With its new classroom accommodations, the Sunday School attendance increased to 550 children during the first decade of the new building's existence.²⁵ Wolsey rewarded attendance at Sunday School, and under his leadership Bar Mitzvah ceremonies, previously a low priority for Reform congregations, became popular.²⁶ By 1958, 1,700 families belonged to Rodeph Shalom Synagogue and the religious school enrollment had increased to 1,100 children, which was maintained for ten years.²⁷

The building at Broad and Mt. Vernon was also used for many public meetings and seminars to discuss Reform Judaism in its many aspects. In 1948, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue hosted a forum discussion on the meaning of Reform Jewish beliefs, rituals and traditions for more than twenty business and professional women's clubs, sponsored by the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods.²⁸

With the leadership of Rabbi David H. Wice, elected as head rabbi of the synagogue in 1947, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue opened a branch synagogue in Elkins Park on High School Road in 1958 to serve as an extension of its activities at Broad and Mt. Vernon

²¹ "Varied Activities for 3500 Members at Rodeph Shalom," *Record* (1 May 1937), Temple University Library, Urban Archives Collection.

²² Jeannette W. Rosenbaum, "Rodeph Shalom, Philadelphia, 1800-1950," *Liberal Judaism* (September 1950), Rodeph Shalom Synagogue archives.

²³ Congregation Rodeph Shalom Archives, Board of Trustees Records, October 11, 1925, Jewish Archives of Philadelphia.

²⁴ Hochman, 48.

²⁵ "Varied Activities for 3500 Members at Rodeph Shalom," *Record* (1 May 1937), Temple University Library, Urban Archives Collection.

²⁶ Hochman, 48.

²⁷ Hochman, 58.

²⁸ "Women Invited to Forum," *Evening Bulletin* (21 April 1948), Temple University Library, Urban Archives Collection.

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Streets. Wice was an important leader of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, the organizing institution for Reform Judaism.

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue today remains the largest Reform Judaism congregation in the Philadelphia area and one of only two Reform Judaism congregations located in the city. Rodeph Shalom Synagogue presently has 1,000 membership "units", representing approximately 3,500 members. In contrast, the other Reform congregation in Philadelphia, Congregation Beth Ahaveh (incorporated in 1977), has approximately 150 members.²⁹ Rodeph Shalom Synagogue has held the distinction of being the largest Reform Judaism congregation in Philadelphia since 1949, when Philadelphia's other Reform Judaism congregation, Keneseth Israel, moved out of Philadelphia to Elkins Park, PA from its home at 1717 Broad Street.

Criterion C: Significance in Architecture

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue remains an important example of a Byzantine Revival/Art Deco style religious building in the region and an outstanding work by the firms of Simon & Simon, with decorative elements crafted by D'Ascenzo Studios.

Brief History of Synagogue Design in United States

From the earliest design and construction of synagogues in American, there has always been a balance between stylistic assimilation (Revival styles, Georgian, Gothic) and the need to express and evoke individual heritage (Byzantine, Moorish).³⁰ However, despite the often conflicting styles, the fundamental principle has remained the same. The word synagogue is derived from the Greek word "synagein," meaning "to bring together."³¹ Consequently, a synagogue requires only an enclosed space to allow a congregation to assemble for prayer and to hear the Torah (Five Books of Moses) read.³²

The physical form of the synagogue has varied greatly throughout its history, primarily because of constant access new materials and awareness of new styles.³³ Synagogue architecture has typically followed local styles rather than universal designs.³⁴ The first Jewish communities in America adopted popular architectural styles of the late 18th

²⁹ Congregation Beth Ahaveh website, World Wide Web, accessed on January 4, 2006, http://pa025.urj.net/2about/about_history.html.

³⁰ Stoltzman, 17.

³¹ Henry and Daniel Stoltzman, *Synagogue Architecture in America* (Victoria, Australia: The Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 2004), 15.

³² Samuel Gruber, "American Religious Buildings," *Common Bond* (Vol. 11, No. 1 / May 1995), New York Landmarks Conservancy, viewed on the World Wide Web, January 20, 2006, <http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSPInfoClearingHouse/articles/AMERICAN%20SYNAGOGUE%20ARCHITECTURE.htm>.

³³ Stoltzman, 17.

³⁴ Stoltzman, 15. The first North American synagogue was built in 1730 in Lower Manhattan.

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century, like the Georgian/Classical Revival style Touro Synagogue in Newport, RI (1753), America's oldest surviving synagogue.³⁵ As many Jewish communities culturally assimilated, so too did their religious buildings architecturally adapt. In this way, "the use of the latest architectural fashion was a proud symbol of Jews' [social and economic] integration into society."³⁶

During the 19th century, synagogues built in the United States outwardly reflected the country's fascination with eclecticism and followed the fashionable period styles: the Italianate, Moorish Revival, Renaissance Revival, Queen Anne, Byzantine Revival and Egyptian Revival styles. The Gothic style, perhaps because it was often employed for church design, was rarely used for synagogues in the United States.³⁷ By the early 20th century, the Classical Revival and Beaux Arts styles made a comeback in popularity for synagogues. The Art Deco style was readily embraced by many Jewish communities in the 1930s, though the number of synagogues built in the nation decreased during the Depression. The theme of modernity introduced with the Art Deco style continued in the 20th century with many synagogues and community centers built in the suburbs expressing contemporary architectural styles. Beginning in the mid-20th century, synagogues were often "at the forefront of contemporary American trends, more so than Protestant church design, which has not strayed far from Gothic or Colonial influences."³⁸ The appeal of modern design came both from the lack of "unified [Jewish] stylistic precedents in history" and from the need of affluent suburban Jews to break ties with their often stigmatized urban and ethnic pasts.³⁹

Throughout Jewish history, several key elements have constituted a synagogue: the Ark or Aor aron ha-kodesh (a niche in the eastern wall, containing the Torah scrolls); the amud (prayer desk, facing the ark) and the bima (a platform), from where the Torah is read. The ner tamid (eternal light) typically hangs in front of the Ark. Prior to the early 19th century, the bima was centrally located in Ashkenazic synagogues; with the influence of the Reform Judaism Movement, the placement of the bima was consolidated to stand in front of the Ark at one end of the room.⁴⁰

Simon & Simon

The architectural firm of Simon & Simon specialized in commercial designs, hospitals, banks and office buildings. The firm was founded by Edward Simon (1878-1949) and

³⁵ Gruber, "American Religious Buildings."

³⁶ Stolzman, 71.

³⁷ During this time, the discovery of early Eastern European and Palestinian synagogues also impacted American designs.

³⁸ Stolzman, 34.

³⁹ Stolzman, 34; Stolzman, 57.

⁴⁰ Stolzman, 27-28.

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his younger brother, Grant Miles Simon (1887-1967), both native Philadelphians.⁴¹ Edward Simon received degrees in architecture and building construction at Drexel Institute in 1900.

Grant Simon excelled as an architect, lithographer, painter, watercolorist, historian, and author throughout his life. He attended the University of Pennsylvania in architecture where he trained under master architect Paul Cret and received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in architecture in 1911; he also studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Grant Simon received many prizes for his designs during his training, including: the Cope Memorial Prize in 1908; University of Pennsylvania Alumni Scholarship, 1909, 1910, 1911; Stewardson Memorial Traveling Scholarship, 1909; Arthur Spayd Brooke gold medal, 1911; and the Paris Prize in 1913.

After several years of working with other partners, Edward Simon established a firm with his brother, Grant, in 1918 after his brother returned from his studies abroad. Grant Simon left the firm in 1928, but Edward continued to use the name Simon & Simon through the 1930s. Other significant Philadelphia commissions by the firm in the late 1920s include: the Blum Store at 1300 Chestnut Street (1928; in East Center City Commercial Historic District, NRHP 1984); the Strawbridge Department Store (1929-1931) at 8th and Market Streets, an impressive 13-story Art Deco monolithic design (included in the East Center City Commercial National Historic District); the Beaux Arts style Curtis Hall for Drexel Institute at 3101 Chestnut Street (1928); the Classical Revival style Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Bank Building at 123-151 Broad Street (1927; NRHP 1978), a 29-story high rise. Although the stylistic approach of the firm varied by project, the scale and complexity of their projects remained consistent.

D'Ascenzo Studios

Both the exterior and interior walls of the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue are covered with painted and carved geometric designs—stencils and mosaics—executed by D'Ascenzo Studios, the firm that was also responsible for the stained glass of the main sanctuary and the mosaic tile floor of the vestibule.

D'Ascenzo Studios was founded in Philadelphia by Nicola D'Ascenzo in 1896. Born in 1871 to a long line of armor makers in Italy, D'Ascenzo came to the United States in 1882.⁴² Originally apprenticed to a stonemason and woodworker, he received his formal education at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art (now Philadelphia's

⁴¹ Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database, listing for Simon & Simon, World Wide Web, accessed January 2, 2006, http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm?ArchitectId=A1271, accessed January 2, 2006.

⁴² "370: Nicola D'Ascenzo," *Heritage Forums* – June 2001. World Wide Web site <http://www.abruzzoforum.com/archived/0106/messages/370.html>. Accessed 6 January 2006.

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Philadelphia County, PA

School of Industrial Art listed him as an alumnus in 1892.⁴³ D'Ascenzo received continued education from New York School of Design in New York City and Scuola Libera in Rome.⁴⁴ Skilled in easel painting in oils and watercolors, mural painting, mosaics, and stained glass, D'Ascenzo briefly taught a mural painting class for the Evening School of Decorative Painting (part of Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art) before forming his own business in Philadelphia.⁴⁵

A contemporary to Louis Comfort Tiffany, D'Ascenzo Studios excelled in stained glass, in addition to decorative and mural painting and mosaics. The studio created stained glass for clients within the United States and Europe and received multiple awards for their work, including a medal at the Columbia Exposition in Chicago (1893) and a gold medal from The Architectural League of New York (1925).⁴⁶ Among the more notable stained glass projects are: Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, PA; Folger-Shakespeare Library and National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.; and Riverside Church in New York City.⁴⁷ Additionally, D'Ascenzo Studios worked on many other projects with Simon & Simon in the late 1920s, including First Camden National Bank (1929). Their work at Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is very much in keeping with the rest of their portfolio.

Byzantine Revival Style/Art Deco Style

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is an important example of the combined Byzantine Revival and Art Deco styles. Simon & Simon described the proposed appearance of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue to the building committee in a memo as "Byzantine throughout in its general character, expressive of the influence of the east and of the greatest Jewish tradition, yet in its adaptation to American religious life it attains a new virility and strength."⁴⁸

⁴³ "Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871-1954), *University of the Arts Libraries*. World Wide Web site <http://uarts.edu/stuserv/libraries/archives/alumni/dascenzo.html>. Accessed 6 January 2006.

⁴⁴ "370: Nicola D'Ascenzo," *Heritage Forums - June 2001*. World Wide Web site <http://www.abruzzoforum.com/archived/0106/messages/370.html>. Accessed 6 January 2006.

⁴⁵ "Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871-1954), *University of the Arts Libraries*. World Wide Web site <http://uarts.edu/stuserv/libraries/archives/alumni/dascenzo.html>. Accessed 6 January 2006.

⁴⁶ "Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871-1954)," World Wide Web site <http://www.ilsitodi.it/gessopalena/GessaniMondo/NicolaDascenzo/NicolaDascenzo.htm>. Accessed 6 January 2006.

⁴⁷ "Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871-1954), *University of the Arts Libraries*. World Wide Web site <http://uarts.edu/stuserv/libraries/archives/alumni/dascenzo.html>. Accessed 6 January 2006.

⁴⁸ "Rodeph Shalom Congregation Dedicates New Synagogue," *The Philadelphia Jewish Times* (14 September 1928), 14-15, Temple University Library, Urban Archives clippings collection for Rodeph Shalom Synagogue; Rodeph Shalom Synagogue archives, building construction folder, accessed on January 6, 2006.

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The Byzantine Revival style references the Byzantine Style, which emerged in the Byzantine Empire beginning in the 4th century AD and was based on Early Christian and Roman antecedents. The Byzantine style itself was characterized by massive domes with square bases, rounded arched openings, spires, large open spaces and highly decorative interiors that used a multitude of color and rich materials such as marbles, mosaics, and coffered ceilings. The Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey (532-37) is a well-known representative of a Byzantine style religious building.

During the second half of the 19th century, the Byzantine Revival style enjoyed a resurgence in church design and reiterated the round arches, abundant surface decoration and multiple domes found in Byzantine architecture. In the beginning of the 20th century, the Byzantine Revival style was increasingly employed by architects for synagogues throughout the nation instead of the Moorish Revival style previously commonly used for synagogues in the 19th century.⁴⁹ The central dome over the sanctuary space was a common feature among these buildings. The Byzantine Revival style was a departure from the Moorish Revival Style that was favored during post-Civil War era by first-generation Jews who immigrated to United States from Germany. By the late 19th century, many second-generation Jews, wishing to assimilate with American culture, found the Moorish Revival style too exotic and "un-American."⁵⁰

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's Byzantine Revival style elements include a blocky structure with modified tower-like features at the corners, a formal grouping of three arched openings centered on the front elevation, the lavish stenciled interior decoration and mosaics that reference the polychromy of Byzantine architecture. Unlike many Byzantine Revival style religious buildings, Rodeph Shalom's dome is shallow and hidden behind a stepped parapet wall on the exterior; the dome is, however, prominently featured on the interior. Building committee records from 1926 list the cost of having a dome visible and sheathed in a costly material such as copper was evaluated, but in the end, perhaps due to economic considerations, the committee rejected having the dome play an important role in the exterior design.⁵¹

The Art Deco elements of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue include its simplified boxy, planar form, the stepped-back parapet wall, and stylized Byzantine style decorations. Unlike

2006.

⁴⁹ Samuel Gruber, *Common Bond* (New York Landmarks Conservancy), Vol. 11, No. 1 / May 1995, accessed on the World Wide Web on January 23, 2006, <http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSPinfoClearingHouse/articles/AMERICAN%20SYNAGOGUE%20ARCHITECTURE.htm>.

⁵⁰ Gruber.

⁵¹ Board of Trustees Records, various, Rodeph Shalom Archives, Jewish Archives of Philadelphia.

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other Byzantine Revival style synagogues, the form of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is rectangular and not reminiscent of a basilica with truncated arms in all directions. By the late 1920s, the Art Deco style became the first widely accepted national architectural style of the 20th century to break from the traditional revivalist architecture of earlier decades. The moniker "Art Deco" originated from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs Industriels et Modernes, held in Paris, France in 1925. The Art Deco style was extremely eclectic, incorporating motifs that referenced important artistic movements (Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, and Expressionism) and archaeological interests, such as ancient Egyptian and pre-Columbian art and architecture.⁵² The discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922, as well as archeological digs in Mexico in the 1920s, stirred renewed interest in exotic expression. Other attributes of the style included: emphasis on verticality, flat roofed forms often with setbacks, stylized floral and geometric motifs.

For the interior of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, Grant Simon drew on the design of the synagogue in Florence, Italy, finished in 1882 and designed by Vincenzo Micheli. Like Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, the Florence Synagogue has a domed interior with exuberant interior decorations covering all wall surfaces with lavish stencils and mosaics.

Comparisons

While the Byzantine Revival/ Art Deco style of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is unique for a religious building in both Philadelphia and the region, the Synagogue is characteristic of religious building construction and more mainstream architectural trends in Philadelphia in the 1920s.

The St. Francis de Sales Church at 47th Street and Springfield Avenue (1907-1908) represents the only other Byzantine Revival style religious building in Philadelphia. Like Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, the building contains a large dome, although this dome is plainly visible from the exterior unlike the one in the synagogue. The dome is constructed of Guastavino tile and contains stained glass by D'Ascenzo Studios. Designed by ecclesiastic architect Henry Dagit, the interior is lavishly decorated with polychromatic motifs in keeping with the Byzantine Revival style.

Euclid Avenue Temple, completed in 1912 at 8206 Euclid Avenue in Cleveland, OH, was a source of inspiration for the design of the new Rodeph Shalom Synagogue. This synagogue, built under Rabbi Louis Wolsey's leadership prior to coming to Rodeph Shalom Synagogue in 1925, was designed in the Byzantine Revival style. Rabbi Wolsey

⁵² "New Deal Art and Architecture," Kresge Art Museum, Lansing, MI website. World Wide Web, accessed on April 13, 2005, <http://artmuseum.msu.edu/wpa/WPA/pages/vocab.htm>.

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sent architect Grant Simon to the Euclid Avenue Temple in 1927 to study particular interior aspects of the temple.⁵³ The building, now owned by Liberty Hill Baptist Church, has a cubic shape with a central dome over an assembly area that seats 1,200 people and stained glass windows by Tiffany Studios.⁵⁴ Like Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, the entrance is marked by large arched openings that are intricately ornamented. However, Euclid Avenue Temple was faced in brick instead of the more costly stone of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue. Unlike Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, the dome at Euclid Avenue Temple was designed to be visible on the interior and exterior.

Congregation Beth Israel Synagogue (NRHP 1992), standing at 2432 N. Teutonia Ave. in Milwaukee, WI (now known as Greater Galilee Missionary Baptist Church) is an example of a Byzantine Revival style synagogue that does not have a dome visible on the exterior. Completed in 1925 and designed by architect Herman Bruns, Beth Israel Synagogue shares many features with Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, including the tripartite round arched openings on the primary façade, the flanking towers and grouped narrow arched stained glass windows. Beth Israel Synagogue was built of brick, unlike the stone and terra cotta of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue.

Beth El Synagogue is an example of a Byzantine/Art Deco style synagogue that dates from the same period as Rodeph Shalom Synagogue. Beth El Synagogue, located in Waterbury, CT at 359-375 Cooke Street (NRHP 1995) was designed by architects Nathan Myers & Joseph Stein and was constructed from 1925 to 1929. Beth El Synagogue possesses significance as the first synagogue constructed in the state of Connecticut in the Byzantine Revival style. Beth El also has a large dome centered on a blocky brick-clad mass, but its dome is clearly visible from the street, whereas Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's dome is not. Although both synagogues display the marriage of the two styles, Art Deco and Byzantine Revival, the ornamentation on Beth El Synagogue is streamlined and minimal whereas Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's ornamentation is a lavish, but stylized reference to Byzantine architecture. Both buildings have the stepped massing of the Art Deco style, but the ornamentation on Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is more academic in derivation.

There are a number of religious buildings in Philadelphia with construction dates comparable to those of the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, such as Saint John's Lutheran Evangelical Church (1928), the Wesley Zion Church (1926) and the Transfiguration of Our Lord Church (c. 1924). Saint John's Lutheran Evangelical Church was built at the corner of North 61st Street and Cecil B. Moore Avenue by Carl Augustus Ziegler (1878-

⁵³ Various Letters in the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue archives at Jewish Archives, 1925.

⁵⁴ "The Soul of Cleveland," World Wide Web accessed on January 11, 2006,
http://www.travelcleveland.com/pdf/soul_of_cleveland.pdf.

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1952). The church was built in the Colonial Revival style in red brick with an oversized broken pediment, a central Palladian window and large arched windows throughout as a duplicate of a previous structure that was demolished. The Wesley Zion Church was built at the corner of 15th and Lombard Streets in the Late Gothic Revival Style. The stone building is characterized by Gothic arches and lintels, oversized stained glass windows and a Gothic bell tower. It was listed on the National Register in 1978. The Transfiguration of Our Lord Church was built at 5541 Cedar Avenue in the Romanesque Style by Henry Dagit (see St. Francis de Sales Church, above). The stone building has heavy arched openings, rusticated stonework and semi-circular side chapels and a semi-circular apse. From these and other comparable examples, it is evident that while the revivalist tone of the Byzantine elements in the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue was perhaps typical of its era for religious building design, the more progressive and comprehensive Art Deco scheme was unique to the building and the combination of the more traditional with the more avant-garde truly sets the building apart.

The Art Deco style elements of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, such as the rectilinear forms and stepped-back parapet wall, are not typically found in other religious structures in Philadelphia, but are evident in the local Art Deco style commercial buildings. Rodeph Shalom Synagogue was constructed early in Philadelphia's development of the Art Deco style. While there are numerous other Art Deco buildings in Philadelphia, most of them were built to house progressive aspects of society, such as advertising, transportation and radio. Notable examples of the style in Philadelphia include the N.W. Ayer Building (1929), Suburban Station (1930), the W.C.A.U. Studios (1931) and the United States Post Office – Main Branch (c. 1931). The N.W. Ayer Building is located on the West side of Washington Square and was built by Ralph Bowden Bencker (1883-1961) for N.W. Ayer and Son, Inc., the first advertising agency in the country. The stone building is fourteen stories tall with regular window openings and minimal decoration. The primary material, volume and step backs are similar to the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue. Suburban Station is located at 1617 John F. Kennedy Boulevard and is used as a railway station and office building. Designed by Graham, Anderson Probst and White of Chicago, the stone building is twenty-one stories tall with lavish ornamentation in granite, bronze and marble. It was listed on the National Register in 1985. The lavish ornamentation, volume and step backs are reminiscent of Rodeph Shalom. The W.C.A.U. Studios, at 1618-1622 Chestnut Street, were built in 1931 by Gabriel Roth and Harry Sternfeld. The brick building was used for a combination of radio studios and retail and office space. With a dark blue glass and plastic façade and Aztec-influenced metal ornaments, the building was "a visual representation of the radio age."⁵⁵ The building was listed on the National Register in 1983. The prominent ornamental scheme is comparable to that at Rodeph Shalom. The United States Post Office is located at 2970

⁵⁵ National Register Nomination Form, *W.C.A.U. Studios*, 1982, p. 2.

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(National Register, 2006). The rectilinear stone building is six stories tall and has various Pre-Columbia geometric designs, similar to those on the W.C.A.U. Studios' main elevation. It is similar to Rodeph Shalom in terms of scale, primary material, step-backs and fortified appearance. While contrary in use, the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is similar to other Art Deco buildings in Philadelphia in terms of scale, materials and amount of ornamentation.

In conclusion, Rodeph Shalom Synagogue's significance is derived from the combination of exquisite Byzantine Revival style architectural expression and Art Deco style form.

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Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
name of property

Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
county and state

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 18 486252E 4423719N
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

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 Sheryl Jaslow

organization Powers and Company, Inc.

date July 7, 2006

street & number 211 N. 13th Street, Suite 500

telephone (215) 636-0192

city or town Philadelphia

state PA

zip code 19107

Additional Information

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____

telephone _____

city or town _____

state _____

zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Philadelphia County, PA

Boundary Description:

The boundary of Rodeph Shalom Synagogue is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying scaled map entitled SITE PLAN.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated building includes the entire piece of land that is historically associated with Rodeph Shalom Synagogue and includes the building itself, the sidewalks and entrance steps to the north and west of the building and a 12 foot margin to the south and east of the building. The surrounding lots, now used as a parking lot for the synagogue and bounded by N. Broad Street, Mt. Vernon Street, Green Street and N. 13th Street, are owned by the synagogue but were not acquired during the period of significance.

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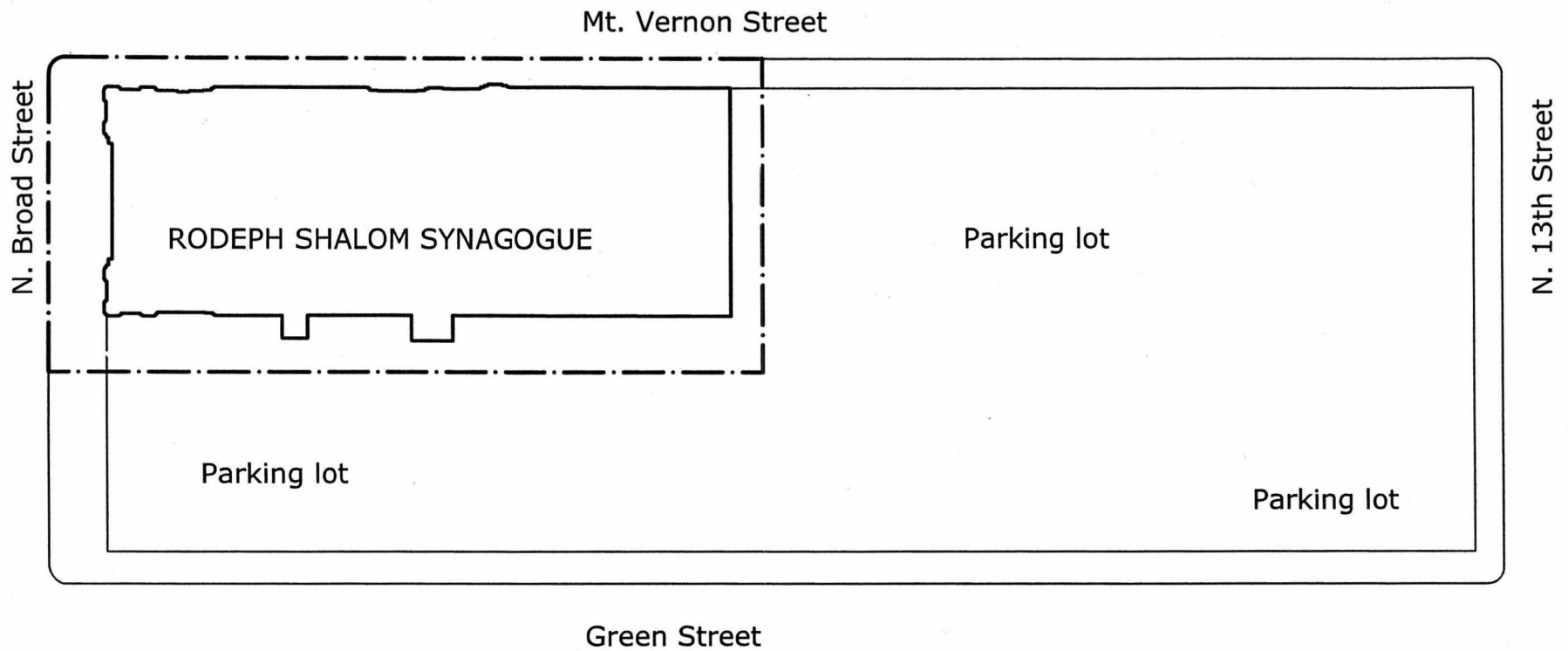
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 1 Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, PA

The following information pertains to every photograph:

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania
Robert Powers
February 2006
Powers & Company, Inc.

<u>Photograph #</u>	<u>Description of Photograph</u>
1	Front, west elevation, view east
2	Front, west elevation, detail of entrance, view east
3	North and west elevations, view southeast
4	North elevation, detail of stained glass window, view south
5	North elevation, view southwest
6	South and east elevations, view northwest
7	South elevation, view north
8	South and west elevations, view northeast
9	1 st floor foyer, view north
10	1 st floor sanctuary, view west
11	1 st floor sanctuary, view southeast
12	1 st floor sanctuary, view east
13	1 st floor sanctuary, detail of bima, view east
14	1 st floor chapel, view northeast
15	Basement auditorium, view northeast
16	3 rd floor corridor, view east
17	4 th floor classroom, view east

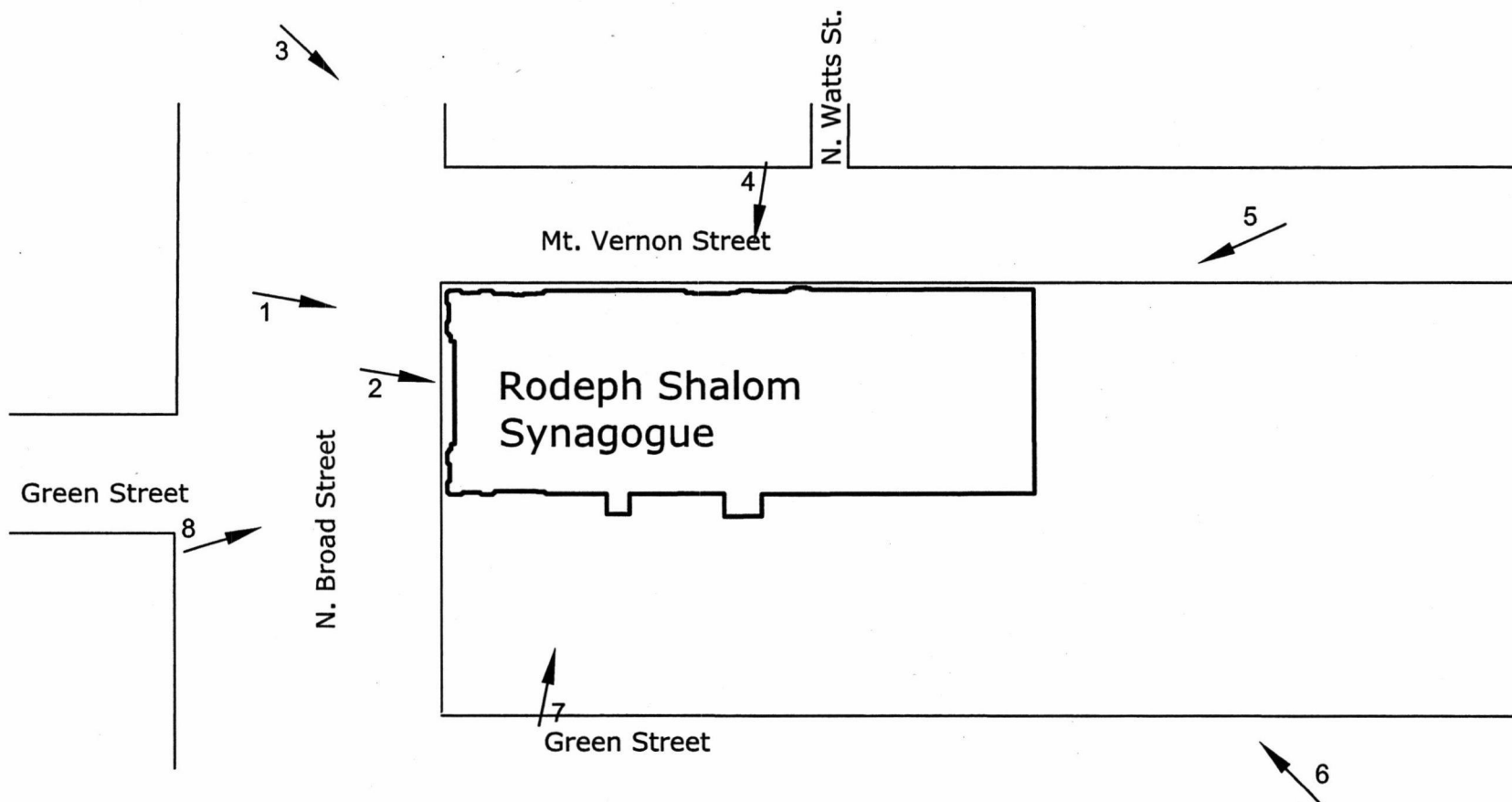


National Register Boundary

SITE PLAN



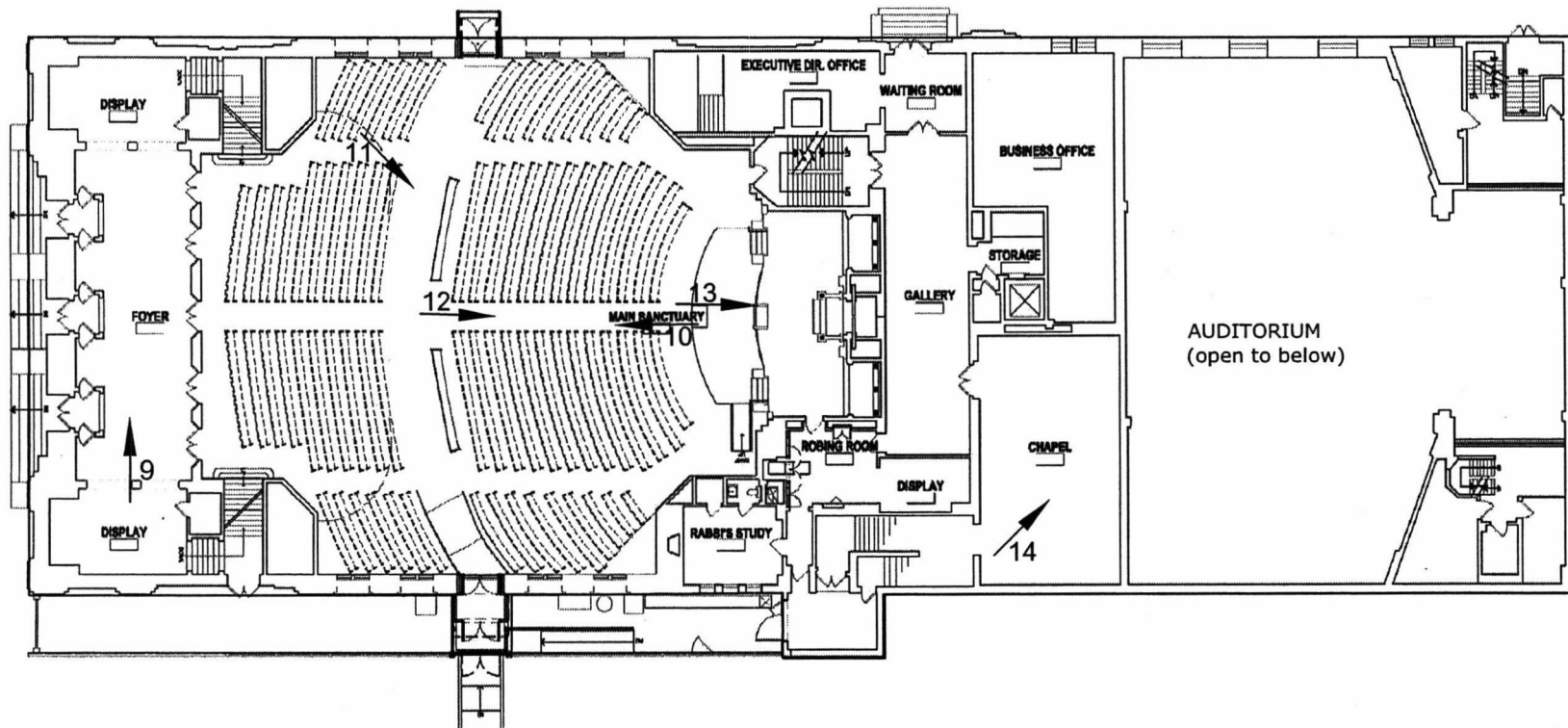
Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, PA
Robert Powers
August 2006
Powers & Company, Inc.
scale: 1" = 60'-0"



Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, PA
Robert Powers
February 2006
Powers & Company, Inc.
n.t.s.

Exterior Photographs locations

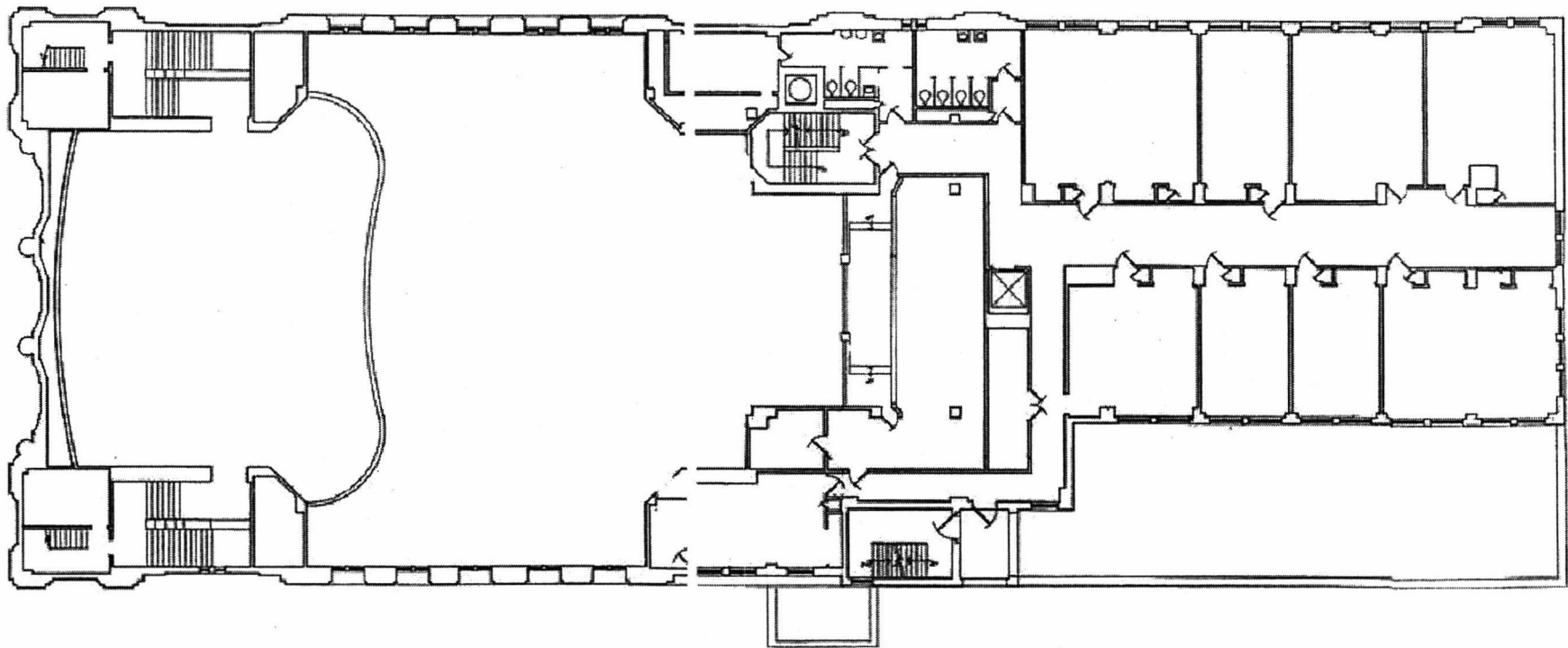




Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
 Philadelphia County, PA
 Robert Powers
 February 2006
 Powers & Company, Inc.
 n.t.s.

1st Floor Photographs

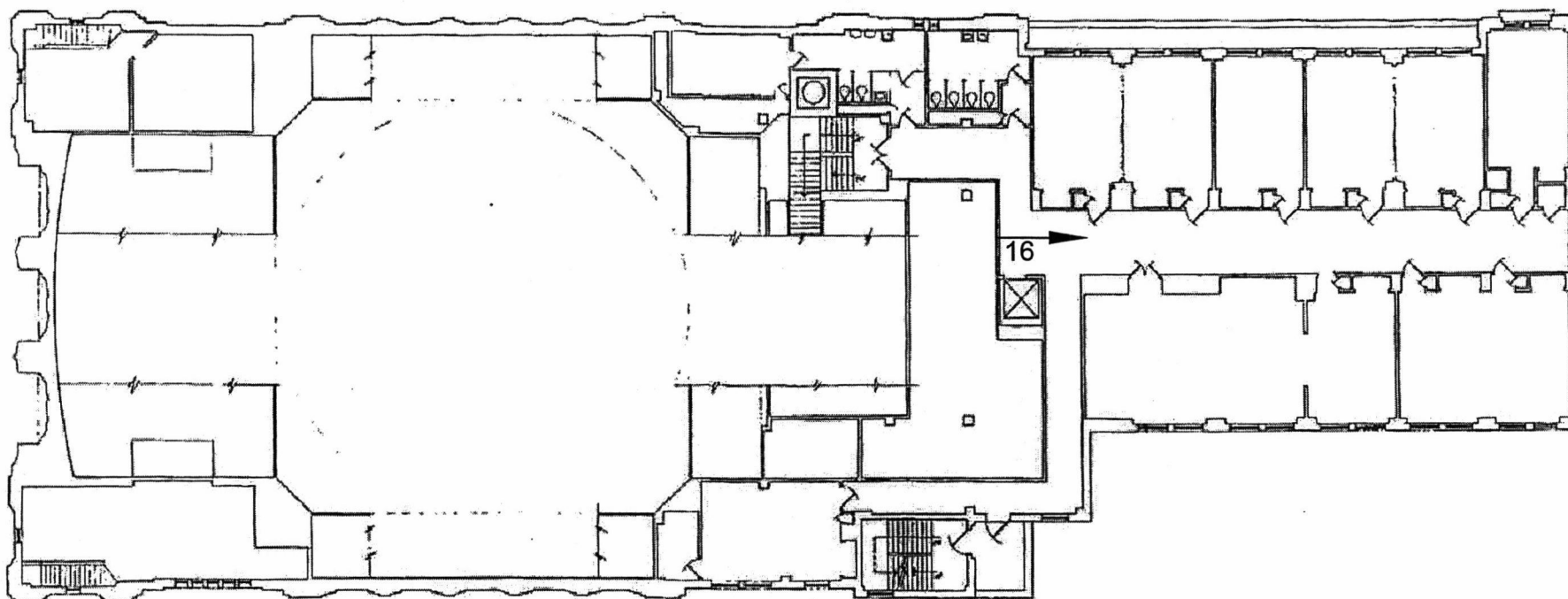




Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, PA
Robert Powers
February 2006
Powers & Company, Inc.
n.t.s.

2nd Floor Plan

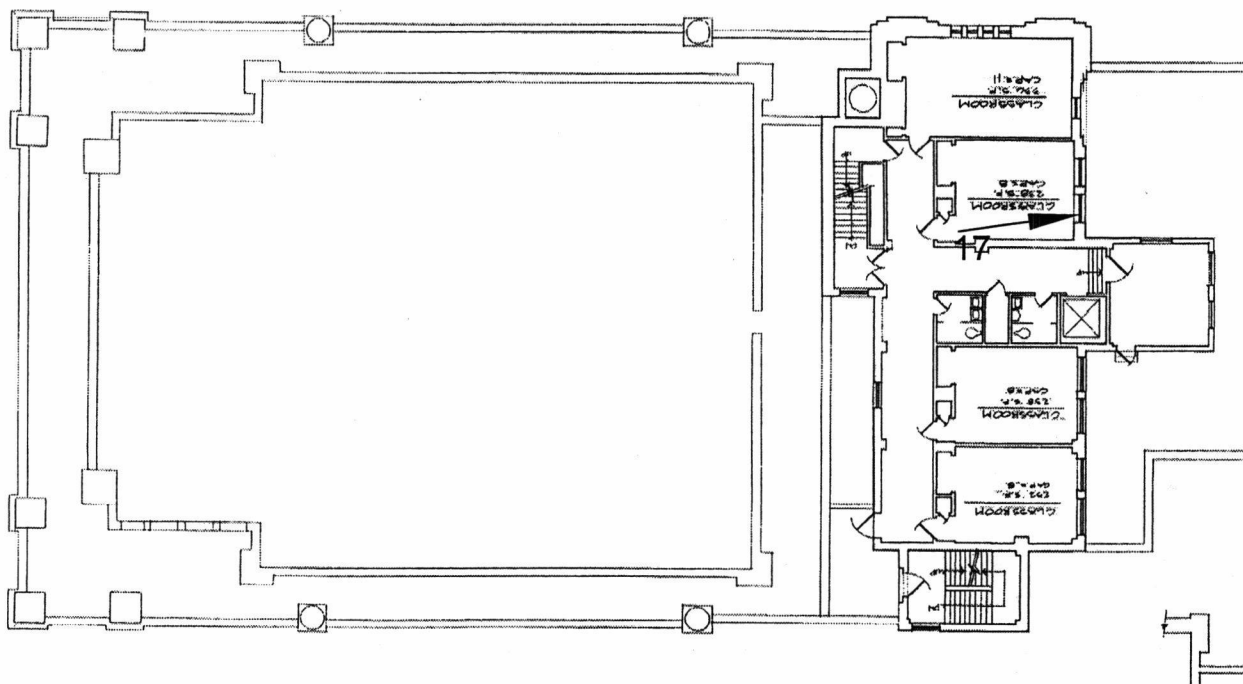




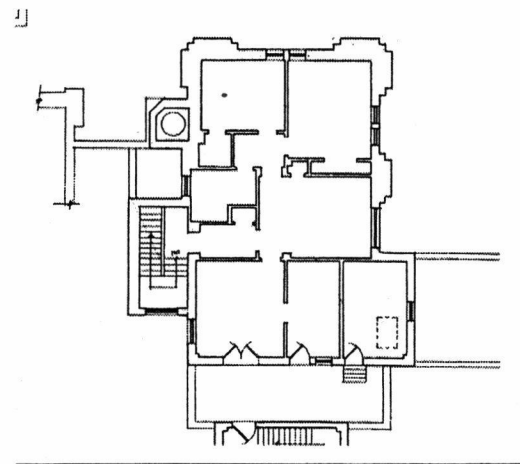
Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, PA
Robert Powers
February 2006
Powers & Company, Inc.
n.t.s.

3rd Floor Photographs





4th Floor Photographs and plan

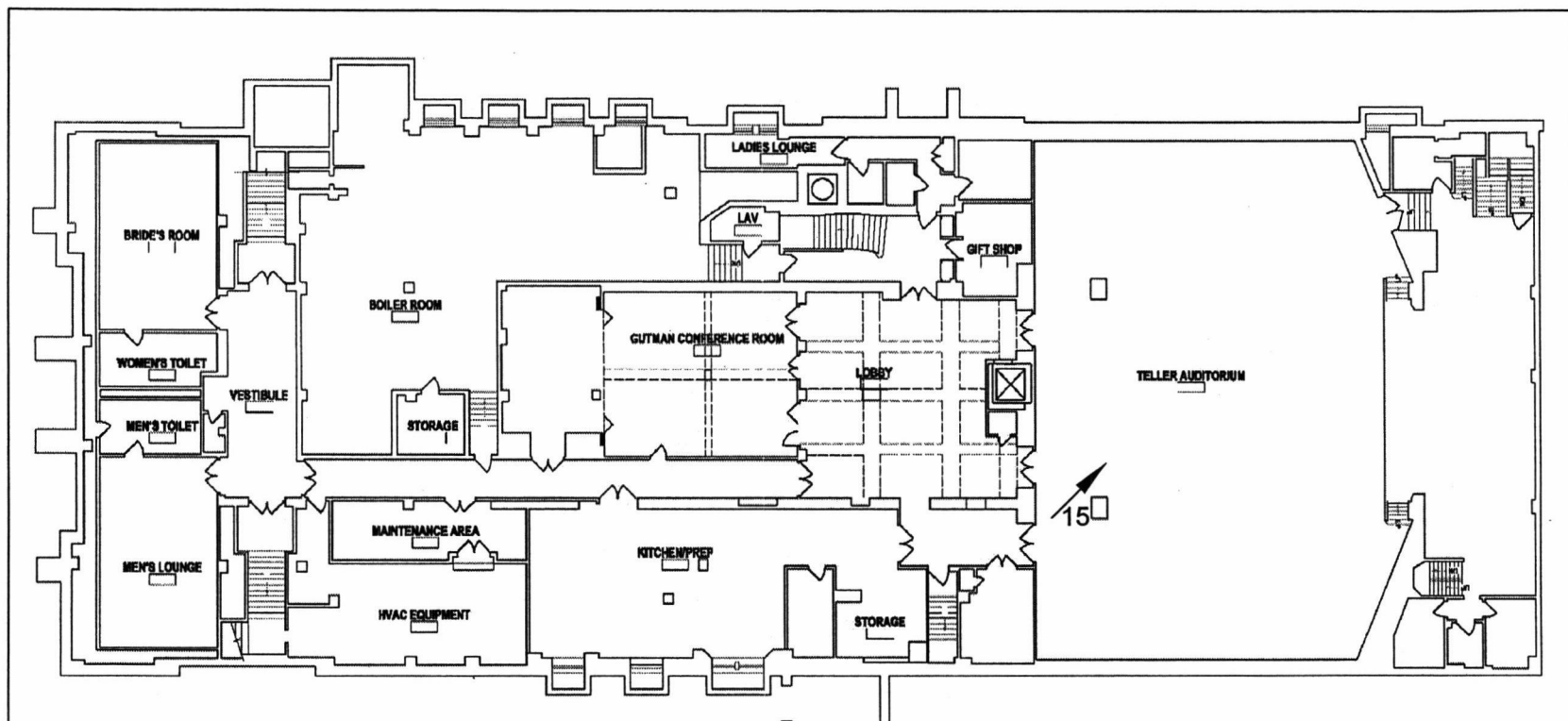


5th floor plan

Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
Philadelphia County, PA
Robert Powers
February 2006
Powers & Company, Inc.
n.t.s.

4th Floor Photographs and 5th floor plan





Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
 Philadelphia County, PA
 Robert Powers
 February 2006
 Powers & Company, Inc.
 n.t.s.

Basement Photographs



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Rodeph Shalom Synagogue
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia

DATE RECEIVED: 6/25/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/18/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/02/07 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/08/07
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07000797

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 8.7.07 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #1



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #2



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #3



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #4



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #5



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #6



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #7



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
- PHOTO #8



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #9



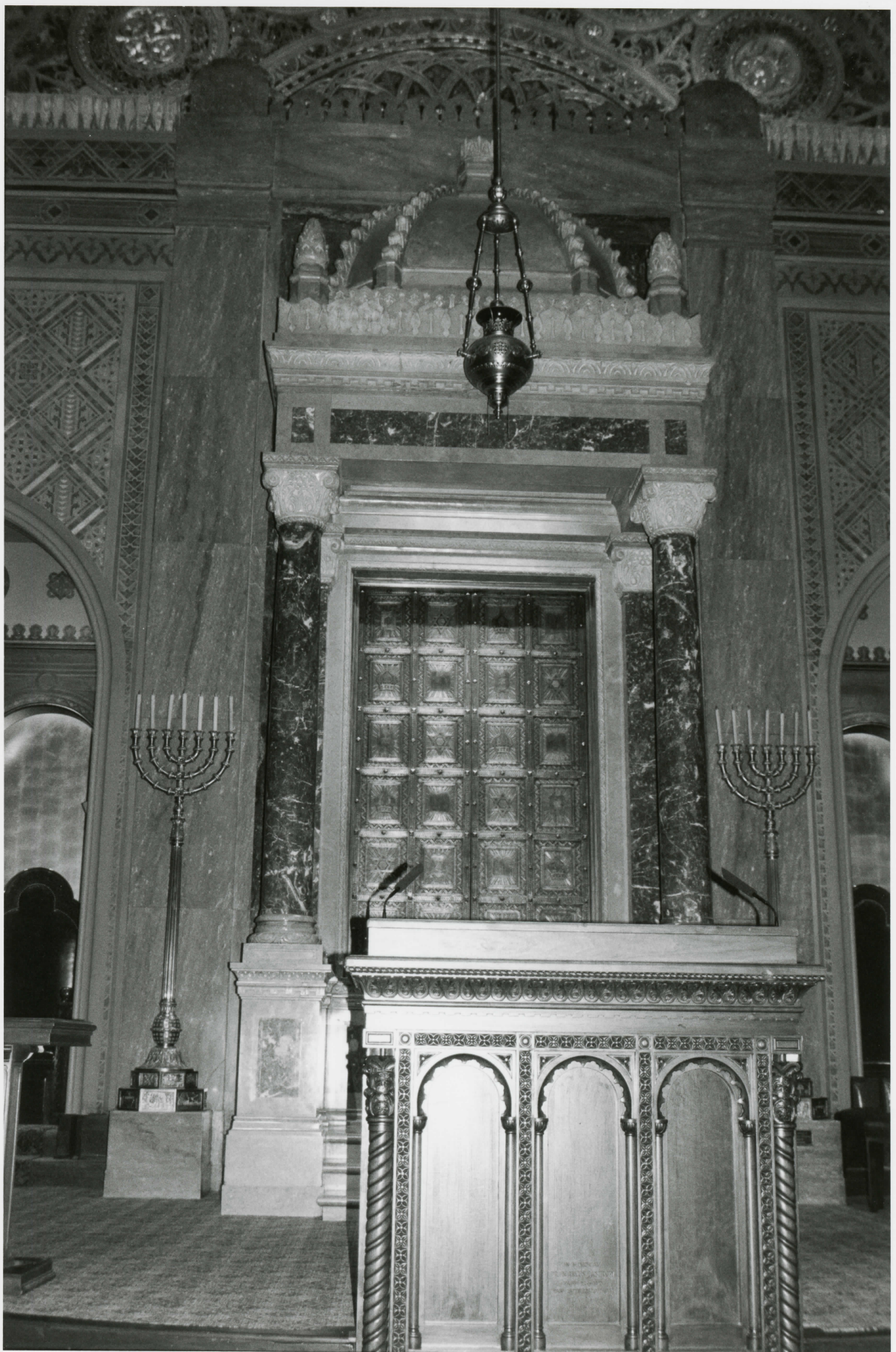
RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #10



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #11



ROBERT SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO # 12



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #13



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #14



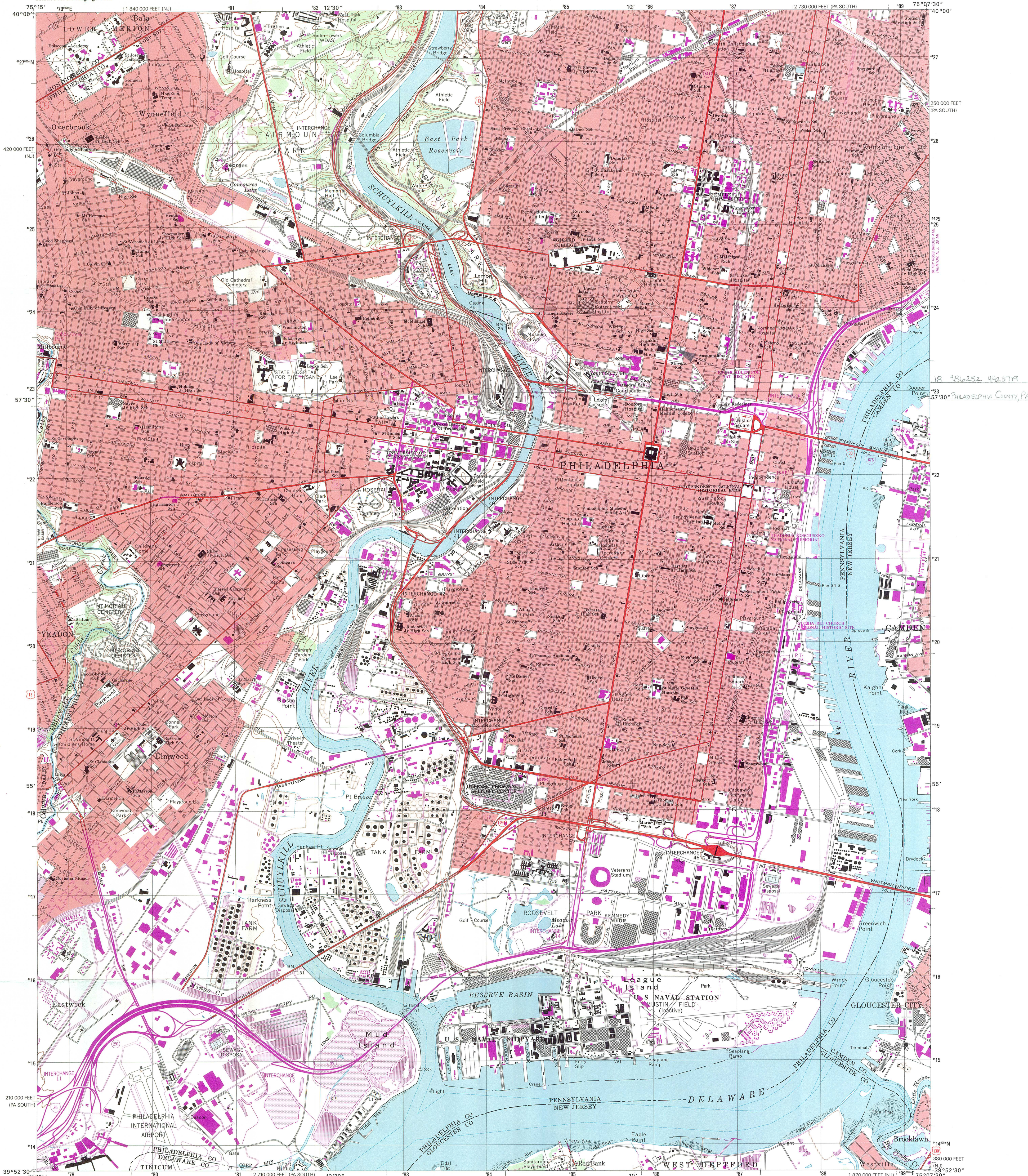
RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO # 15



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #16



RODEPH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PA
PHOTO #17



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Topography compiled 1965. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1990 and other sources. Photomapped using imagery dated 1995; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1967. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1999
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27)
Projection: Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
10 000-foot ticks: Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone and New Jersey coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours

UTM GRID AND 1999 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET
12°
213 MILS
0° 07'
2 MILS

SCALE 1:24 000
KILOMETERS
METERS
MILES
FEET

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION
PENNSYLVANIA

1	2	3	1 Norristown
4	5	6	2 Germantown
7	8	9	3 Frankford
			4 Lansdowne
			5 Camden
			6 Bridgeport
			7 Woodbury
			8 Runnemede

PHILADELPHIA, PA-NJ

1995

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**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**

17 April 2007

Andrea L. MacDonald
Chief, Division of Preservation Services
Bureau for Historic Preservation, PHMC
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2nd Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: Rodeph Shalom Synagogue, 607-615 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia

In response to your request for an official Certified Local Government recommendation on the significance of the Rodeph Shalom Synagogue at 607-615 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Historical Commission convened to review the National Register nomination on 13 April 2007. At that meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board that the building satisfies National Register Criterion C (It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values). Designed by the important architectural firm of Simon & Simon and built in 1928, the Byzantine Revival and Art Deco building is significant for its extraordinary architecture. The Commission also noted with pride that Grant Simon, one of the architects, was the first chair of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the National Register nomination.

Yours truly,

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.
Acting Historic Preservation Director