Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Easement 68

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED B-3707
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Chizuk Amuno Synagogue

AND/OR COMMON
B'nai Israel Synagogue

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
27-35 Lloyd Street — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore — VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3rd

STATE
Maryland — CODE — COUNTY Baltimore City — CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	X RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
B'Nai Israel Congregation
c/o Rabbi Samuel Pliskin
Mr. Abbot Hoffman, President
B'nai Israel Congregation

STREET & NUMBER
2204 East Fairmont Avenue
3701 Southern Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore, Maryland 21231
Baltimore, Maryland 21206

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Records Office, Room 601
Liber #: GR 719
Folio #: 508

STREET & NUMBER
Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore — STATE Maryland 21202

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey

DATE
1976 — __FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY X LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation

CITY, TOWN
Baltimore — STATE Maryland 21202

DESCRIPTION

B-3707

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The B'nai Israel Synagogue is located on Lloyd Street approximately at the center of the block, and set back from the sidewalk about three feet. A plain cast iron fence about four and a half feet high with a decorative arched gate borders the sidewalk along the front of the building.

The Synagogue is a subdued Victorian Gothic structure that synthesizes Romanesque and Moorish elements with traditional Jewish symbols. The architect was Henry Burck, whose design was supposedly based on that of the Schieff Congregation in Vienna. The carpentry was done by E. F. Hausen and the interior frescoes by F. Moore. The building was completed in 1876.

A three-story brick structure, the synagogue is eight narrow bays wide across the gable end that faces the street and ten bays long. The facade is laid in all stretcher bond and is presently painted red and striped to simulate mortar. An earlier black and white photograph shows this painted a light stone color with slightly darker trim. The brick on the other walls is laid in common bond and unpainted.

The facade has a symmetrical design composed of a four-bay center section flanked on each side by a slightly projecting two-bay section. The entrance occupies the entire first floor center section. It consists of a wide but shallow arcaded vestibule containing three Moorish arch doorways; the center arch is taller and wider than the ones on each side. The arches are all faced with smooth Indiana granite and supported by a squat, one-third section engaged columns which have simple leaf pattern capitals. The center columns are attached to brick piers. Arched decorative doors of wood are deeply recessed within each arch. The doors have a curved scallop pattern along the arch and rosettes along the cross bar. Above each side arch is a stone lintel with a crenellated upper and lower edge. A crenellated block that is flush with the lintel extends below the center of the lintel, joining the arch below.

Brick pilasters separate the arches and a vertical half-pilaster flanks each lower side arch, intersecting the projecting bay. The pilasters extend above the arches and terminate in a crenellated, corbelled brick course. Approximately eight courses above is a series of rectangular stone blocks, slightly recessed within brick frames. This pattern stretches across the entire facade. A brick string course under the "paralleling" ornamentation further defines the division between the first and second floors. The string course is interrupted at the center by a rectangular stone block inscribed in Hebrew with the following words: "The Gates of the House of God, Holy Congregation, B'nai Israel, 5633".

Above the "panelled" section are four lancet arch, one-over-one windows. The center two windows are narrower than the outer two, but all are the same height. Between all the windows are raised brick piers. The windows appear to be recessed because of the rectangular double brick frames surrounding the top upper portion and sides of the windows. The upper edge of the outer frame is crenellated. Above the two center windows is a narrow stone strip with returned corners. The windows have one stone sill, painted red, in common.

The third story, center section is occupied by a large circular window with heavy tracery forming a sept-partie pattern. The molded stone (possibly terra cotta frame) is painted red, and rests upon a stone sill that stretches the width of the center facade. A double brick arch springs from the ends of the sill. The arch is framed by a course of bricks that follows the rake of the gable. The gable comprises Romanesque corbelled cascading blind arches. The cornice is a plain fascia molding. Rising from the apex of the gable are stone tablets inscribed in Hebrew with the Ten Commandments.

The two end double bays project slightly beyond the center section of the facade. Each double-bay terminates in a moderately-pitched cornice repeating the angle of the roof. The first floor is occupied by coupled, narrow one-over-one lancet arch windows. Between each window is a raised brick pier. The windows are slightly recessed within double-brick frames. The upper frame is crenellated. The stone panelled effect and brick string course and window arrangement from the center facade are continued on each bay.

The gable end of each bay has a smaller, circular window. Also framed by stone, the windows have a simpler tracery pattern. The windows rest on a brick string course. The cascading blind arches are also repeated on each gable. A smaller, more simple single stone tablet, painted to resemble an antifex, rises from the apex.

Both sides of the projecting bays project slightly, forming a pilaster effect that emphasizes the verticality of the facade. A simple leaf pattern capital crowns each pilaster. A plain rectangular block with a pedimented cap crowns each capital.

A brick wall extends from each side of the facade at the first floor level. The wall on the northern side is one bay and contains a lancet arch doorway with a plain wooden, arched door. The arch is framed by a course of raised bricks. The wall above the arch is crenellated and capped with another, vertically crenellated course that has a semi-circular stone decoration rising from the center. The wall at the southern end is two bays and comprises a blind lancet arch enclosed by narrow brick piers. South of the arch is a blank brick wall. A crenellated course runs the width of the wall above the arch. The wall is capped with stone coping that has a crenellated pattern in relief.

A stone foundation occupies approximately one-third of the first floor level. The face of each stone block is bush-hammered with chiseled margins. The stone is painted red, matching the other stone trim on the building.

The sides of the building are simple, laid in common bond with two-over-two rectangular windows on the second floor and two-over-two lancet arch windows on the third floor. A rectangular metal panel connects each second and third floor window.

The rear of the building is also relatively plain, with two circular windows with colored pie-shaped panels at the third floor level. On the second floor are two two-over-two, rectangular windows. The window framing is painted white.

The main sanctuary occupies the second and third floor levels. It seats 425 people. The center aisle terminates at the semi-circular, convex altar. The women's gallery runs along the length of each side. Slender columns support the gallery which is partially screened by a low wooden wall with recessed, rectangular panels. Within each panel is an arch design. The walls and ceilings were frescoed in a plain but tasteful manner.

The highly ornate altar is the focal point of the interior. The two-story altar resembles the facade of the Synagogue. Concentric Moorish arches are set within a larger frame with a moderately-pitched upper frame. The tablets of the Ten Commandments rise at the

apex of the altar. At each side is an engaged column on a high plinth, with a massive Byzantine capital. Sconces are attached to each column. The altar is covered with rich, stylized scroll work and gothic bline arch patterns. Two sets of candelabra decorate the altar. Wooden banisters along the convex altar separate the altar from the pews. Against the wall behind the altar is a round arch. Above the arch is a flat arch. Both arches have a simple wood molding.

Below the gallery level, near the front of the sanctuary, are Victorian chandeliers. The first floor is occupied by the Beth Hamidrosh, the house of instruction, for study and meeting rooms.

A park, to be named Freedom Park, will be installed to the north of the Synagogue, between this structure and the Lloyd Street Synagogue. The Park will be dedicated to the numerous ethnic groups which emigrated to Baltimore for religious, political and cultural reasons. The Park is part of the City's Commercial Revitalization Plan for the adjacent East Lombard Street Business District. The Synagogue is in good structural condition, but in need of cosmetic rehabilitation.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	X RELIGION
00-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1876 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry Burck

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The history of this structure is associated with two congregations, the Chizuk Amuno, "Perpetuators of Faith," and the B'nai Israel, "Children of Israel," which still uses the building. Its significance relates to the achievements of both congregations, and to the fact that the Synagogue continues to contribute to the rich ethnic and religious history of Baltimore.

The founding Congregation not only served to retain traditional Jewish worship in Baltimore, but was one of the first congregations of Conservative Judaism in America. The Chizuk Amuno Congregation was founded in 1871, by former members of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation who resigned in protest of reforms made to the traditional services.

The second and present congregation is a remarkable survival of an earlier ra when religion was a significant daily activity. The congregation has witnessed over a hundred years of daily prayer, study and assembly, the three traditional functions of a synagogue.

The Baltimore Hebrew Congregation built and worshipped in the Lloyd Street Synagogue, the first in Maryland and the third in the United States. The Congregation originally rejected the reforms to the Services recommended by the Leipzed Synod in 1869, but several months later adopted them. These reforms included the following: creating family pews; changing the Hebrew Prayer books; incorporating an organ into the service; and allowing non-Jewish male and female singers to assist with the services. Traditionally the sexes were segregated, men occupying the main floor while the women occupied the upper gallery.

The minority opposing these changes objected most strongly to the inclusion of the organ and the mixed, non-Jewish choir members. The men felt that these changes were in violation of the Congregation's charter and "petitioned the Circuit Court of Baltimore to enjoin the Officers of the Congregation from introducing these changes." The case was referred to an examiner and there was considerable controversy before the two parties agreed amicably to disagree. Those men opposing the changes resigned from the Congregation in December 1870, and formed the Hebrew Chizuk Amuno Congregation of Baltimore, later changed to the Baltimore Hebrew

Chizuk Amuno Congregation. The Dedication Service was held on April 1, 1871, and the following day an organizational meeting was held. The Minute Book lists twenty-three Charter Members. At their April 23rd meeting, "The Constitution was adapted and dues were fixed at $8.00 a year". Membership was contingent upon City residency. By April 30, there were thirty-two members. To prevent reforms, the Charter stated that anyone who proposed a reform would cease to be a member.

The new congregation worshipped at Exeter Hall, 2 North Exeter Street. The first floor became a Beth Hamidrash, house of instruction, for the study of the Talmud and theology, while the second floor was the place of worship.

The congregation grew and by 1874 members decided to construct a new synagogue. They purchased a lot, 47' x 100', just to the south of the Lloyd Street Synagogue. According to Rabbi Samuel Pliskin, members of the congregation went to Europe to select a design for the new synagogue. The building is, therefore, similar in design to the Schieff Congregation in Vienna. The new Synagogue was designed by the architect, Henry Burck. The carpentry was done by E. F. Hausen and the interior frescoes by F. Moore. (See Description).

The Synagogue was completed by July 1876. The Ceremonial Inauguration took place on August 18, 1876, and it was dedicated on August 29, 1876 amidst great festivities. It was the only Orthodox Congregation in the city with a large Synagogue.

Chizuk Amuno was one of the sixteen original congregations to send delegates to the Founding Conference of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The Congregation was also at the forefront of the Conservative Congregations of America.

The Congregation occupied the Synagogue for nineteen years, from 1876 to 1895, when it moved McCulloh and Mosher Streets, and later to Eutaw Place and Chauncy Avenue. In 1958 it moved to its present site on Stevenson Road in Baltimore County.

The Congregation sold the first Synagogue to the B'nai Israel Congregation in 1895; B'nai Israel was organized by eight members in 1873 in the midst of the financial panic. The first service was held on the eve of Passover in rented Osceola Hall on Gay Street near Lexington Street. It later moved to North Exeter Street. Other than the Charter, there are no records or minutes of the early affairs of the Congregation. The Congregation flourished and became known as the "Russische Shule", Russian Synagogue, to distinguish it from the earlier German Congregation. The Russian Jews who replaced the German Jews in East Baltimore emigrated to the United States after the May Laws, restricting Jewish rights, residency and commerce, were enacted in 1882. The German Jews moved to the northern part of the City.

The fathers and grandfathers of many now distinguished Baltimoreans worshipped at "Russische Shule". Today the Synagogue still holds daily prayers, serving the merchants and customers of the 1100 block of East Lombard Street, "Corned Beef Row". That block is now the focus of a City-Sponsored commercial revitalization project. The City is working in tandem with the merchants to provide facade renovation standards, sign controls and street and parking improvements.

The descendents of Russische Shule Congregation and the Jewish Historical Society are raising funds to enhance the area between the B'nai Israel and Lloyd Street Synagogues with a park. The park will be named Freedom Park, dedicated to the numerous ethnic groups which emigrated to Baltimore for religious, political and cultural freedom. The park is being designed by the City's Planning Departments, and will include a fountain, landscaping and benches.

The B'nai Israel Synagogue is living history. It continues to contribute to Baltimore's rich and diverse ethnicity by performing the functions it did one hundred years ago.

Books, Isidor, The Jews of Baltimore,. Baltimore/Washington: Historical Review Publishing Company, 1910

Fein, Isaac M., The Making of An American Jewish Community; The History of Baltimore Jewry from 1773-1920. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971

NEWSPAPERS

The Baltimore American: August 19, 1876
The Evening Sun: August 19, 1876
The Evening Sun: April 22, 1948
The Jewish Times: December 8, 1972, p. 28

BROCHURES

"B'nai Israel Congregation, 100th Anniversary, Sunday, August 19, 1973".
"B'nai Israel Diamond Jubilee 5708-1945"
Chizuk Amuno, Baltimore Maryland on Friday August 18, 1876 (AB 28-5636), L.H. Frank & Company Printers & Publisher
"Order of Service at the Consecration of the New Synagogue of The Congregation.

The Synagogue is a subdued Victorian Gothic structure that synthesizes Romanesque and Moorish elements with traditional Jewish symbols. The architect was Henry Burck, whose design was supposedly based on that of the Schieff Congregation in Vienna. The carpentry was done by E. F. Hausen and the interior frescoes by F. Moore. The building was completed in 1876.

A 3 1/2 story brick structure of simple rectangular form, the Synagogue is approximately eight narrow bays wide and ten bays long. All of the architectural details are concentrated on the facade. The ridge of the moderately-pitched roof is perpendicular to the facade.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

B-3707

SEE SEPARATE SHEET

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	361924	4348998	B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Barbara A. Hoff, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION — DATE

Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation — 1976

STREET & NUMBER — TELEPHONE

100 North Holliday Street — (301) 396-4866

CITY OR TOWN — STATE

Baltimore — Maryland 21202

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL ___

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE — DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 888-448

Chizuk Amuno Synagogue

B-3707