

Chizuk Amuno Congregation

MIHP# BA- 3175

8100 Stevenson Road  
Baltimore, Baltimore County, MD 21208

Constructed between 1958 and 1967

Private access

The suburban complex of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation is a significant postwar Modernist synagogue that is also the work of a prominent architect, Daniel Schwartzman. It is significant under Criterion C as an example of Post World War II Modern religious architecture. In addition, the suburban complex has significance under Criterion A for the period 1954-1970 as an important exemplar of Maryland and Jewish social history. The complex is located on Stevenson Road, just north of Interstate 695, the Baltimore Beltway. The Modernist structure is a massive building that is serenely placed in a gently rolling landscape. The primary façade faces Stevenson Road and is dominated by the striking curvilinear wall and undulating roofline of the synagogue. The Chizuk Amuno site is a multi-function complex that combines worship, administration, community activities, and education. The building includes many significant Modern features including its simple ornamentation and dramatic but austere massing with rhythmic grouped windows and tiles. In addition, the synagogue's prominent suburban siting along a major thoroughfare contributes to its significance and reflects broader trends of Jewish suburbanization in Baltimore and the United States as a whole.

Chizuk Amuno was one of the Baltimore congregations that built the greatest number of synagogues and maintained a tradition of distinguished architecture. Additional significance resides in the synagogue's artwork and art gallery, the first one located in a synagogue in the United States. The Chizuk Amuno facility is one of a unique collection of contemporary

synagogues in the northwest Baltimore suburbs that symbolize a new suburban Jewish way of life and helped establish the trend nationally of constructing esthetically significant suburban synagogue complexes. Collectively, they pushed Baltimore to the forefront in the renewed interest in and Modernist expression of synagogue architecture that occurred throughout the United States in the late 1940s and 1950s. The new synagogues were not simply houses of worship, but complex centers that were used on a daily basis for a wide range of suburban activities. The close proximity of these complexes helped shape Judaism into an everyday suburban way of life, not just a weekly worship ritual. They were a crucial intervention in establishing the rich cultural environment that enabled "a Jewish way of life" to thrive in the context of assimilation, increasing individualism, and the horrors of Jewish persecution before and during World War II.

Chizuk Amuno Congregation's architectural distinction and social significance as the embodiment of a new suburban way of life for one of the nation's oldest and largest Jewish populations makes this resource worthy of designation even though it is less than 50 years old for part of its period of significance.

The following National Register of Historic Places form was prepared for inventory documentation purposes only; the property has not been nominated to the National Register.

**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 Chizuk Amuno Congregation

other names \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 8100 Stevenson Road  not for publication

city or town Baltimore  vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Baltimore County code 005 zip code 21208

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title 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 certifying official/Title 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 the National Register.
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### 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		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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  
N/A

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Education  
Religious  
Social

#### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Education  
Religious  
Social

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement

#### Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Glass, metal, stone, and ceramic tile  
roof Other: tar and gravel  
other

#### Narrative Description

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

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### Description Summary:

The suburban complex of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation is a significant postwar Modernist synagogue that is also the work of a prominent architect, Daniel Schwartzman. The complex is located on Stevenson Road, just north of Interstate 695, the Baltimore Beltway. The Modernist structure is a massive building that is serenely placed in a gently rolling landscape. The primary façade faces Stevenson Road and is dominated by the striking curvilinear wall and undulating roofline of the synagogue. The Chizuk Amuno site is a multi-function complex that combines worship, administration, community activities, and education. The building includes many significant Modern features including its simple ornamentation and dramatic but austere massing with rhythmic grouped windows and tiles. In addition, the synagogue's prominent suburban siting along a major thoroughfare contributes to its significance and reflects broader trends of Jewish suburbanization in Baltimore and the United States as a whole.

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### General Description:

#### *Construction Overview*

The development of the Chizuk Amuno synagogue complex occurred in six phases. The first three were completed between 1958 and 1967 and fulfill the original plan devised by architect Daniel Schwartzman. They include a Social and Educational Center (1957-58), the Sanctuary (1962) and the Administration and Education Addition (1967). The subsequent phases of construction were completed to facilitate the expansion of the congregation and the Jewish day school, formed in 1981, that provides full-time education for kindergarten through eighth grades. The first expansion of the Education Building to house the new day school was in 1988. In 1993, the Preschool Wing was expanded and a Kindergarten Wing was constructed. The Kindergarten wing was then expanded in 1997. Although there have been major additions to the Chizuk Amuno complex, it is best understood as a living, breathing complex; it has appropriately grown and changed as its congregation's needs and size have changed.

#### *Site Plan*

Chizuk Amuno is located in northwest Baltimore, immediately adjacent (to the north) to Interstate 695. The western edge of the property abuts the site of the Beth El synagogue. The complex is situated in Baltimore County, although it is within close proximity to a cluster of synagogues located in the Park Heights community of Baltimore City.

The 173,267 square foot building is constructed on a 22.5-acre plot of land. The complex is set back from the street and is identified by a short concrete sign in the center of the grassy front lawn. The sign has the words "CHIZUK AMUNO CONGREGATION" centered on a concrete panel. To the east of the panel is a short fieldstone pier with a bronze menorah. The base of the sign is concrete and it is surrounded with low shrubs and landscaping. The complex is approached from Stevenson Road via a semicircular driveway that leads to the covered drop off of the formal entrance along the main facade. This entrance is flanked with magnolias, red maples, moraine honey locust, and sycamore trees. The south end of the semicircular drive leads to the parking area, located in the southern portion of the site. To the south of the parking lot is a large sound barrier wall that borders Interstate 695. To the west of the complex is mainly a large grassy area with small playgrounds associated with the school facility. On the northern side of the synagogue there is a paved area and service facilities (mechanical equipment, etc.). Overall the terrain of the site is relatively flat.

The Chizuk Amuno complex is organized in broad functional areas. The education portions of the building comprise the western and southern corridors. The social and worship spaces are primarily located along the eastern and northern corridors of the building. The layout of the building allows for a large central, landscaped

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courtyard, commonly known as the Biblical Garden. As previously stated, the development of the Chizuk Amuno complex occurred during six different building campaigns. The first portion of the building included the two-story social and educational building, which opened in 1958; this portion of the complex now occupies the central portion of the northernmost section. This space had its entrance on the south side and had an exterior finish of Maryland fieldstone with royal blue and turquoise Italian mosaic trim. In addition, it had a curved roofline. The second portion of the building, completed in April 1962, was the sanctuary. This was situated to the east of the original social/educational center, thus creating a new façade facing Stevenson Road (the northeast portion of the complex). What had previously been the eastern exterior wall after the original construction became the interior western wall of the sanctuary. The exterior of the sanctuary was comprised of Maryland fieldstone and blue Italian glass mosaics, thus maintaining the same character as was utilized for the Social Center. The original entry on the south side was maintained and the original foyer for the social/educational center became a hall and gallery space when this second phase of construction was complete. The third building campaign represents the completion of Schwartzman's original design. In 1967, an L-shaped addition was constructed to the south of the existing social center and sanctuary building. This included a north-south corridor, referred to as the Garden Lounge, which connected the new east-west educational and administrative wing with the existing buildings. In addition, a new formal entrance was developed at the midpoint of the Garden Lounge on the eastern wall; this still serves as the main formal entrance at the center of the semicircular drive. A chapel was constructed at the midpoint of the Garden Lounge, along the western side; it now protrudes into the Biblical Garden. An additional entrance was constructed at the southern end of the new Administration and Education Addition to facilitate easy entrance to the building from the southern parking area. The east-west wing contained administrative space on the first floor and classrooms on the second floor.

The final three building additions were not included in Schwartzman's original concept, although they continue the spirit of the design while allowing for necessary educational space. In 1988, 40,000 square feet of additional space dedicated to education uses was constructed. This came as a result of the new Jewish day school formed at Chizuk Amuno in 1981. This created a two-story western, north-south corridor that connected at the southeast end to the third phase of construction and at the northeast end to the first phase of construction. At the northwest corner of the new building, a short, one-story east-west wing protruded to the west to house twelve preschool classrooms. A new auditorium/cafeteria was developed at the northern end of the building. Protruding to the west from the southern end of the building was the school gymnasium. In 1993, this education wing was expanded with a second story addition to the 1988 preschool wing and an east-west kindergarten wing located to the south of the gymnasium. The kindergarten wing was one-story and housed four additional classrooms. The final construction at Chizuk Amuno was completed in 1997 with an elongation of the kindergarten wing that had three classrooms on the south side and a multi-purpose room on the north side. This expanded educational complex now includes the entire western half of the complex.

*Exterior Elevations*

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The exterior description of Chizuk Amuno begins on the Stevenson Road facade, the primary elevation of the complex. From there, it will proceed clockwise around the structure, subsequently describing the north facade, the rear elevation, and the south facade.<sup>1</sup>

### *Stevenson Road Façade*

The Stevenson Road elevation, which faces east, is the main facade of the Chizuk Amuno complex. The primary material on the facades of the synagogue, Maryland fieldstone, gives a rich texture to the building. On the southern end is the eastern facade of the Esterson Auditorium. This is a blank wall with no windows or other exterior decoration. North of the auditorium wall is the east wall of the primary north-south corridor that connects the sanctuary and social space to the administration and school wing. At the midpoint of this corridor is the formal entrance to the complex. This entrance, while nearly flush with the wall of the corridor, is set back from both the east wall of the auditorium and the sanctuary. The walkway leading from the driveway to the entrance doors is composed of square concrete blocks. The walkway is flanked on both sides with four light fixtures that have painted white metal bases and circular glass globes. The entrance has brick pillars supporting the canopy roof of the drop off area. The entrance has two sets of double glass doors with rectangular glass panes above. The entrance was originally flush with the corridor wall, and was later extended out to the east to allow for easier accessibility.

North of the entrance is the sanctuary facade. From Stevenson Road, the eastern, curvilinear wall of the sanctuary is visible. While the facade is also made primarily of Maryland fieldstone, in the center of the wall is a large concrete panel extending from the ground to the roofline. In the center of this panel is a bronze sculpture designed by Robert Cronbach. The sculpture is a representation of the Burning Bush and measures twenty-four feet tall and sixteen feet wide. It is hand hammered and oxidized in a green patina. Flood lights installed on the ground illuminate the sculpture at night.

### *North Façade*

The north facade of Chizuk Amuno is comprised of the walls of the sanctuary and social hall. The sanctuary wall is at the eastern end of the facade, while the social hall facade is at the western end of the north elevation. The facades of the two spaces in the building seamlessly blend into a cohesive, exterior facade. The gently curving roof and walls of the sanctuary and social hall are most visible from this elevation. The north facade is extremely long and runs perpendicular to Stevenson Road. Due to the curvilinear walls and decorative tile panels, this is one of the most striking facades of the Chizuk Amuno complex. Although the sanctuary was constructed after the social hall, both areas of the building were part of Schwartzman's original design. The facade is a continuous wall comprised of Maryland fieldstone. This side of the complex has a rhythmical procession of groups of narrow, vertical windows and panels of blue faux tile. The blue faux tile panels were

<sup>1</sup> A current floor plan of Chizuk Amuno is included at the end of this nomination and may provide additional orientation for the reader.

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installed to replace the original Italian Venetian glass mosaics. They were made from digital reproductions of the original pattern of the glass.

The sloped roof, which rises gradually to the east, is supported with 200 steel beams and two girders. The roof rises up to forty feet and dips down to twenty feet in a wave-shaped pattern. The highest peak is above the sanctuary space. Underneath this peak there are four areas of windows/tiles. On the east side there is a cluster of three windows, with three panels of blue tile underneath, and three additional windows below the tile. The windows and tile panels are separated from each other and from the brick façade with concrete piers that extend from the ground to the roof. There are two additional sets of windows/tile panels to the west of the first. The fourth set has blue tile panels adjacent to the roof, with windows in the middle and additional tile panels on the bottom.

The lowest point in the roofline is above the social hall. Nearly the entire façade of the social hall is composed of either windows or tile panels. Along this portion of the façade, the pattern of tiles and windows is unbroken, as opposed to the clustered groupings that exist on the façade of the sanctuary. Along the roofline, there is a row of tile, with windows below. Underneath the windows there is another row of tile, windows below, and tile again at the ground level. As on the sanctuary façade, the columns, windows, and tile panels are separated from each other with concrete piers that extend from the ground to the roofline.

### *Rear Façade*

The rear, or west, façade of Chizuk Amuno includes the educational portions of the building. This façade contains both the western facades of the primary north-south education wing, as well as the protruding preschool and kindergarten wings and the gymnasium. The education space at Chizuk Amuno is located in the western portion of the site. There is a primary north-south corridor with two major protruding wings to the west. At the northern end of the façade is the preschool wing, while the gymnasium/kindergarten wing protrude to the west from the southern end of the façade. This entire portion of the building was constructed between 1988 and 1997. Classrooms are located throughout the entire space, with the grade school rooms in the north-south corridor, the preschool rooms in the northern preschool wing, and the kindergarten rooms in the southern kindergarten wing.

These facades are the newer portions of the building complex and are mainly composed of concrete panels and a medium-brown tile. The majority of the rear façade is two-stories, with the exception of the southernmost portion, which is a single level. On the second story, the windows are square, with four smaller square panes. On the ground level, the windows are comprised of two square panes, one on top of the other.

The two-story preschool wing extends to the west from the northern end of the rear façade. This wing is simple, with little ornamentation. At the end of the wing is a stairwell, with glass block windows facing west. There are a series of windows set in aluminum casings on both levels of the preschool wing. This wing is primarily

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comprised of medium-brown tile and concrete panels that match the rest of the façade. The original preschool wing was one-story (constructed in 1988) and was expanded to two-stories in 1993.

The protruding wing at the southern end of the façade houses the gymnasium and the kindergarten corridor. The one-story kindergarten wing shares its north wall with the south wall of the gymnasium. From the rear façade of the complex, the north wall of the gymnasium, and the west walls of the gymnasium and kindergarten wings are visible. The gymnasium has four large panels of glass block windows on its north façade, extending from approximately one foot off the ground to about three feet from the roofline. Leading into the western edge of the kindergarten wing is an entrance comprised of a single set of double glass door set in metal framing. Along this façade, interspersed in the medium-brown colored tile are blue square tiles that mimic the tile panels on the older portions of the building.

### *South Façade*

The south elevation includes the south wall of the one-story school wing, the 1967 two-story administrative and school wing, the common entrance, and the Esterson auditorium. The one-story educational wing constructed in 1997 is similar to that on the west façade. It is mainly composed of concrete panels and medium-brown tile. There are square windows with four panes grouped in clusters of three. East of this portion of the façade is the 1993 façade of the school addition. This area is also one-story but is made from a combination of Maryland fieldstone and small concrete tiles. The sections of fieldstone create the image of four piers. In between these piers there are three sets of windows. West of the one-story wing is a covered entrance to the educational portion of the building. The entrance has an arched roof.

West of the entrance is the 1967 educational/administrative wing. This façade is two-stories, with the second floor identically mimicking the ground level. Expanses of Maryland fieldstone separate concrete panels that frame the windows. The windows are square panes, grouped in sets of three. The sets are separated by thin concrete piers that extend from the ground to the roofline. Below the large square pane of the window are two smaller rectangular panes that push open from the bottom. Near the eastern end of this façade is the common entrance to the synagogue complex, accessible from the south parking lot. The three sets of double glass doors are flush with the façade of the building. The walkway leading to the doors from the parking lot is covered with a flat roof, supported by piers made of Maryland fieldstone. To the east of the entrance is the south façade of the Esterson Auditorium. It is similar in design to the administrative/education portion, but has only two small rectangular windows set in each of the concrete sections. The concrete panels are again divided into three sections via thin concrete piers that extend from the ground to the roofline.

### *Interior*

The social hall is at the northern end of the complex, in the central portion of the site (east to west). It is a two-story space commonly known as the Krieger Auditorium. The room can seat up to 1,000 people. It has a central, sunken area that is enclosed with raised wooden "boxes" (these were originally flower boxes but are

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now capped off). Along the west wall there is a raised stage. The room has had its acoustics improved and has new window coverings, but has its original fabric otherwise. Below the social hall there are smaller rooms that can facilitate meetings and were originally used as the Sisterhood and Brotherhood rooms. On the second level of the social hall there are seven classrooms. These classrooms were the only classroom space at the complex until the 1967 addition. Educational services were provided at the suburban campus of Chizuk Amuno from the onset. In the northwest corner of the second level, there are school-related offices (this space was originally a small apartment for the on-site caretaker of the complex).

To the east of the social hall is an art gallery that doubly functions as a north-south hallway linking the Krieger Auditorium and the Sanctuary to the Garden Lounge and the original Administration and Education Addition. The upper level of this space holds a balcony with additional gallery space. The gallery has six wall panels that are designed to hold various exhibits.

The sanctuary, the 1962 addition, is entered from the west, via large mahogany doors. The sanctuary sits directly to the east of the social hall and measures 120-feet long and 113-feet wide. The ceiling rises up to 41 feet. The western interior wall of the sanctuary is made of the same Maryland fieldstone as on the exterior (this was originally the exterior wall of the building after the first phase of construction). The interior woodwork in the sanctuary is all mahogany. Each side of the sanctuary has nine large glass windows symbolizing the nine Jewish festivals. The seat layout faces east (towards Jerusalem) and is comprised of individual theatre-style seats. Both the seats and carpets have been replaced but are similar in style. There are two balconies, on the north and south sides, to provide additional seating. Including the balcony seating, the sanctuary holds 1,800 people. The Memorial Wall of the congregation is on the western wall. The ceiling of the sanctuary follows the gently curving form of the roof. The bema is located on the eastern side of the room, on a raised platform. On the eastern wall of the sanctuary, the back wall of the bema, there are two large mahogany panels that flank the central portion made of Israeli marble. In the center is a 15'x24' hand-woven tapestry that encases the Ark. The tapestry weighs approximately 300 pounds. To the front of the Ark is the bronze Eternal Light, which is suspended from the sanctuary ceiling. The Eternal Light is made of polished and lacquered bronze and is two-foot wide. On each of the mahogany panels rests a seven foot bronze sculpture designed by Robert Cronbach (the same artist who designed the bronze Burning Bush sculpture on the Stevenson Road façade). The sculpture on the south panel is the seven-foot tall, 180 pound Hanukkah menorah, which is set on a track so that it can be raised and lowered. This sculpture also includes working candle lights. The two mahogany podiums on the bema are for the Rabbi and the Cantor and are original to the space. These podiums are equipped with a communications system so that the Rabbi and the Cantor can signal one another.

South of the social hall and sanctuary is a north-south corridor that extends from the entrance to the gallery space to the common entrance on the south side of the complex. The hallway includes exposed fieldstone piers along both walls and carpeted floors. Approximately half-way down the corridor, to the east, is the formal entrance to the synagogue. The entrance protrudes to the east and includes two woven tapestries on both the north and south walls. The floor of the entryway is stone tiles. Protruding to the west, directly across from this

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entrance is the daily chapel, or Hoffberger Chapel, built in 1967. The chapel has rows of pews and can seat 150 people. There are stained glass windows on both the north and south walls. The windows on the north are comprised of warm-toned glass, while the windows on the south wall are cool-toned.

At the south end of this corridor is the Sisterhood store, the Esterson Auditorium, restrooms, and a stairwell. The auditorium was included in the 1967 building campaign and was renovated in 2000. The auditorium protrudes from the building to the east. There is a short staircase leading to the auditorium and an elevator on the south side of the stairwell. The room has a removable dividing wall that runs east-west. Below the auditorium, there is a basement that has two additional rooms for meetings, youth groups, and social space. At the very southern end of this corridor is the common entrance, leading in from the south and the parking area.

Also at the southern end of the north-south corridor is the original two-story east-west Administration and Education wing. The lower level corridor has office space on both the north and south sides with carpeted floors. On the south side of this corridor on the western end is a stairwell leading to the second floor. This level is composed of cinder block walls, typical of educational facilities. The rooms have solid wood doors with glass panels to one side and original built in wooden shelving and storage space. There are twelve rooms on the upper level. This is original classroom space that continues to serve this educational purpose.

At the western end of this east-west corridor is the main two-story educational building. It is built around a north-south spine, which also connects to the back portions of the social hall (Krieger Auditorium). Along this corridor there are classrooms, specially designed art and music rooms, and a two-story library with an interior stairwell. At the northern end of the hallway is the Stulman Auditorium, which functions as both the school cafeteria and additional service space. Jutting to the west from the northern end of the wing is a two-story preschool wing with twelve classrooms on the ground level. At the western end of this wing, there is a stairwell with large panels of glass block windows. Protruding to the west from the southern end of the building is the school gymnasium, whose north wall is lined with large glass block windows. Just south of the gymnasium is the kindergarten wing, which also extends to the west and shares its north wall with the south wall of the gymnasium. The wing is one-story and has five classrooms on the south side and two classrooms and a multi-purpose room on the north side.

**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 pattern of our history.
- B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**Area of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Art

Religion

Social History

**Period of Significance**

1954-1997

1957-1970

**Significant Dates**

1957-58, 1962, 1967, 1988, 1993, 1997

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Daniel Schwartzman

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**Previous documentation on files (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: University of Maryland, School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation

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### Summary Statement of Significance:

The Chizuk Amuno Congregation's suburban synagogue complex is significant under Criterion C as an example of post World War II Modern Jewish religious architecture. In addition, the suburban complex has significance under Criterion A for the period of 1954-1970 as an important exemplar of Maryland and Jewish social history. Its particular form derives from the suburbanization of the Jewish population in Baltimore, as it is a distinguished example of the evolution of the synagogue as a multi-functional complex that preserves Jewish ethnic religious identity and offers a full communal life. In addition, the complex is the work of a prominent Jewish architect, Daniel Schwartzman – a native of Baltimore and former member of the congregation. Chizuk Amuno was one of the Baltimore congregations that built the greatest number of synagogues and maintained a tradition of distinguished architecture. Additional significance resides in the synagogue's artwork and art gallery, the first one located in a synagogue in the United States. The Chizuk Amuno facility is one of a unique collection of contemporary synagogues in the northwest Baltimore suburbs that symbolize a new suburban Jewish way of life and helped establish the trend nationally of constructing esthetically significant suburban synagogue complexes. Collectively, they pushed Baltimore to the forefront in the renewed interest in and Modernist expression of synagogue architecture that occurred throughout the United States in the late 1940s and 1950s. The new synagogues were not simply houses of worship, but complex centers that were used on a daily basis for a wide range of suburban activities. The close proximity of these complexes helped shape Judaism into an everyday suburban way of life, not just a weekly worship ritual. They were a crucial intervention in establishing the rich cultural environment that enabled "a Jewish way of life" to thrive in the context of assimilation, increasing individualism, and the horrors of Jewish persecution before and during World War II. Chizuk Amuno Congregation's architectural distinction and social significance as the embodiment of a new suburban way of life for one of the nation's oldest and largest Jewish populations makes this resource worthy of designation even though it is less than 50 years old for part of its period of significance.

The complex retains a high level of integrity, although it continued to grow and expand after Schwartzman's original vision was completed. All of the portions constructed in the 1950s and 1960s remain intact, and have experienced few alterations. The newer portions of the building were constructed to house growing needs for educational space. These portions of the complex are all located in the western edge of the property and are not visible along the primary façade facing Stevenson Road. These additions continue to reflect the spirit of Schwartzman's design, although they are quite distinguishable. As reflections of a living and growing congregation, the additions also testify to an ongoing, evolving Jewish suburban presence and the significant place of the complex within its households' members' everyday lives.

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### Resource History and Historic Context:

#### Contextual History

##### Social History of the Jewish Population in Baltimore

The history of the Jewish population in Baltimore, originally comprised first of German Jews and later Eastern European Jews, is essential to an understanding of the trends in suburbanization that resulted in the construction of Chizuk Amuno's suburban synagogue complex. There had been a long tradition of immigration, relocation, and suburbanization within the Jewish community of Baltimore. Throughout different periods of history, the Jewish community relocated, generally to the north and west of the central city, as the result of chain migration patterns, discrimination, institutional support, and the construction of new synagogues. Although during the early years of Eastern European immigration the existing German Jews and the new immigrants generally maintained separate communities both geographically and socially -- including separate synagogues -- in the mid-twentieth century they began to merge into a unified Jewish community of Baltimore.

Baltimore Jews played a major role in the development of North American Judaism. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Baltimore was a center for Jewish life in America. Although Maryland's first settlers had purely Christian ideals in mind, they became more hospitable towards Jewish populations over time. In 1632 the proprietary charter for the State of Maryland invoked "zel [sic] for the propagation of the Christian faith." The Act Concerning Religion was passed a few years later, in 1649, as a result of growing tensions between Catholics and Protestants within the state. The Act declared tolerance for Christians, but stated that those persons who did not follow the Christian faith "shall be punished with death and confiscation or forfeiture of all his or her lands and goods."<sup>2</sup>

The first recorded Jewish resident of Maryland was Jacob Lumbrozo, a healer, innkeeper, businessman, and Indian trader. He was sentenced to death in 1658 for blasphemy under the Act Concerning Religion (known as the Tolerance Act), but was later freed under a general amnesty in honor of Richard Cromwell's accession as Lord Protector of England. The next known Jewish settlers were Benjamin Levy, a merchant who moved to Baltimore from Philadelphia, and Solomon Etting, who established the city's water company and later became the director of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.<sup>3</sup>

When Maryland's constitution was adopted in 1776, Jews were forbidden to hold elected office or practice law. Twenty-one years later, Etting and other Jewish residents who were gaining prominence in Baltimore's business

<sup>2</sup> Howell S. Baum, *The Organization of Hope: Communities Planning Themselves* (Albany, NY: 1997), 17; Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 20-21.

<sup>3</sup> Baum, 18-19.

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community petitioned the Maryland General Assembly to repeal these provisions from the constitution as the Jewish population continued to grow. This law, commonly known as the "Jew Bill", was not passed until 1826. It permitted Jews to hold public office and practice law and allowed Baltimore to become a predominant immigration center for the Jewish community.

The first wave of 19<sup>th</sup> century Jewish immigration to Baltimore coincided with a massive exile of European Jews who were in search of economic opportunity and political and religious freedom. The earliest immigrants generally hailed from Germany, Bavaria, Bohemia, Austria-Hungary, the Rhineland, and German-speaking Switzerland. These immigrants tended to settle alongside other European immigrants near the entry port in east and southeast Baltimore, around Lombard, High, Exeter, Aisquith, and Central Streets.<sup>4</sup> As early as the 1830s, there were enough Jewish immigrants that viable neighborhoods and community organizations formed.<sup>5</sup>

The first organized congregation in the city was the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, which, as the only synagogue in the city, was known as the Stadt Shul, or the city synagogue. The second synagogue was the Fells Point Hebrew Fellowship (known as the Eden Street Shul) and the third was the Har Sinai Verein, which followed the rituals of Hamburg's Reform temple as opposed to Orthodoxy.<sup>6</sup> In 1853, Temple Oheb Shalom was formed as the fourth congregation in Baltimore, by members of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation who were unhappy with the traditional attitude of their rabbi and the reforms offered by the Har Sinai congregation. Eighteen years later, traditional German Jews who were displeased with the continual reforms occurring at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation formed the Chizuk Amuno congregation.<sup>7</sup> The Jewish population in Baltimore had grown from 200 families in 1840 to 10,000 individuals in 1880. Many entered the clothing business and prospered as Baltimore grew to have one of the largest clothing trade businesses in America with its Jewish community comprising nearly this entire industry.<sup>8</sup>

The earliest trends of moving out of the central city were the result of class distinctions within the German-Jewish community. A small group of elite Jews began to move out of southeast Baltimore to the northwest. After the Civil War, this trend accelerated, as an enclave of prosperous Jews emerged in the northwest portion of the city. This marked the beginning of a century-long trend of Jewish families moving further away from the city center.<sup>9</sup> From the early years of the mass German immigration, leaders within the Jewish community established charitable organizations to care for their less fortunate. These included the United Hebrew Benevolent Society, the Hebrew Assistance Society, the Hebrew Hospital and Asylum, the Jewish Education Alliance, the Hebrew Free Burial Society, and the Jewish Home for Consumptives.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Jan Bernhardt Schein, *On Three Pillars: The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996* (Baltimore: 2000), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Gilbert Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore: A Family Album* (Baltimore: 2000), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 5-6.

<sup>7</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 9.

<sup>8</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 19.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

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By the late 1860s, the rate of German immigration had drastically slowed, and Jews began arriving (in small numbers at first) from the Russian Empire of Eastern Europe. The Port of Baltimore was the first stop for thousands of Eastern European immigrants, along with Boston, Philadelphia, and New York.<sup>11</sup> This second wave of Jewish immigration into Baltimore flourished in the post-Civil War period. Eastern European Jews were fleeing from persecution, epidemic, and famine. The established German-Jewish population commonly referred to the new immigrants as "Russians", acknowledging the czar's control over Poland, Lithuania, and the Ukraine, among other countries. During the 1880s 24,095 Jews landed in Baltimore, with an additional 20,000 arriving in the 1890s, and 25,000 from 1900-1905.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the immigrants arriving directly in Baltimore, Jews made their way to Baltimore from other eastern ports as the city acted as a "magnet" for Jews.

The newly landed Eastern European Jews encountered an organized, sophisticated German-Jewish community that was generally located around East Lombard and East Baltimore Streets between Central Avenue and the Fallsway.<sup>13</sup> A social divide emerged between the two immigrant groups, reflected in the separation of their synagogues. The existing German-Jewish residents were concerned that the influx of poor "Russian" Jews would damage their social standing.<sup>14</sup>

The Eastern European synagogues -- the Bikur Cholim Congregation (1856), the B'nai Israel Congregation (1873), and the Anshe Chesed Bialystok Congregation (1875) -- were located near the immigrant communities in southeast Baltimore. The rapid surge in immigration resulted in "ghetto-type" conditions within the east Baltimore neighborhoods. As these poor immigrants continued to settle in Baltimore, established German-Jews began to move to the northwest near Eutaw Place and into the established residences, mansions, and grand apartment buildings that lined the boulevard.<sup>15</sup> This caused a geographic rift within the Jewish community of Baltimore. The German-Jews generally lived in the northwest portion of the city and were commonly referred to as "Uptown Jews", while the Eastern European Jews remained in southeast Baltimore and were known as the "Downtown Russians."<sup>16</sup> The Eastern European immigrants arrived with experience in industrial fields, especially tailoring. They often found work in the shops and factories owned by the German-Jewish population. The new immigrants formed organized unions and began to strike out against the German-Jewish factory owners. This caused a deeper rift between the two groups and began to discourage German charitable concern for the less fortunate population.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 68.

<sup>12</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 20.

<sup>13</sup> Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 4.

<sup>14</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 20.

<sup>15</sup> Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 5.

<sup>16</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 21.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 20-21.

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By 1895, there were four German-Jewish synagogues established in the northwest portion of the city. Within a few blocks of each other were the Chizuk Amuno Congregation, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Temple Oheb Shalom, and Har Sinai. The majority of the members of these congregations lived on six main streets – Eutaw Place, Madison Avenue, Linden Avenue, McCulloh Street, Bolton Street, and Druid Hill Avenue. In the history of Chizuk Amuno Congregation Jan Bernhardt Schein notes that “despite differing religious preferences, the German Jews of Baltimore lived side-by-side, served communal organizations together, often intermarried with one another, and some German Jews maintained dual membership – paying dues to more than one synagogue.”<sup>18</sup>

By the 1920s, the Eastern European Jewish community had gained both social and economic stability. They subsequently began to follow their German predecessors to the northwest portion of the city and the Park Heights-Reistertown Road area. As a result, the German Jews, still not comfortable living next to the Eastern European communities, began to move further out toward the City boundary and the suburbs.<sup>19</sup> The opening of the Eastern European Shaarei Zion Congregation on Park Heights Avenue, just north of Druid Hill Park, represented the onset of the relocation of the newer immigrants to this portion of the city. Another indicator of these population shifts was the opening of a branch of the German-Jewish, orthodox Shearith Israel Congregation further out on Park Heights Avenue, near Glen Avenue.<sup>20</sup> As the two communities began to move in similar directions, a growing sense of unity began to emerge between the two immigrant populations. There were two main reasons for the Jewish population shift to the north and west. First, the Protestant and Catholic communities of northeast Baltimore, centered in Roland Park, were generally inhospitable to the Jewish population. Second, the Eastern European Jews followed the pattern of movement that the German Jews had earlier embarked on.<sup>21</sup>

During the 1920s there was a construction spree among Jewish congregations throughout the United States. Lay leaders believed that new buildings and renowned cantors would help increase membership and attendance, which dropped off in the 1920s as “increased mobility and the need for financial stability” caused many men to prioritize social and economic pursuits over religious observances. To complicate matters, Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe nearly stopped in 1924 when the United States Congress passed the Johnson Immigration Act, which severely restricted the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, Baltimore’s synagogues took advantage of the construction boom of the 1920s in two ways. New assembly spaces attracted Jews who “no longer assembled for community events at privately owned locations...but rather convened for public rallies and memorials at synagogues.”<sup>23</sup> Secondly, in striving—perhaps for the first time—to adapt to the changing *American* lifestyles of their congregations, some synagogues began to reinvent themselves as

<sup>18</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 103.

<sup>19</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 21.

<sup>20</sup> Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 8.

<sup>22</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 165.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 166.

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community centers. As the intensive Jewish homelife of the immigrant generation waned, adults began to attend late Friday evening services not just for worship but for “social interaction and communal fellowship.”<sup>24</sup> This trend would expand significantly with the synagogue relocations to the suburbs after World War II.

By the 1930s Park Heights Avenue up to the city boundary was an elongated Jewish neighborhood. The extension of the streetcar lines made it possible for the area around Park Heights Avenue and Reisterstown Road to become bedroom communities for Jewish people working in downtown Baltimore. The Jewish population had been drawn to this area because of the affordable rowhouses, the friendly neighborhoods, and the abundance of drug stores and kosher butcher shops. In addition, while some residents moved prior to the relocation of the synagogues, many chose to live in the area after their synagogues had constructed new facilities nearby.<sup>25</sup> In 1938, a new orthodox congregation, Beth Jacob, formed on Park Heights and Manhattan Avenues and the reform Har Sinai built a suburban branch on Park Heights and Strathmore Avenues. In addition, they relocated their religious school uptown.<sup>26</sup> Throughout the following decades, Jewish life would be wholly transported to this area as the Jewish Community Center, Hebrew Schools, Baltimore Hebrew University, and agencies of the Associated Jewish Charities all relocated to the Park Heights neighborhood.<sup>27</sup>

An ongoing conflict within the Jewish community of Baltimore was whether to identify itself as a religious or an ethnic group. In medieval Europe Jewish communities were geographically defined and self-contained. The Enlightenment brought about the development of nation-states and Jewish communities subsequently began to define themselves based on the customs of their homelands. Throughout Germany, the forces of the Enlightenment caused an erosion of the established Jewish community and posited Jews as individual citizens. As a result, German-Jews began to think of themselves as a purely religious group similar to Catholics or Protestants. In Eastern Europe, though, there was a mix of national groups and the formation of nation-states occurred at a slower pace than in Germany. The Russian government also treated the Jewish population as a separate national, or ethnic, group. Throughout the twentieth century, distinct Jewish communities, commonly living in ghettos, existed across Eastern Europe. While their religious practices followed several centuries of tradition, religion was not the primary element in their Jewish identity.<sup>28</sup> In North America, German-Jews tended to adopt widespread American customs. This was especially visible in the reform congregations with liberal practices and patterns of worship. The Eastern European immigrants preferred to use more traditional religious practices and formed Orthodox congregations that were both religiously and socially similar to the institutions of small Eastern European Jewish settlements. As these newer immigrants began to adapt to American society, they sought out a more moderate form of worship. Conservative Judaism was created as a compromise between the strict Orthodox and the liberal Reform movements. While the practice of conservatism emerged in Philadelphia and New York around the turn of the century, Baltimore’s conservative

<sup>24</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 166, 150-51.

<sup>25</sup> Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 8 and 128.

<sup>26</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 192.

<sup>27</sup> Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore*, 206.

<sup>28</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 22.

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congregations grew mainly during the post-World War II period of suburbanization.<sup>29</sup> Today, conservative congregations generally belong to the United Synagogue of America, the liberal or reform congregations to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and orthodox to the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations.<sup>30</sup> The separation of the Jewish community by type of worship (conservative, reform, or orthodox) was reflected in their geographic distribution. The orthodox communities tended to remain in the Park Heights area, while the reform and conservative Jews lived in the adjacent northwest suburbs.<sup>31</sup> Although the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation and Temple Oheb Shalom are located within the City of Baltimore, they are generally thought of as located in the northwest suburbs along with other Conservative and Reform congregations, such as Chizuk Amuno, and Beth El.

By 1947 there were 80,000 Jews living in the greater Baltimore area (as estimated by the Baltimore Jewish Council.<sup>32</sup>) In this post-war period, a sense of nationalism emerged in America. This had a positive effect on the relationship between the German and Eastern European Jewish communities. Throughout the following decades the groups would work together on a variety of issues including buffering the criticism of the Christian community in the 1950s and eliminating the use of restrictive covenants to limit the rights of Jews in property ownership (declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1953).<sup>33</sup>

***Suburbanization of American Judaism***

In Baltimore, the shift to suburban Judaism was particularly dramatic and epitomized a national phenomenon of relocating to the vast open spaces of the suburbs and constructing large synagogue complexes. After World War II, most new residential development occurred in bands and corridors around established urban centers. Deconcentration challenged organized Judaism in that it dispersed congregation members over a wider area, distributing households in far more integrated neighborhoods that provided little natural support for Jewish identification or traditional lifeways.<sup>34</sup> Synagogues filled this void through the provision of all-encompassing social, educational, and worship centers. As a result, many synagogues experienced an increase in membership and were forced to assess their facilities. How could all the new worshippers be accommodated, especially on High Holidays? Should existing structures be modified or should new synagogues be constructed? What aesthetic environment would best reflect the new religious reality of American Jewish life?<sup>35</sup> In order to answer these questions successfully, congregations developed what was essentially a new building type – the Modern synagogue complex.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 22-23.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Thiry, Richard M. Bennett and Henry L. Kamphoefner, *Churches and Temples* (New York: 1953), 19J.

<sup>31</sup> Baum, *The Organization of Hope*, 23.

<sup>32</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 228.

<sup>33</sup> Phillip Kahn, *Uncommon Threads: Threads That Were the Fabric of Baltimore Jewish Life* (Baltimore: 1996), 221.

<sup>34</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 228.

<sup>35</sup> Lance J. Sussman, "The Suburbanization of American Judaism as Reflected in Synagogue Buildings and Architecture, 1945-1975," *American Jewish History* 73 (September 1985): 31.

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Modernism was chosen as the most appropriate architectural style for these new complexes for a number of reasons. The suburban synagogues represented a completely new building form in a growing suburban landscape. As suburban locales gained political power and independence, the residents often desired to separate themselves from “old” traditions. One method of doing so involved turning to Modernism as the principal architectural style – especially for prominent social and community buildings such as religious structures – including synagogues. Modern architecture at its best offered the ability to merge the multifunctional practical requirements of the building with a design expressive of its symbolic purpose.<sup>36</sup> In many cases, the lay leaders and prominent patrons of the congregations influenced both the functions and designs of the new buildings. They have asked for “social halls, stages for dramatic performances, art galleries, swimming pools, classrooms, libraries, museums, meeting rooms, and kitchens.”<sup>37</sup> At Baltimore Hebrew Congregation the Rothschild family, who were also patrons of the avant-garde in art and music, appear to have influenced design decisions; artist Amalie Rothschild, for example, designed the tapestries covering the Ark in the sanctuary. Another rationale for selecting Modernism related to the progressive thinking and liberal attitudes associated with Reform congregations. As national Jewish organizations began to support Modern designs for Reform synagogues, the typology quickly spread throughout the entire Jewish community as a method of giving the synagogue a unique and outwardly recognizable architectural form.

Collectively, Jewish leaders, architects, and artists concluded that a new synagogue form was necessary to symbolize the arrival of Judaism in the suburbs. In addition, a bold and Modern synagogue design reaffirmed publicly the Jewish community’s right to assert their collective heritage and identity, particularly in light of the persecutions before and during the European war.<sup>38</sup> European architects immigrating to the United States, such as Walter Gropius, who designed Temple Oheb Shalom, brought a more functionalist approach to architecture with them. By the end of the 1940s, a new synagogue form had emerged. The design was distinctly suburban and unique from synagogues of the pre-war period. The new synagogue complex was a symbol of suburbia, and it actively nurtured the family values associated with it. It incorporated programs that promoted the values of recreation and a youth-oriented society. Some general characteristics of the suburban synagogue included an overall sense of “newness” expressed in the furniture, light fixtures, Torah covers and candelabras; increased accessibility by the automobile; and the availability of an expansive setting with large lawns and attractive landscaping.<sup>39</sup> In addition, the suburban synagogue had to accommodate a sprawling, multifunctional complex and room to park cars, and therefore demanded larger plots of land than were generally available within the city.

From 1945 to 1975, an impressive number of suburban-style Modern synagogues were constructed across the United States. In the post-Holocaust period, there was a determined revival of faith, especially within the Jewish community, which brought unprecedented numbers of worshippers into existing synagogues. This

<sup>36</sup> Avram Kampf, *Contemporary Synagogue Art: Developments in the United States, 1945-1965* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1966), 28.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>38</sup> Brian de Breffny, *The Synagogue* (New York: Macmillan, 1978), 192.

<sup>39</sup> Sussman, “The Suburbanization of American Judaism as Reflected in Synagogue Buildings and Architecture, 1945-1975,” 31-32.

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caused overcrowding among congregations, and led many of them to construct new facilities. In this period of widespread construction, "it might even be asserted that building new synagogues constituted the central religious activity of American Jews."<sup>40</sup> This building boom brought the United States to the forefront in modern synagogue architectural design.<sup>41</sup> Baltimore synagogues played a prominent role in that process.

Before World War II, American synagogues generally followed the plans and techniques of Christian churches.<sup>42</sup> Architects in Europe, however, began experimenting with new styles, flexible spaces, and new building materials in synagogue design as early as the 1920s and 1930s. Although architectural innovation nearly ceased in Europe as congregations focused on the war and the unfolding Holocaust, it sprang forth with renewed vigor in the United States after the war, as the role of the synagogue in daily life transformed to suit the needs of the new suburban population.<sup>43</sup>

The idea that the synagogue could serve the cultural and social needs, as well as the spiritual needs, of the Jewish community arose out of the conditions of the American urban environment. The "Jewish American" movement, which emerged in second and third tier settlements throughout cities in the early twentieth century, promoted a new type of Jewish community that was based primarily on ethnicity.<sup>44</sup> The ideas of Mordecai Kaplan, who believed that Judaism was more than a religion and encompassed a civilization that included language, culture, and customs, promoted the concept of a "synagogue center" offering religious services, study programs, drama, dance, song, sports, and exercise in an effort to retain young Jews in the congregations and reduce the amount of intermarriage. Mordecai Kaplan was born in Lithuania in 1881, where he received a traditional Jewish education. He came to the United States in 1889.<sup>45</sup>

According to Lance Sussman, in the post-war period of suburbanization, America "changed from the land of immigrants, with its thriving ethnic groups, to the triple melting pot in which people tend[ed] more and more to identify and locate themselves in terms of three great sub-communities – Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish – defined in religious terms."<sup>46</sup> As one of these emerging sub-

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>41</sup> de Breffny, *The Synagogue*, 196.

<sup>42</sup> H.A. Meek, *The Synagogue* (London: Phaidon, 1995), 227.

<sup>43</sup> Sussman, 33-35.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 35-36.

<sup>45</sup> "Mordecai Kaplan: Founder of Reconstructionism," *Rabbi Sheinerman's Home Page* [on-line], available at: <http://sheinerman.net/judaism/personalities/kaplan.html>, 2003.

Modceai Kaplan graduated from the City College of New York, was ordained at the conservative Jewish Theological Seminary, and received a master's degree from Columbia University. In addition, he served as an associate rabbi for an Orthodox synagogue in New York and taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He became disenchanted with orthodox theology and interested in alternative approaches to Judaism. Over time the new social science field of sociology and the progress in the physical sciences influenced Kaplan. In 1935 he authored *Judaism as a Civilization*, which became the foundation of the Reconstructionist movement.

<sup>46</sup> Sussman, "The Suburbanization of American Judaism as Reflected in Synagogue Buildings and Architecture, 1945-1975," 36.

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communities, the Jews found themselves as guardians of one-third of the American religious heritage, though only comprising 3.2% of the total American population. These empowered Jews quickly found their synagogues, as both institutions and physical structures, inadequate to serve as symbols of their cultural heritage.<sup>47</sup> Individual congregations, and their national umbrella organizations, turned to architects, many of whom were Jewish, to create a new building type of suburban synagogues. After 1945, there was a widespread belief throughout the Jewish community that a "true" Jewish style in art and architecture was about to be created and that the synagogue would become a distinctly Jewish building. The Reform movement took the leading role in the architectural development of the suburban synagogue because of its large financial resources and its tradition of reforming the standards of Jewish thought. In 1946, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), the national organization of Reform Judaism, published a guide for congregations considering relocating to the suburbs. The following year, the UAHC sponsored two conferences on synagogue architecture. The UAHC also organized a panel of synagogue architects who traveled throughout the country to meet with congregation building committees. The panel developed a series of guidelines for new synagogue construction, which was subsequently published by the UAHC. In addition, the UAHC published, in 1954, the landmark book, *An American Synagogue for Today and Tomorrow: A Guidebook to Synagogue Design and Construction*. The book was edited by Peter Blake, a well known critic and architect, and included writings from a variety of religious leaders and architects (including Daniel Schwartzman, the architect of Chizuk Amuno).<sup>48</sup>

While the UAHC promoted synagogue architecture at the national level, architects who promoted synagogue design in their professional organizations and journals were contacted by individual congregations. Eric Mendelsohn (1887-1953) and Percival Goodman (1904-1989) were the two architects who had the greatest influence on the design and style of American suburban synagogues after 1945. Mendelsohn established trends in the design of large synagogues and experimented in the use of new building materials. His career began in Germany in the 1920s and was pursued in England and the British State of Palestine. Mendelsohn moved to the United States in 1945 and was involved in synagogue architecture until his death in 1953. Goodman, on the other hand, made major contributions to the design and style of smaller synagogues. From the readings of Martin Buber, a Jewish philosopher and theologian, he developed ideas of intimacy in synagogue construction. His most lasting contribution to synagogue design is possibly the emphasis on the Ark as an external feature, which he thought had the possibility to define a building as a synagogue to the general public.<sup>49</sup>

Some architects during the post-war period attempted to transform the suburban synagogue structure into a literal symbol of Judaism, through such methods as devising plans in the form of the Star of David. In most cases, though, such symbolism was not apparent from the interior of the structures or was so abstract that it was not recognized by most congregants. The post-war synagogues also incorporated general trends of religious institutions of any denomination. For example, architects and planners incorporated multifunctional spaces into

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 37-38.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 39-40.

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their redesigns of synagogues. One of the most notable new features of the suburban synagogue was the expandable sanctuary, which provided additional seating for the High Holidays. Spatial flexibility was employed by linking the sanctuary with the social hall. The presence of an imposing social hall reinforced the concept that Judaism was more than just a religion; it was an all-encompassing way of life. Usually equipped with a kitchen and a stage, it could be used for a variety of activities. The religious school was closely modeled after public school buildings and usually did not have any features that identified it as Jewish (the same is true for Catholic schools). For the most part, synagogue schools followed state-wide and national trends towards the use of Modern architecture for new school facilities. Central offices became a noticeable feature of large synagogues, a reflection of the bureaucratic needs of suburban congregations and on the important role granted to office work in the post-war American society.<sup>50</sup>

### Suburban Relocation of Baltimore Congregations

The post-war years marked the beginnings of the eventual suburban relocation of most of Baltimore's synagogues. By 1946, one out of every six Americans lived in the suburbs. The rapid spread of new suburbs after the war created an instant building boom of residential, educational, and religious structures (including synagogues), all adopting similar design concepts. In the new communities, the synagogue complexes were typically the only operating Jewish agencies and they truly became the geographic center of Jewish life. As such, new designs that allowed for programmatic flexibility were necessary. As early as the 1940s, plans emerged that included features such as movable partitions and sliding doors that would allow for the conversion of spaces for a variety of uses.<sup>51</sup>

By the end of World War II, Baltimore's German Reform Jews had moved from the mid-town northeast into Upper Park Heights; Eastern European Jews still living in East Baltimore migrated to the newly vacated residences.<sup>52</sup> Throughout the late 1940s the generations reaching adulthood continued to leave the urban area. In general, they relocated to the suburbs where they hoped to "raise their children in single-family homes nestled among green lawns and open areas."<sup>53</sup> With the suburban migration, though, came a loss of the tightly knit Jewish community that had existed in the dense urban neighborhoods. The suburban synagogue complex, with its social, educational, and worship spaces, was designed to provide a surrogate community to its members.<sup>54</sup>

Three of the prominent Reform congregations, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Har Sinai, and Temple Oheb Shalom, began discussions for relocation plans as early as 1940. Their desire was to move closer to their members who lived at the time in the Pikesville and Stevenson areas. The synagogue leaders collectively

<sup>50</sup> Ibid 40-43.

<sup>51</sup> Rachel Wishnitzer, *Synagogue Architecture in the United States: History and Interpretation* (Philadelphia: 1955).

<sup>52</sup> Kahn, *Uncommon Threads*, 222.

<sup>53</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 228.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid 229.

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understood that they would have to follow their members in order to survive. This was a lesson learned from the Hebrew Friendship Congregation that, after the Civil War, refused to follow their members out of East Baltimore and eventually had to disband the synagogue.<sup>55</sup> Throughout the 1950s and 1960s Jewish families in Baltimore continued to settle and relocate to the northwest suburbs and the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation was the first reform congregation to relocate in 1951. Har Sinai followed in 1959 with a new complex at Park Heights Avenue and Fords Lane, while Temple Oheb Shalom moved to its new complex on the west side of Park Heights in 1961.<sup>56</sup>

The conservative congregations in Baltimore gained popularity in the post-war period. They appealed to young people because they allowed their members to fully participate in a secular life while still maintaining their religious lives. As a result, not only did the conservative congregations have to accommodate a shift to suburban locations, but also a growing membership. As Schein notes, "nationally, migration to suburban areas, coupled with increasing interest in the middle of the road policies of the Conservative movement, had created an explosion of new congregations."<sup>57</sup> The largest conservative congregation in Baltimore, Chizuk Amuno, relocated to Baltimore County in 1961.<sup>58</sup> Twenty families that were displeased with the strict ideologies of the Orthodox Beth Tfiloh synagogue formed an additional conservative congregation, Beth El, in 1947. Although Beth El's first site was near Taney Road, many members soon moved outward. Their first synagogue complex, erected by the congregation in 1960, was north of the city line on Park Heights Avenue, directly behind the Chizuk Amuno site.<sup>59</sup>

Other Jewish facilities soon followed suit. In 1958 the Baltimore Hebrew College relocated to 5800 Park Heights Avenue. Two years later the Jewish Community Center moved to a facility at 5700 Park Heights Avenue. By 1968 there were 106,300 Jews living in greater Baltimore, comprising almost 7% of the total population of the city. Out of this Jewish community, 47% lived in suburban locations. The greatest concentration was in the Upper Park Heights community, with 35.8% of the total Jewish population. In addition, 29.2% lived in Liberty, 14.6% in the Reb Corridor, 10.9% in Lower Park Heights, 5.2% in the downtown, and an additional 4.3% lived in other outlying areas. The Lower Park Heights neighborhood was predominantly Orthodox (55%), while the other communities had a more balanced distribution. Upper Park Heights, with the largest concentration of Jewish residents, was 35% Orthodox, 29% Conservative, and 31% Reform.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Kahn, *Uncommon Threads*, 222-223.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 274.

<sup>58</sup> Kahn, *Uncommon Threads*, 224-225.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> "The Jewish Community of Greater Baltimore: A Population Study," completed by the Associated Jewish Chamber of Baltimore, 1968.

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### Trends in Synagogue Design

The synagogue, from the Greek “sinago”, or “to gather”, has a triple function in Jewish life. It serves as the house of prayer, house of study, and house of assembly. In other words, the synagogue provides space for worship, educational facilities, and social gathering places.<sup>61</sup> In the introduction to a 1963 exhibit entitled *Recent American Synagogue Architecture*, Richard Meier describes this typology as the Jewish people’s “most original creation, the mainstay of their cohesiveness, assuring the survival of their group, their cultural identity, and their historical cohesiveness.”<sup>62</sup> There have never been any standard definitions or prescribed protocols for synagogue design. While certain implications about the form of the synagogue have been extracted from the Bible, there is no set of rules that architects or congregations must follow. Synagogues thus become an individualized, outward expression of the congregation. In arriving at this end, it is “the problem of the synagogue architect to express in a physical structure the spirit of the Jewish congregation.”<sup>63</sup>

The earliest designs for synagogues were by today’s standards “a grassroot, democratic form springing up from and encouraging individual initiative and responsibility based on a common understanding of basic needs.”<sup>64</sup> Although there are no prescriptions for designing a synagogue, there are some common elements among congregations. The Torah, the most valuable element in the sanctuary, is a “copy of Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, handwritten on parchment about twenty inches high and a foot in diameter.”<sup>65</sup> The second ritual element is the Ark, in which the Torah is stored. In addition, an Eternal Light always hangs near the Ark. Other traditional features include a seven-branch candelabra that hangs on one or both sides of the Ark and a representation of the Tablets of Law above the Ark.<sup>66</sup>

The sanctuary of the synagogue is designed with the bema in front of the Ark. The bema should be, but is not always, elevated with three steps. On the bema there is a reading desk, or pulpit, that is used to place the Torah on when unrolled. There is a great amount of flexibility in the arrangement of the bema. Some common patterns consist of placing one reading desk in the center of the bema, in front of the Ark, one unit to either side of the Ark, a mobile unit that can sit in different locations depending on the service, or two separate pulpits on either side of the bema. There are no further guidelines for the shape or dimensions of the sanctuary as a whole.<sup>67</sup> Prior to entering the sanctuary, there is generally a foyer, or gathering space, which functions as the central core of the complex. Generally, all areas of the synagogue facility are accessible from this space.

<sup>61</sup> Meier, 11.

<sup>62</sup> Meier, 13.

<sup>63</sup> Meier, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Thiry, *Churches and Temples*, 6J.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 19J.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 20J.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 22J.

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Historically, Jewish communities have built synagogues that follow the dominant architectural style of the time. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, congregations borrowed the forms of the Greek temple, Moorish mosque, Gothic cathedral, Romanesque church, and even the colonial American church.<sup>68</sup> Early on in America, the immigrant origins of the congregations, along with their religious views and economic conditions, were the dominating factors in synagogue design. Although the Jewish population in America began to flourish in the early 1800s, there were no professional architects or designers within the Jewish community until the 1840s.<sup>69</sup>

Although Jews had settled in America as early as the mid-seventeenth century, it was not until 1730 that the first building was constructed specifically for Jewish worship in New York City. By 1825, Jewish congregations were worshipping in their own buildings in many of the larger cities in the new nation. At this time, neoclassicism was the typical choice for many synagogue designers. The growth of the Jewish population around the mid-nineteenth century directly led to an increased need for houses of worship. Many Jews crowded into urbanized areas and replaced pre-existing Christian communities. Jews commonly acquired former church structures, many of them Gothic in design, and converted them for Jewish liturgical use. The Romanesque revival style was also used for synagogues in the period before the Civil War.<sup>70</sup>

By the mid-1800s, German Jews began to prosper along the Eastern seaboard. As the community organized into distinct congregations, they began to show concern over distinctive features in their synagogue buildings. While synagogues do not have any display of an image or symbol that is thought to have "supernatural" power, the German Jews were the first group to display common Jewish symbols on the exteriors of their buildings. The Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, in 1845, was the first synagogue in the United States to display the Star of David on a building; it was visible in one of the synagogue's windows.

Beginning after the Civil War and continuing into the twentieth century, synagogues used Islamic motifs, including Moorish minarets and horseshoe-arched facades. This style was easily differentiated from church design at the time and created a desired visual identification for the minority Jewish groups. However, the Moorish style lacked any true identification with Judaism and remained alien to American sensibilities. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, a new interest in the planning of the synagogue emerged. There was a shift from the basilican plan, which had characterized Moorish synagogues, to a more central orientation. The dome is the architectural form that was most often used to emphasize this new approach. Then in the early twentieth century synagogue architecture experienced a new phase. The archeological discovery of ancient synagogues in Galilee justified the use of Greco-Roman designs. Although antiquity became the most popular reference in the first quarter of the twentieth century, other historical periods were also represented.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Meier, 7.

<sup>69</sup> Rachel Wishnitzer, *Synagogue Architecture in the United States*.

<sup>70</sup> *Two Hundred Years of Synagogue Architecture* (Waltham, Mass: 1976), 9-13.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 13-17.

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During the 1920s, many of the historical elements that characterized synagogues were derived from Byzantine architecture. The layout of Byzantine churches could easily be adapted to a centrally planned synagogue. Another advantage was the characteristic simplicity in the block-like forms of a polygonal Byzantine structure. Although new advances in technology had freed architecture of the load-bearing wall and massive stone buttress, synagogues in the 1920s continued to feature these traditional forms. The onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s brought a virtual halt to synagogue construction in the United States, although experimentation with new forms continued throughout Europe.<sup>72</sup>

The earliest synagogues in America were generally single buildings, with the primary space dedicated to worship, and smaller rooms for educational and social functions. Due to their urban locations, many of the social gatherings for the congregation could be held at other nearby locations. Beginning in the 1920s, as households left the traditional neighborhoods behind, a trend to build Jewish centers emerged in an effort to provide for the social and cultural needs of the congregation. These synagogue centers existed in addition to the broad-based, community-oriented Jewish Social Centers that served the community at large.<sup>73</sup>

During World War II, architects in the United States began experimenting with the concept of multi-purpose space and flexible design for synagogues. The most common flexible space included in modern synagogues was the combination of the sanctuary and social hall. The social hall was almost always included in synagogue design, illustrating the importance of the festive meals in celebration of the various Jewish holidays. To provide increased seating flexibility, particularly in smaller synagogues, this space was often situated adjacent to the sanctuary and separated with a removable wall. Other common elements in modern synagogue complexes were classrooms, administrative offices, a library, memorial walls, the mechanical plant, and kitchen(s). Additional gathering space was also commonly provided by the inclusion of an outdoor courtyard.<sup>74</sup>

After World War II, there was a popular revolution in American spirituality. After the Holocaust, many American Jews renewed their religious and cultural identity. This increase in membership and changing demographics led to an unprecedented number of newly constructed synagogues. During this building frenzy, architects in the U.S. began to use the idiom of the Modern Movement in synagogue design, which was influenced by the architectural experimentation of pre-war Europe. Eric Mendelsohn, a German born architect, was the first to produce an outstanding post-World War II synagogue, the Congregation B'nai Amoona in St. Louis (c.1946).<sup>75</sup> Its layout enabled the seating capacity to be doubled for the high holidays by linking the prayer hall, foyer, and auditorium with folding walls. This "flexible plan" was revolutionary at the time.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>73</sup> Rachel Wishnitzer, *Synagogue Architecture in the United States*.

<sup>74</sup> Thiry, *Churches and Temples*, 23-25J.

<sup>75</sup> Information on the B'nai Amoona synagogue can be found in Kathleen James' *In the Spirit of Our Age: Eric Mendelsohn's B'nai Amoona Synagogue* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2000).

<sup>76</sup> *Two Hundred Years of American Synagogue Architecture*, 30.

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There were still no standard rules for exterior synagogue design, except that “Biblical law says the orientation should be toward Jerusalem” and that the “synagogue should be on the highest land in the community and should be the highest building.”<sup>77</sup> Also common on the exterior are two freestanding columns flanking the main entrance to the building. Paul Thiry, in his discussion of synagogue design, notes that contemporary synagogues “are planned so that each of the various parts expresses its own essential spirit: sanctuaries, the center of religious life, tend to express mass and, by means of greater height, to dominate other elements; social halls, often larger in area than the prayer hall, are usually endowed with greater glass areas which let in light and create a cheerful atmosphere; and the educational and administrative functions are revealed as spreading, many-windowed wings.”<sup>78</sup>

Percival Goodman, one of the most prominent modernist synagogue architects, believed there were five key elements to successful synagogue design. First, he emphasized that the tradition of the congregation and their service should “establish the whole tone and feeling of the building.” In addition, the best skills, most advanced engineering, and best materials should be employed. Intimacy was essential. The design of the sanctuary should allow as many people as possible to sit as close as possible to the bema. Goodman also believed that there was no substantial difference in the sanctity of the parts of the synagogue and that the educational, social, and worship spaces should all receive equal emphasis. The only ritual element that Goodman called for is to have two menorahs flanking the Ark.<sup>79</sup>

The post-war trends in synagogue design are highly significant and represent a genuine change in the design of synagogues. In the years following World War II, the suburban version of the synagogue complex was elaborated and there was a dramatic turn to Modernism as the architectural solution for the new buildings. By the mid-twentieth century, Jews no longer accepted structures that were not representative of their heritage. Jewish services in a Gothic atmosphere seemed anachronistic. The lack of traditional temple architecture enabled Modernism to become the language of the suburban synagogues of the new American Jewish communities.<sup>80</sup> Another trend after WWII was synagogue complexes that included “monumental” chapels, which were clearly distinct religious spaces. Frank Lloyd Wright’s Temple Beth Shalom (c.1956) in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania was the most publicized post-war synagogue. The plan resembled the Star of David and the building had a tripod roof, which Wright hoped would suggest both Mount Sinai and the tent tabernacles of the ancient Hebrews. This tent theme is the most popular idiom in modern American synagogue architecture. Symbolic programs went hand in hand with these historical allusions. Generally, these building types were not as successful because their form was compromised in order to exhibit their chosen symbol.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Thiry, *Churches and Temples*, 25J.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Recent American Synagogue Architecture* (New York: 1963), 21.

<sup>80</sup> Matthew Fitzsimmons, “The Baltimore Hebrew Congregation” (College Park, Md: 2002), 7.

<sup>81</sup> *Recent American Synagogue Architecture*, 31-33.

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The Baltimore Hebrew Congregation's suburban synagogue complex represents the beginning of a national trend towards a new building form for Jewish religious structures. Constructed in the late 1940s, it was one of the earliest Modernist synagogues in both the mid-Atlantic region and in the nation as a whole. It set a standard for excellence in expression that the other new Baltimore suburban synagogue complexes emulated in spirit if not in the precise details of design. One of Percival Goodman's remarkable achievements in architecture, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation is extensively highlighted in Elman and Giral's *Percival Goodman: architect – planner – teacher – painter*, a text highlighting the work of this master architect. The congregation has long been recognized nationally as one of the most important in American Jewish history. It was the first congregation in Baltimore, a city known for its prominent place in American Judaism, and it blazed the trail for Chizuk Amuno, Beth El, and Temple Oheb Shalom in the postwar suburban era.

### Artwork in Synagogues

Traditionally, there are three main types of artwork in the synagogue: symbols, ritual objects, and decorative works. Paul Thiry, Richard M. Bennett, and Henry L. Kamphoefner in *Churches and Temples* mention that “only the artist can revitalize the familiar objects and images so that they convey a meaning and a feeling transcending the inherent reality of the devices themselves.”<sup>82</sup> Most designers of synagogue artwork use functional objects to represent Jewish symbols and concepts, but there is the need for the artist to express the deeper purposes they embody. As architectural historian Avram Kampf points out, Modernist synagogues in particular, because of the strictly rationalized principles of their design, “need the intensification of the meaning of the building, the externalization of its spirit; they need some of the warmth, eloquence and passion of an individual work of art.”<sup>83</sup>

Particularly as the synagogue has become a multi-functional complex in which the prayer hall is but one component, art has come to play increasingly prominent roles in its cultural and religious expression. To begin with, art fulfills the traditional need for “Hiddur Mitzvah (the artistic work which is done to adorn religious objects and actions).” In addition to artistic expression that will stimulate worship, many suburban congregations desire an environment appropriately indicative of the social status of the congregants. Then, too, artistic works such as sculpture and the embellishment of the synagogue doors enable congregations to identify with and to announce themselves to the surrounding community. Art can also express “communal pride and personal identification with the synagogue,” particularly when it captures the values and spirit of a congregation. Many lay leaders believe art should form part of the educational program and become, for example, a meaningful activity that children learn from. Still others “seek an art which is relevant, which increases consciousness of belonging, spiritual awareness, [and] an historical understanding of the group.” Thus art comes into the mid-twentieth century Modern synagogue as an activity directed toward increasing

<sup>82</sup> Thiry, *Churches and Temples*, 341.

<sup>83</sup> Kampf, *Contemporary Synagogue Art*, 30.

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communality, assisting the traditional requirements of the worship service, creating a stimulating and inviting environment, and incorporating new cultural activities into the increasing complex program it sponsors.<sup>84</sup>

Modern art has struck a resonant chord for many mid-century suburban congregations in the United States. Its sources of appeal are varied. For some congregants who uphold the prohibition of the Second Commandment, abstract art is more palatable than traditions of classical representation. As the dominant art form at the time, modern art placed “the synagogue within the main stream of modern life.” In its various manifestations, modern art is capable of communicating important truths and inward states of mind with great effectiveness. Suburban synagogues possess examples of contemporary art that express a range of themes from traditional biblical symbols, such as the burning bush, the revelation on Mt. Sinai, and the menorah, to ideas of spirituality and mystery, democratic ideals of social justice, and the Jewish peoples’ struggle for acceptance.<sup>85</sup> Works of art manifest on the exteriors of buildings—as sculpture, mosaics, murals, pylons, or inscriptions; in vestibules—where they help prepare worshippers for the more spiritual mood of the prayer hall; in worship spaces—especially adorning ritual objects, such as the Ark, the Torah, the Eternal Light, Menorahs, and stained glass; and in galleries, museums, memorial walls, educational spaces, and sometimes social halls.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps the quintessential example of the integration of art and architecture in a mid-century synagogue is Percival Goodman’s Congregation B’nai Israel in Millburn, New Jersey (1951). There Goodman selected three struggling abstract artists to enhance a modest synagogue he had designed in the outer suburbs of New York City. Among the striking results were Herbert Ferber’s dramatic sculpture of the Burning Bush on the exterior façade, Robert Motherwell’s semi-abstract decorative mural in the vestibule, and Adolph Gottlieb’s Torah curtain in velvet appliqué.<sup>87</sup> A similar quality of the integration of art and architecture seen in B’nai Israel is achieved in different ways in Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Chizuk Amuno, Beth El, and Temple Oheb Shalom in suburban Baltimore.

**History of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation** (Jan Bernhardt Schein’s *On Three Pillars: The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996* provided most of the historical information about the congregation)

Chizuk Amuno Congregation is the oldest Conservative congregation in Baltimore, and one of the oldest in the nation. The congregation was formed by a group of members of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation who were displeased with the reforms being introduced into their religious practices. This group of traditional German Jews, led by Jonal Friedenwald, resigned from Baltimore Hebrew Congregation in December 1870 and January 1871. Their first meeting space was in the Exeter Hall at 2 North Exeter Street in a two-story building. The first floor functioned as their Bet Hamidrash (House of Study), while the second floor was used as the Bet Tfiloh (House of Worship). The founders chose to call themselves the Hebrew Chizuk Amuno Congregation, or “Strengthening of the Faith.” From the

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 88, 125, 140-173.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 75-86.

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earliest years of the congregation, the Chizuk Amuno religious school admitted both boys and girls, although they were separated for translation classes. In the first ten years, Chizuk Amuno's membership settled around forty and a strong sense of community emerged within the congregation. In 1876, Chizuk Amuno hired a new rabbi, Henry W. Schneeberger, the first American-born Jew of any denomination to be trained as a rabbi.<sup>88</sup>

### Lloyd Street Synagogue

The first building constructed by Chizuk Amuno was located at 27 Lloyd Street, just a few blocks away from the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation's facility. In November 1871, as membership was growing steadily, the congregation appointed a committee to find a site to construct a synagogue. The site options were limited to locations within walking distance of the members' homes. Although a few congregation members had moved closer to Charles Street, most still lived in East Baltimore. On October 3, 1875 the committee reported the purchase of the 48' wide and 90' deep lot on Lloyd Street near Lombard Street. The new facility was used from its dedication in 1875 until 1895.

Henry Berge, who was a non-Jewish immigrant from Bavaria and an amateur architect and marble cutter, prepared the plans for the new synagogue free of charge. The total cost for construction was \$19,810. Due to the strict worship rituals of the Orthodox Chizuk Amuno congregation, members were required to live within walking distance of the synagogue building. The building was eclectic in style and was comprised of Gothic, Romanesque, and Moorish elements. A description of the Lloyd Street synagogue was published in an August 1876 edition of the *Baltimore American & Commercial Advertiser*:

The synagogue building makes an imposing appearance, being built of brick, trimmed with Indiana stone and granite. After entering the front door, there is a vestibule thirteen feet wide with a wide stairway on either side. The first, or ground floor, contains the Beth Hamidrash and several classrooms and meeting rooms for the Board of Directors and the members of the congregation. The second floor is the synagogue proper and has a seating capacity for 425 persons. The gallery for the females runs the entire length of the synagogue and at the lower end are two rows of seats for the accommodation of a male choir. The walls and ceiling are frescoed in a plain but very tasty manner, and a circular window of stained glass is situated on either side of the Ark, which is of wood, painted white and ornamented with gold and beautiful carved work. The Ark is surmounted by marble Tablets of an ashy color and the Ten Commandments are inscribed on them in letters of gold.<sup>89</sup>

Chizuk Amuno's Lloyd Street synagogue was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

<sup>88</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 40.

<sup>89</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*: 40.

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In 1895, the Chizuk Amuno congregation relocated to a new synagogue at McCulloh & Mosher Streets, into a facility that would serve for the next twenty-six years. As new Eastern European immigrants poured into East Baltimore, many of the German Jews began to move uptown. Because of the strict Shabbat service at Chizuk Amuno, most of their congregation members remained in East Baltimore, close to the synagogue building on Lloyd Street. As a result of its location in East Baltimore and strict adherence to Orthodox rituals, the congregation was attractive to new Eastern European Jewish immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1885, M.S. Levy, a prominent and highly active member, moved away from East Baltimore to the uptown area popular among other German Jews. By 1889, approximately thirty percent of Chizuk Amuno members lived over a mile or more away from the Lloyd Street synagogue. In 1893, Levy submitted a motion to sell the Lloyd Street building and relocate the congregation uptown. In that same year, he reported that a site to build a new synagogue was available on McCulloh Street near Mosher Street for \$9,000. The final decision to relocate was made by the congregation at a January 1895 meeting. Within one month, the Lloyd Street Synagogue was sold to the Congregation B'nai Israel of Baltimore City for \$12,000. The transfer was set to take place in September of that same year. A May 1895 issue of the *American Israelite* included a description of the new building:

The temple will front fifty feet on McCulloh Street, and have a depth of 104 feet on Mosher Street, running back to an alley. The main entrance will be on McCulloh Street, and will be reached by seven steps leading through a colonnade. There will be three doors at the front, over which will be a massive arch. Two massive pillars will stand between the doors. The roof will be four-sided and will be surmounted by a cupola. The basement will contain three classrooms, 18x27 each, which will have a separate entrance on Mosher Street, with a corridor leading to the other rooms in the basement, among which there will be a library, coat and toilet-rooms. A stairway from the minor sanctuary will lead to the main floor above. The main auditorium will have a total seating capacity of 750, and it will be accessible from the rear as well as the front. Along the main entrance, will be a choir gallery, 22x12 feet. The entrance to the auditorium will be from a large vestibule, in which will also be stairways leading to the galleries. The pulpit platform, reading desk and shrine will be at the end of the auditorium, opposite McCulloh Street, and their arrangement will follow closely the orthodox traditions. The shrine is made the central feature of this end, occupying the entire breadth of the recess and extending almost to the ceiling. It will be elaborately carved and ornamented. On each side of the shrine will be small rooms, each 10x10 feet – one to be used as a study and the other as a reading-room. The ceiling of the auditorium will be divided into deeply-recessed panels with enriched members. There will be two aisles five feet wide, and three rows of pews. The middle row will be double and fifteen feet in length, and the side rows ten feet long. The building will be heated with steam, and lighted by

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both gas and electricity. The exterior will be of North Carolina granite and a granite cornice will extend around the entire building.<sup>90</sup>

As the McCulloh Street building was nearing completion, congregation members began to move closer to the other wealthy German Jewish families.<sup>91</sup> The congregation had moved the McCulloh Street synagogue in 1895, and by the next year over one-third of the members had relocated to northwest Baltimore. By 1900, 82 percent of the members lived in the northwest area of the city, and only six percent of the members remained over a mile away from the new building. Chizuk Amuno established a Hebrew School at the new site, but continued to hold religious classes at the Lloyd Street site as well. As an Orthodox congregation, Chizuk Amuno built its new synagogues following trends in uptown Jewish migration by other non-Orthodox residents and synagogues. The construction of the new synagogue for Chizuk Amuno was key to Orthodox Jewish migration.

After the move, nearly one-hundred new members joined Chizuk Amuno within ten years. After the congregation moved to its uptown location, there were four synagogues within just a few blocks of each other: Chizuk Amuno, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Oheb Shalom, and Har Sinai. The majority of the members of all four congregations lived on six main streets: Eutaw Place, Madison Avenue, Linden Avenue, McCulloh Street, Bolton Street, and Druid Hill Avenue.

Rabbi Eugene Kohn was the second American-born rabbi at Chizuk Amuno. A graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary, he served the congregation from 1912 to 1918. Membership in Chizuk Amuno continued to flourish between 1913 and 1923. By this time, many Eastern European immigrants had achieved financial stability, had moved out of East Baltimore, and were attracted to Chizuk Amuno's adherence to Orthodox worship practices.

### Eutaw Place Synagogue

Chizuk Amuno's third synagogue, located on Eutaw Place, was dedicated in 1922. By 1920, the Hebrew school had expanded to a point that it became necessary to consider another relocation. The congregation purchased a lot at the northwest corner of Eutaw Place and Chauncey Avenue. The property had 106-foot frontage on Eutaw Place and a depth of 150 feet. The plans included the construction of a new synagogue and school facility. Ground was broken for the new building in October 1920. By this point, Chizuk Amuno "had been swept up in the national movement to recast synagogue buildings as multi-purpose synagogue-centers, rather than only as places of worship."<sup>92</sup> Due

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 95-96.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 97.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 138.

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to a drop in attendance and a concern over the loss of a sense of Judaism among younger members, "the synagogue would be a gathering place and unifying factor for its constituents."<sup>93</sup>

The original plans for the facility, designed by noted Baltimore architect Joseph Sperry (non-Jewish), included a main sanctuary and a school building. Due to cost constraints, this scheme was not possible and the classrooms were subsequently integrated into a single synagogue center. Since they did not construct two buildings, the congregation sold off half of the property. Even with the downsizing, the final cost for the facility (\$800,000) exceeded original estimates by \$400,000. The cornerstone laying ceremony was held in June 1921. The new building by Sperry was designed in the then-popular combination of Romanesque and Byzantine styles with its exterior composed of Maryland granite. The main sanctuary, including the balcony, seated 1,500 worshippers in individual seats. The sanctuary was also outfitted with state-of-the-art acoustical features. In the downstairs of the complex there were vestry rooms that doubled as assembly halls, a Bet Hamidrash, classrooms, a boardroom, and offices. The synagogue was located one block from Druid Hill Park, the second largest municipal park in the United States at the time. A 1922 issue of *Jewish Times* described the Eutaw Place building as "the most elaborate Orthodox synagogue in the United States."<sup>94</sup>

In 1920, Chizuk Amuno hired a new rabbi, Adolph Coblenz. He received his ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary and became the first foreign-born rabbi at Chizuk Amuno. He was also their first rabbi who was not of German ancestry. The congregation experienced little growth in membership during the 1920s, although there was a continual surge in attendance at the Hebrew School. In May 1924, the congregation voted to place a deposit on a lot at Linden and Chauncey Avenues for a new school.

In 1943, the congregation made a formal announcement of the need to build a new "School Center." Five years later, Chizuk Amuno hired Israel Goldman, a nationally known rabbi among the Conservative Jewish community. In 1949, the National Jewish Welfare Board commissioned a study of demographic information about the Baltimore Jewish community. Dr. Thureber Fales reported the results to Rabbi Goldman, and assessed that "the area will remain for the next ten to fifteen years socially and economically very much as it has during the last twenty years."<sup>95</sup> That same year, Joseph Weinstein also conducted a survey of the Chizuk Amuno congregation, 357 affiliated families and 525 children. Of the families with children, 203 lived on Eutaw Place and 154 lived in Upper Park Heights and Forest Park, but thirty percent of school age children were not enrolled in the congregation's schools or activities. Based on this survey, the congregation decided against relocation and settled on building a new school center close to the Eutaw Place synagogue. In 1941, the congregation had purchased a property on Eutaw Place and Whitelock Street and had been maintaining it as rental apartments. Due to

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 151.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 231.

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the growth in school attendance and the need for additional classroom space, the building was remodeled, as tenants moved out, to provide educational facilities. The new school building was dedicated in March 1949 and was referred to as the "Chizuk Amuno Annex Building."

Youth activities continued to grow in popularity and in June 1950, the board of the congregation approved a two-step program to provide additional space. First, the second floor of the School Center was to be remodeled; second, a committee was appointed to find and purchase land in the suburbs for future growth. The School Center was completely remodeled in 1951. In that same year, the main sanctuary of the Eutaw Place building was remodeled and the vestry of the synagogue was enlarged and redecorated. Throughout the 1950s Rabbi Goldman continued to encourage the expansion of youth programs held at the synagogue including girl, cub, and boy scouts, drama, orchestra, dance, camera, art, crafts, and athletic teams. All of these additional activities were part of a strategy to increase synagogue attendance, and "for Rabbi Goldman, synagogue attendance was a means for members to strengthen their sense of a Jewish community."<sup>96</sup>

In 1952, the board announced that they would be holding additional holiday services in the Pikesville Armory on Reistertown Road. During the September 1952 High Holidays, worship services were held in four locations: (1) the main sanctuary on Eutaw Place, (2) the Macht Assembly Hall, (3) the Pikesville Armory, and (4) the School Center on Eutaw Place and Whitelock Streets. This represented a shift towards suburban expansion, and "shortly after the announcement of plans for the suburban service, the board completed negotiations to open a suburban branch of their Hebrew and Sunday schools."<sup>97</sup>

### *History of the Commission and Project*

During the fifteen to twenty years prior to relocating in 1962, about 800 to 900 of Chizuk Amuno's members had relocated to the northwest suburbs. The suburban synagogue complex was thus the fourth building in the history of the congregation that followed the movement of the members outward from neighborhood to neighborhood. The new facility also served the growing membership base, which had more than doubled since the early 1950s.

In 1952, Bernard Manekin and Leonard Stulman, co-chairmen of the Planning and Location Committee, were beginning to search for suburban land for a new synagogue. In June 1952, they looked at two tracts of land on Stevenson Road. The first was seventy acres, at a cost of \$3,000 per acre, and the second was forty-two acres, at \$4,500 per acre. A \$5,000 deposit was placed on the larger piece of land in October of that same year. The property was located on the west side of Stevenson Road, north of Old Court Road. Although the purchase was complete, the committee continued to estimate that development was ten to twenty years away.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 242.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 250.

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Because their members continued to move, the Planning Committee launched a national search for an architect for the new Stevenson Road complex in 1953. Over a dozen prominent architects were interviewed for the commission. Leonard Stulman, chairman of the committee, announced that Daniel 'Duke' Schwartzman of New York City would be granted the contract.<sup>98</sup>

Schwartzman was a former student at the Chizuk Amuno religious school and had become a bar mitzvah at the McCulloh Street synagogue.

Throughout the entire planning process, Rabbi Israel Goldman was very involved in the design. He had traveled extensively and often made notes on landscaping, sculpture, interior design and architecture. Goldman had also studied Modern architecture – especially its application to public buildings and schools – and “wanted Chizuk Amuno to reflect twentieth century culture, just as historic synagogues had mirrored the Romanesque and Byzantine eras.”<sup>99</sup> He wanted all three aspects of the new facility – sanctuary, schoolrooms, and meeting areas – to have equally prominent designs. In preparation for the new synagogue complex, Rabbi Goldman wrote the following notes expressing his desires<sup>100</sup>:

1. The buildings to be arranged so as to give the effect of a campus and to have organic unity throughout
2. The most imposing and the tallest building should be the Synagogue Building. It should face in an easterly direction...and should have a modern tower of pylon, at the top of which should be a large and magnificent Menorah which would be illuminated for special occasions. In this way the Synagogue will serve as a landmark and focal point for the entire countryside.
3. The buildings should be so arranged as to make possible a series of gardens, courtyards, terraces, walks, and outdoor playground areas.
4. The main garden shall be designated as THE HEBREW CULTURE GARDEN. It might be laid out in the form of a Mogen David. It should incorporate a Bible Garden which would have in it Bible trees, plants and flowers imported from Israel if necessary.
5. We will have an expandable sanctuary...in its largest form accommodates 2000 worshippers. Classroom wings on each side of the sanctuary should add 1000 seats. The sanctuary should not look like an auditorium or a theatre. It must have majesty, mystery, reverence and

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 253.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 255.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 254-255.

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simplicity. The front of the sanctuary should not be a stage. It should be an elevated area consisting of steps leading from the floor of the sanctuary and composed of several levels. Such an elevation at the front of the sanctuary expresses the democracy of Judaism by means of which each worshipper can have access to the Holy of Holies.

6. The social hall should be separate from the Synagogue and not to be sued as part of the expandable sanctuary. It should have a luxury appearance.
7. Use Israeli building materials wherever possible.

As land was plentiful, Schwartzman was not confined with space restrictions. This allowed him to design freely the entire congregation complex including the social center, sanctuary, and other buildings on the property. Since space was not an issue, his major challenge was to “synthesize space and meaning into a physical structure that expressed the spirit of Chizuk Amuno congregation.”<sup>101</sup> Because Rabbi Goldman saw in natural daylight and gardens symbols of freedom, the design incorporates a central courtyard/garden. The covered walkways that were designed to connect the different parts of the complex were meant to convey a sense of serenity and allow natural light to penetrate the interior of the building. Part of Schwartzman’s intent in designing the suburban campus for Chizuk Amuno was to “make the center harmonious with the rolling Maryland countryside.”<sup>102</sup>

Throughout the planning process, Schwartzman presented the congregation with his sketches and plans. The first architectural drawings that were formally presented in 1954 were additionally illustrated on the cover of a September 1954 issue of *Jewish Times*, a Baltimore publication. These earliest drawings closely reflected Rabbi Goldman’s ideas. On June 15, 1955 the final model was unveiled at a reception at the Lord Baltimore Hotel in downtown Baltimore.<sup>103</sup> A review of the facility in the June 16, 1955 edition of the *Baltimore Sun* depicted the suburban complex as “contemporary in style, though incorporating traditional Hebrew symbols.”<sup>104</sup> An additional review in the April 15, 1957 edition of the *Baltimore Sun* described the synagogue’s “contemporary design and spaciousness” as giving the structure “a touch of the spectacular.”<sup>105</sup>

The construction of the new complex was originally planned in five stages for financial reasons. The first phase was to include the social and educational center, followed by the main sanctuary, then the chapel and library, the administrative wing, and finally the educational building. In the end, the congregation would be capable of

<sup>101</sup> Nancy J. Ordway, *A History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation: An American Synagogue* (Masters Thesis, Baltimore Hebrew University, 1997), 243.

<sup>102</sup> Frank Henry, “Synagogue Follows the People: Chizuk Amuno Dedicating Four-Building Complex,” *Baltimore Sun*, April 1, 1962.

<sup>103</sup> Jan Bernhardt Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 255.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, 255.

<sup>105</sup> Jack Lewis, “Rites Set Today by Chizuk Amuno,” *Baltimore Sun*, April 15, 1957.

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completing Schwartzman's design in only three phases.<sup>106</sup> A \$2 million building campaign was launched by Albert Esterson, the Finance Committee chairman, using the motto "Build Now for Generations to Come." In 1956, the State Roads Commission approached the Board about eighteen acres of Chizuk Amuno property that was needed to complete construction of Interstate 695, the Baltimore Beltway. The settlement with the Commission was not resolved until 1960.

### *Phase One: Social and Educational Center (1957-1958)*

The first building erected was the two-story social and educational center, now known as the Krieger Auditorium. The groundbreaking ceremony was held in October 1956. Almost a year later, in September 1957, the congregation laid the cornerstone at the new facility. The entrance to the building was on the south side, near the eastern edge. Congregation members entered the space from the south and progressed into an entry foyer that included a gallery/balcony space on the second level. A \$1,000,000 contract for the construction of the first phase was awarded to Baltimore Contractors, Inc. This first phase of construction was completed in the spring of 1958.

For the exterior of the structure, Schwartzman chose to use Maryland fieldstone, with royal blue and turquoise Italian mosaic trim. The curved roofline of the social hall peaked at twenty-eight feet and included a full glass wall on the eastern side. The main auditorium room seated up to 1,000 people. The room had two levels, with the sides and rear two steps above the main floor. This central, sunken area was separated from the raised portion with raised mahogany flower boxes. In addition, along the west wall there is a raised stage. At the main entrance to the social hall was a mezuzah that had been used on the doorway of the Palestine Pavilion. Daniel Schwartzman commented that the auditorium was designed "in accordance with the most advanced principles of acoustical engineering, with the sound distribution from the stage by means of low level ceiling diffusers and acoustical treatment of the ceiling, as well as the sound absorbing drapery at the back wall."<sup>107</sup>

The social and educational center, at the time commonly referred to as the "Center Building," opened for 800 students in March 1958. By that fall, early childhood education programs were being offered at the new complex. The main auditorium was originally used by Chizuk Amuno's auxiliary organizations for various receptions and gatherings and today is still used for these purposes as well as for additional High Holiday services. Below the social hall was space for the Sisterhood and Brotherhood rooms. Above the social hall, on the second level, there were seven classrooms used for Hebrew school. In addition, the second floor included a small apartment at the northwest corner. The apartment was fully equipped with a kitchen and bathroom and was constructed to house an on-site caretaker. At the time of construction, there was not a great deal of housing in the surrounding area, and such arrangements were dictated by the congregation.

<sup>106</sup> Jan Bernhardt Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 256.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, 262.

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### *Phase Two: Sanctuary (1962)*

By the spring of 1960 enough money had been raised and the Board approved the beginning of the next phase of construction. This entailed the building of the sanctuary, one of the largest in the country at the time, with 1,300 seats on the main floor and an additional 500 in the two balconies. E. Eyring and Sons were hired as the general contractors for the project. The groundbreaking ceremony was held in November 1960, with the laying of the cornerstone in September 1961 (the construction team experienced early delays due to a severe winter and a rainy spring). The sanctuary building was officially dedicated on April 1, 1962 and cost a total of \$2,500,000.<sup>108</sup>

The sanctuary was constructed directly across, to the east, of the social hall. What had previously been the eastern exterior stone wall after the 1958 construction became the interior western wall of the sanctuary. The fieldstone wall was left exposed in the sanctuary space and the lower portions of the ten glass panels on the wall were converted to four sets of mahogany doors. The interior of the sanctuary featured natural mahogany woodwork and Israeli marble and was completely air-conditioned. The seat layout was designed to face east – towards Jerusalem – with individual seats rather than pews. Two balconies, on the north and south sides of the sanctuary, provided additional seating. The Memorial Wall for the congregation was installed on the western wall of the space. The unique shape of the gently curving roof, which sloped up to forty feet and down to twenty feet in a wave-shaped pattern, was supported with 200 steel beams and two girders. The exterior of the new sanctuary was comprised of Maryland fieldstone and blue Italian glass mosaics – maintaining the same character as was utilized for the Social Center.

The sanctuary's bema was located on the eastern side on a raised platform. On the back wall of the bema there are two large mahogany panels that flank the central wall made of Israeli marble. In the center is a 15'x24' hand-woven Puerto Rican tapestry that encases the Ark. The 300 pound tapestry was designed by artist Samuel Weiner, Jr. On each of the two mahogany panels rests a seven foot bronze sculpture. The sculpture on the right panel is the Hanukkah menorah, which is set on a track so that it can be raised and lowered. In addition, this sculpture includes working candlelights that are turned on during the holiday season. The two mahogany podiums on the bema – one for the Rabbi and one for the Cantor – are original to the sanctuary. Included in the design of the podiums was "a state-of-the-art communication system...that enabled [the rabbi] to call for an usher, or signal the cantor to slow down or speed up."<sup>109</sup>

The original entry foyer became a hallway/gallery space when this phase of construction was complete. This space was renovated in 2000 and the gallery/balcony space above was under renovation in the spring of 2003 and will eventually house a visual display of a timeline of Jewish history.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 269.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

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The design of the sanctuary space incorporated a number of features that held Jewish symbolism. Worshippers entered the space through a wall with ten windows, which represented the Ten Commandments. The three memorial niches in the rear of the sanctuary contain stones from Palestinian synagogues of the second and third centuries as well as stones from more recent famous European synagogues. The front of the space has three ascending levels to the Ark of the Covenant. In 1961, the *Baltimore Evening Sun* described the symbolism as “deeply rooted in Jewish tradition”:

The glass screen wall in the rear had ten panels symbolizing the Decalog. Similarly, the front has three elevations leading to the Ark and there are ten steps by which the Holy Ark is reached. This conveys that the pathway to God is an experience of ascension. The nine windows on each side commemorate the nine major and minor festivals of the Jewish religious year.<sup>110</sup>

Throughout the 1960s, Chizuk Amuno continued to use and operate the Eutaw Place synagogue. It functioned as a satellite branch of the congregation and had its own budget and governing board. The new complex on Stevenson Road was designed for 1,200 families, but by April of 1963, membership had only grown to 840 families. As a result, the congregation launched a membership campaign.

### *Phase Three: Administrative and Educational Building (1967)*

Overcrowding in the school portion of the Stevenson Road facility began to be a problem as early as 1960. At the beginning of that school year, four mobile classrooms were placed behind the school for overflow space. By 1965/1966 a building campaign was initiated to raise money for the third phase of construction that would provide administrative space as well as additional educational facilities. The construction contract was once again awarded to E. Eyring and Sons, Co. and the groundbreaking ceremony was held in March 1967. The L-shaped addition was completed later that year. The final cost of the phase three building project reached \$1,175,000 and represented the fulfillment of Schwartzman’s design. At the end of phase three, the Chizuk Amuno complex had reached a total of 88,908 square feet. At the time of the dedication of the third building the congregation had expanded to 972 families – 838 with seats at Stevenson Road and 134 at Eutaw Place.

The new building was constructed to the south of the existing social center and sanctuary buildings. The Garden Lounge, named for the garden visible through the glass walls of the hallway, connected the new school/administrative wing with the existing buildings. Halfway down the lounge, a 150-seat chapel was built. The chapel included two sets of stained glass windows and a tapestry by artist Samuel Weiner, Jr. In Schwartzman’s original design, the chapel was located at the southern end of the corridor on the east side (where the school auditorium was constructed). The construction of the chapel along the Garden Lounge was the only substantial variation from the original concept. Approximately half way along the passageway, on the eastern wall, a formal entrance to the complex was installed. The entrance was originally flush with the interior

<sup>110</sup> John D. Hackett, “Chizuk Amuno Temple Sanctuary Front Rising,” *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 19, 1961.

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corridor, but was shifted outward to the east in the 1990s to allow for the creation of an entrance foyer and covered drop-off space. At the southern end of the hallway a new entrance was constructed that facilitated easy entrance to the building from the southern parking lot.

The garden in the central courtyard was referred to as the Biblical Garden and was planted with plants and shrubs mentioned in the Bible. These included acacia, almond, fig, broom, and cedar of Lebanon, but few have survived. Rabbi Goldman originally wanted a reflecting pool with a menorah tower to be placed in the Biblical Garden. This idea was later eliminated in the design.

The east-west administrative and school wing was two-stories in height, with the administrative uses mainly on the ground floor and educational spaces on the upper level. The first floor of the building was designed to house the congregation's pre-school department, youth center and administrative offices. The second floor had ten classrooms, a library, and the teacher's lounge. The lower level corridor has been renovated and now includes both new and original fixtures, new carpet and lighting, and offices – some of which have been renovated and reconfigured. All of the windows, though, are original. The current uses along the first level include the administrative offices (including the reception area), the Rabbi's and assistant Rabbi's offices, development office, accounting office, communications department, a board room, library, and adult education office.

At the east end of the building a school auditorium for 200 people including a stage and a full kitchen was constructed. This space was renovated in 2000 and included alterations to make the area compliant with the American Disabilities Act by compressing the short staircase leading to the auditorium and installing an elevator. In addition, the original stage was removed and the space was separated in two with a removable wall. In the basement below the auditorium, two rooms for youth group meetings, services, and social/lounge space were constructed.

### Additions to the Synagogue Complex

After the completion of Daniel Schwartzman's design for a suburban campus, additional alterations reflected a growing education program and the creation of a day school at Chizuk Amuno. The idea of starting a day school had been mentioned as early as April 1957. In 1968 members of Beth El, Beth Tfiloh, and Chizuk Amuno met regarding the idea of starting an inter-congregational day school and recommended that "one Hebrew Day School be formed through joint sponsorship."<sup>111</sup> In 1973 two innovative educational programs began at Chizuk Amuno. The first was the Parent Education Program, which "sought to effect a positive change in the Jewish lifestyle of the family through greater observance of and involvement in Jewish living."<sup>112</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 300-301.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, 319.

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The second program was the creation of a Hillel High School of Jewish Studies that “provided a structured educational experience for teenagers without placing unreasonable demands on their time.”<sup>113</sup>

By 1974, the maintenance and continual operation of the Eutaw Place synagogue had become too financially burdensome. As of December 31, 1974, the congregation members wishing to remain at Eutaw Place became members of a newly formed synagogue, Beth Am.

Rabbi Joel Zaiman took over at Chizuk Amuno in 1980. In January 1981, he held a meeting with the Board’s Executive Committee to go over his ideas for a Hebrew Day School at Chizuk Amuno. The day school opened in September 1981 and utilized all of the existing classroom spaces. A Space Utilization Committee was formed in 1982 to “forecast the needs of not only the Solomon Schechter Day School, but also those of the afternoon Religious School and Early Childhood Education Center.”<sup>114</sup> They concluded that the congregation would soon need to expand their educational campus.

A contract was signed in 1986 with NSC Construction, Inc. to build over 40,000 square feet of additional educational space to the west of the original complex. A cornerstone ceremony was held in May 1986, but the building would not be completed until 1988. The new building represented the beginning of contemporary additions to the complex that were not included in the original program. The building housed administrative offices for the school, a health suite, computer laboratory, two-story library, and specially designed rooms for science, music, and art. To the rear of the new building was a one-story wing with twelve classrooms for the pre-school. At the northern end of this wing, the Stulman Auditorium was constructed, which functioned as both the school cafeteria and additional space for services. Protruding to the west from the southern end of the building was the school gymnasium. The gymnasium’s north wall was lined with large glass block windows. At the end of phase four, the complex totaled 161,654 square feet. Also during this construction, the older classrooms above the administrative wing (phase three) were renovated with new electrical fixtures, new carpeting, and upgraded air conditioning systems.

By 1993, the early education programs had expanded to a point that additional space was necessary. An addition to the 1988 education building was constructed that included a second story addition to the preschool wing and a new kindergarten wing. The second level on the preschool wing provided additional classrooms for the day school as well as religious and middle school offices. The kindergarten wing was located just south of the gymnasium and was a one-story addition with four classrooms. After the 1993 construction, the complex had expanded to 167,892 square feet.

The most recent addition to the Chizuk Amuno complex was completed in 1997. This project included the expansion of the kindergarten wing with three additional classrooms built on the south side and a multi-purpose room on the north side. With these 1997 additions, the Stevenson Road campus stands at 173,267 square feet.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 320.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, 360.

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The only major change to the exterior of the building was the replacement of the original Italian Venetian glass mosaics with blue faux tile panels. The original mosaics became increasingly costly to repair and the panels now in place were created from digital reproductions of the original pattern of the glass.

### *Rabbi Israel Max Goldman*

Rabbi Israel Goldman served at Chizuk Amuno from 1948-1976. He was born in Purim in the Polish town of Prushnitz, not far from Warsaw. He moved to the United States in 1910 and settled in New York City. He earned his master's degree in Philosophy from Columbia University and was ordained in 1926. In 1927 he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Hebrew Literature. Rabbi Goldman was the fourth rabbi at Chizuk Amuno and had already become nationally known among the Conservative Jewish community when he was hired. He retired in 1976 and was followed by Rabbi Maurice S. Corson (1976-1979), Rabbi Eliot P. Marrus (1979-1980) and Rabbi Joel H. Zaiman (1980-present). Rabbi Goldman's influence on Daniel Schwartzman's design of the suburban synagogue campus is certain. He had studied Modern architecture, landscapes, and interior design and thought that new synagogue complexes should reflect the architecture of the time. For him: "Many of the old synagogues of Europe were built like fortresses to protect our people from hostility and attack. Thank God here, in America, we can build in glass, for we build in freedom."<sup>115</sup> He was a firm believer that natural daylight and ample gardens were symbols of this freedom of worship for the Jewish people.

### *Daniel Schwartzman*

Daniel Schwartzman (1908-1977) was a notable Jewish architect who primarily designed shopping centers and retail facilities; the Chizuk Amuno synagogue complex is one of his only religious works. Although little known today, Schwartzman was held in high esteem by his peers and clients during his lifetime. For proof, the *Art Index Retrospective* provides no less than thirty references to articles on his work and professional activities. Schwartzman was born in Baltimore in 1908. As a boy, he attended Chizuk Amuno's Religious School and became a bar mitzvah at the McCulloh Street complex. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture in 1931, he spent two years in the Baltimore office of Buckler and Fenhagen. From 1933 to 1934, he studied at the Paris Ecole des Beaux Arts and traveled extensively throughout Europe. Schwartzman established an independent practice in New York City in 1935. During World War II, he headed the priority division of Kellex Corporation, engineers for the principal plants of the Manhattan District at Oak Ridge, Tennessee.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 255.

<sup>116</sup> *Progressive Architecture* 27 (June 1946), 18.

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Daniel Schwartzman earned an international reputation in the field of department store design, working for such high-profile companies as Macy's, Bamberger's, and Abraham & Straus.<sup>117</sup> He acted as a consultant for Rotterdam's De Bijenkorf Department Store, designed by Marcel Breuer and A. Elzas. In addition, one of his obituaries mentions consulting jobs in Canada, Puerto Rico, Europe (Spain, Belgium, England), and as far afield as Australia and Brazil.<sup>118</sup> In the United States, he collaborated with Abbott Merkt & Company of New York City on Hecht's department stores in Northwood, near Baltimore (c.1955)<sup>119</sup>, Marlow Heights (c.1961)<sup>120</sup>, and Reistertown Road Plaza, Baltimore (c.1963).<sup>121</sup>

Houses that Schwartzman designed for himself were also noticed in the professional press. His residence at Great Neck on Long Island won first prize in *House Beautiful's* Eleventh Annual Small House Competition in 1939.<sup>122</sup> His second Long Island home, at Sea Cliff, was "the principal focus of a *New York Times* photographic exhibit" at the Brussels World's Fair of 1958.<sup>123</sup> Schwartzman received a number of commissions for single-family homes and apartment buildings, mainly in New York City and Baltimore. These included the Blumenthal House on Anton Farm Road in Baltimore County, as well as the Samuel M. Hech house in Owings Mills, which was included on the Wellesley Club Tour of Modern Homes in 1956.<sup>124</sup> Through his retail and domestic projects, Schwartzman developed skills for manipulating materials for interior design, which is evident in his work at Chizuk Amuno.

Throughout his career, he was involved in both professional organizations and the academic field of architecture. He had teaching stints at the Pratt Institute School of Architecture, New York University's School of Retailing, and Rutgers University's Advanced School of Retail Management.<sup>125</sup>

Schwartzman earned FAIA status in 1960 and continued to be thoroughly involved in the AIA organization. In 1964, while Chairman of the AIA Commission on Professional Practice, he collaborated on an issue of the *AIA Journal* that discussed how to implement improvements in office guidelines and professional practice. His

<sup>117</sup> "Suburban Department Store. Abraham and Straus, Hempstead, L.I.," *Architectural Forum* 96 (May 1952), 127-132 (with Marcel Breuer and Copeland Peter and Associates) and "Store Design," *Architectural Record* 111 (July 1952), 149-178 (with Trask, Prescott & Richardson, Erie, Pennsylvania).

<sup>118</sup> "Netherlands Department Store Rebuilds," *Architectural Record* (May 1955), 206-207 and *Bauen und Wohnen* 12 (August 1958), 257-262.

<sup>119</sup> "Three-level parking and retailing, the Hecht Co. Store, Baltimore," *Architectural Record* 117 (May 1955), 208-210 and *Interiors* 114 (March 1955), 66-67 (Award of Merit, BAC, 1955).

<sup>120</sup> "Facilities for Retailing," *Architectural Record* (May 1961), 181-183.

<sup>121</sup> "New Branch for Baltimore Department Store," *Architectural Record* 133 (June 1963), 160-162.

<sup>122</sup> "House Beautiful's Eleventh Annual Small House Competition," *House Beautiful* 81 (February 1939): 37.

<sup>123</sup> Arthur C. Holden, "In Memory of Daniel Schwartzman," *American Institute of Architects Journal* 66, no. 7 (June 1977), 60 and "Eight Rooms with a View; House of Architect Schwartzman at Sea Cliff, L.I.," *Architectural Record* 123 (February 1958), 170-172.

<sup>124</sup> "Patios in Maryland: a Formal Entrance for a Formal House," *House and Home* 10 (August 1956), 134-35. The Wellesley Club Tour of Modern Homes in the greater Baltimore area was an important means for the dissemination of interest in modern architecture among well-educated upper-middle and upper class women during the 1950s and early 1960s.

<sup>125</sup> Arthur C. Holden, "In Memory of Daniel Schwartzman," *American Institute of Architects Journal* 66, no. 7 (June 1977): 60.

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involvement with the AIA also included serving as the Chairman of this organization's International Relations Committee, Vice President of its New York Chapter, national Treasurer from 1965 to 1967, and national Vice President from 1968-1969. In 1964, Schwartzman received the AIA's Edward C. Kemper award for significant contributions to the Institute and the profession.

Schwartzman also served as President of the Architectural League of New York, Trustee of the National Institute for Architectural Education, and an honorary member of the Institute of Architects of Brazil. In 1971, the New York Society of Architects awarded him its Sydney L. Strauss award. Exemplifying his international reputation was Schwartzman's membership on the Executive Committee of the International Union of Architects (UIA). For this organization, he served as its Vice President as well as their representative to the United Nations.<sup>126</sup>

Schwartzman never ceased to be concerned with Jewish culture and the role of Jewish architects. He was a Trustee on the Jewish Board of Guardians, the Chairman of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' architectural history advisory panel, and a member of the Guild for Religious Architecture.<sup>127</sup> In addition to the Chizuk Amuno congregation in Baltimore, he also designed the Congregation Brith Shalom (c.1959) in Easton, Pennsylvania.

When Schwartzman was commissioned for the Chizuk Amuno Congregation project, he was serving as the President of the Architectural League of New York and was a professor at both the Pratt Institute and New York University. He had also worked as a contributing editor for a new book, *The American Synagogue for Today and Tomorrow*. Although the property for the congregation was acquired in 1953, it took the Planning and Location Committee nearly a year to hire an architect.<sup>128</sup> Schwartzman was selected after the committee interviewed a dozen of his colleagues. Playing in his favor was the fact that he had previously worked with the congregation to design the reconstruction of the Eutaw Place vestry, just three years prior to his selection as the architect for the new suburban campus.<sup>129</sup>

Artwork

Rabbi Goldman believed that the congregation could become aware of the harmony between God and man through art. He believed that "a religious center must be a place in which the esthetics of Judaism find a home."<sup>130</sup> Thus, he insisted that an art gallery be included in the design of the new complex and that this be "a place where the artists and the laity may express or resolve their thoughts on God and

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.<sup>127</sup> Ibid.<sup>128</sup> Nancy J. Ordway, *A History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation: An American Synagogue*, (Masters Thesis, Baltimore Hebrew University), 243.<sup>129</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 254.<sup>130</sup> Robert G. Green, "Chizuk Amuno has 'First' Art Gallery," source unknown, undated.

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man.”<sup>131</sup> In addition, well-known artists were commissioned to design various pieces, primarily for the sanctuary. Prior to installing the artwork in the sanctuary, all of the sculptural pieces and the tapestry were loaned to the Baltimore Museum of Art and were on display for one month.

### *Robert Cronbach (1908-2001)*

Robert Cronbach crafted the massive Burning Bush sculpture on the exterior of the Stevenson Road complex, as well as the candelabras that flank the Ark in the sanctuary and the Eternal Light. Cronbach was a former WPA artist who was trained at the St. Louis School of Fine Arts and the Philadelphia Academy. From 1936-1939 he worked for the New York Federal Arts Project and for a time as an assistant professor in the Art Department at Adelphi College in Garden City, New York. One of his best known works is his sculpture at the United Nations Headquarters. This was commissioned by the National Council for U.S. Art, Inc., whose aim was to “place work of contemporary painters and sculptors in the UN, so making it a center of cultural as well as political importance.” In addition, Cronbach won a commission from the Treasury Department Section of Fine Art in 1940 and his “work in collaboration with Harold Ambellan...on the Willerts Park Housing Project in Buffalo brought both artists into the national limelight as architectural sculptors.”

The most visible of Cronbach’s sculptures at Chizuk Amuno is the enormous Burning Bush that rests on the outside east wall of the sanctuary facing Stevenson Road. When it was installed in 1963, the 24-foot tall, 16-foot wide sculpture was considered the largest piece of outdoor sculpture in Baltimore. The piece is made of bronze and was hand hammered and oxidized in a green patina. Floodlights were installed on the ground to illuminate the sculpture at night. The inspiration for the sculpture comes from the description of the “burning bush which was not consumed” before which Moses stood (found in the Book of Exodus, third chapter). The lower portion of the piece symbolizes the flames rising heavenward.

Robert Cronbach also designed the two candelabras that flank the Ark inside the sanctuary. Both pieces were completed in burnished brass and bronze and are done in a contemporary style. One candelabra represents the Olive Tree Menorah, which symbolizes Zechariah’s dream in which olive trees on either side of the menorah supply it with oil. The second is the Chanukah Menorah and portrays the Lion of Judah. This piece is seven feet tall and weighs 180 pounds. These two candelabras were included in the exhibit held at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

Cronbach’s final piece at Chizuk Amuno is the Eternal Light, which hangs in front of the Ark. The polished and lacquered bronze piece is suspended from the sanctuary ceiling. The Eternal Light is a

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

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two-foot wide sculpture that symbolizes “the wings of the Cherubim surrounding and protecting the ever-burning flame.” This piece was also included in the exhibit at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

### Samuel Weiner, Jr.

Samuel Weiner, Jr. designed the tapestry that covers the doors of the Ark. The 15-foot wide by 24-foot tall tapestry weighs over 300 pounds. After Weiner completed the design, the tapestry was handmade at the V'Soske shops in Puerto Rico. Rabbi Goldman wanted the theme of the tapestry to be “the origin, contents and effects of the Torah.” Weiner described the symbolism in the design in this way: “The origin is represented by the mountain and the fire and smoke accompanying the revelation. The contents are represented by the tablets of law. The effects are represented by the Tree of Life on the two sides, which also suggests the two columns of the Temple of Solomon.”<sup>132</sup> Samuel Weiner is also responsible for the design of the tapestry that resides in the 1967 chapel. Weiner's other work includes an Ark curtain at the Congregation Achduth Vesholom in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

### **Art Gallery**

The art gallery housed in the Chizuk Amuno complex was the first art gallery ever incorporated into an American synagogue. The gallery is located between the lobby between the social center and the sanctuary. The display cases were recessed into the walls of the space and were designed to hold exhibits of religious objects on permanent loan from the Jewish Museum of New York City. Many of the objects on exhibit were also part of the congregation's collection of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century religious and ceremonial objects.

The first exhibit held at Chizuk Amuno opened in 1958, four years prior to the official dedication of the space. This exhibit was called *The Four Ages of Man and the Four Seasons of the Year*. It was lent to Chizuk Amuno from the Baltimore Museum of Art and was open for viewing at an open house in celebration of the completion of the social and educational center (the first building). The museum was officially dedicated in April 1962. Stephen Kayser, curator of New York's Jewish Museum, attended the ceremony and brought a number of items to be displayed in the museum's cases. Another early exhibit, *From the Easel to the People*, displayed approximately thirty paintings by contemporary Jewish painters working all over the world. These artists included David Holleman of Boston and Reubin Rubin, a Romanian who settled in Israel in 1921 and painted Israeli landscapes.

The art gallery has continued to play an important role at Chizuk Amuno. The lobby between the sanctuary and social hall remains a primary gathering place for the congregation. Because this is the

<sup>132</sup> Schein, *On Three Pillars*, 270.

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location of the gallery, the worshippers are constantly reminded of their Jewish heritage through the pieces of art. Recently, the congregation has taken on a renovation of the gallery space, including the renovation of the upper level balcony in the lobby to house additional displays illustrating a timeline of Jewish history.

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Schein, Jan Bernhardt. *On Three Pillars: The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996*. (Baltimore, Md: Chizuk Amuno Congregation, 2000).

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Thiry, Paul, Richard M. Bennett and Henry L. Kamphoefner. *Churches & Temples*. (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1953).

*Two Hundred Years of American Synagogue Architecture*. (Waltham, Massachusetts: The American Jewish Historical Society, 1976).

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### Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for the property is identical to that as defined on the tax map and parcel.

### Boundary Justification:

This boundary defines the historical property as well as the present day site of the congregation.

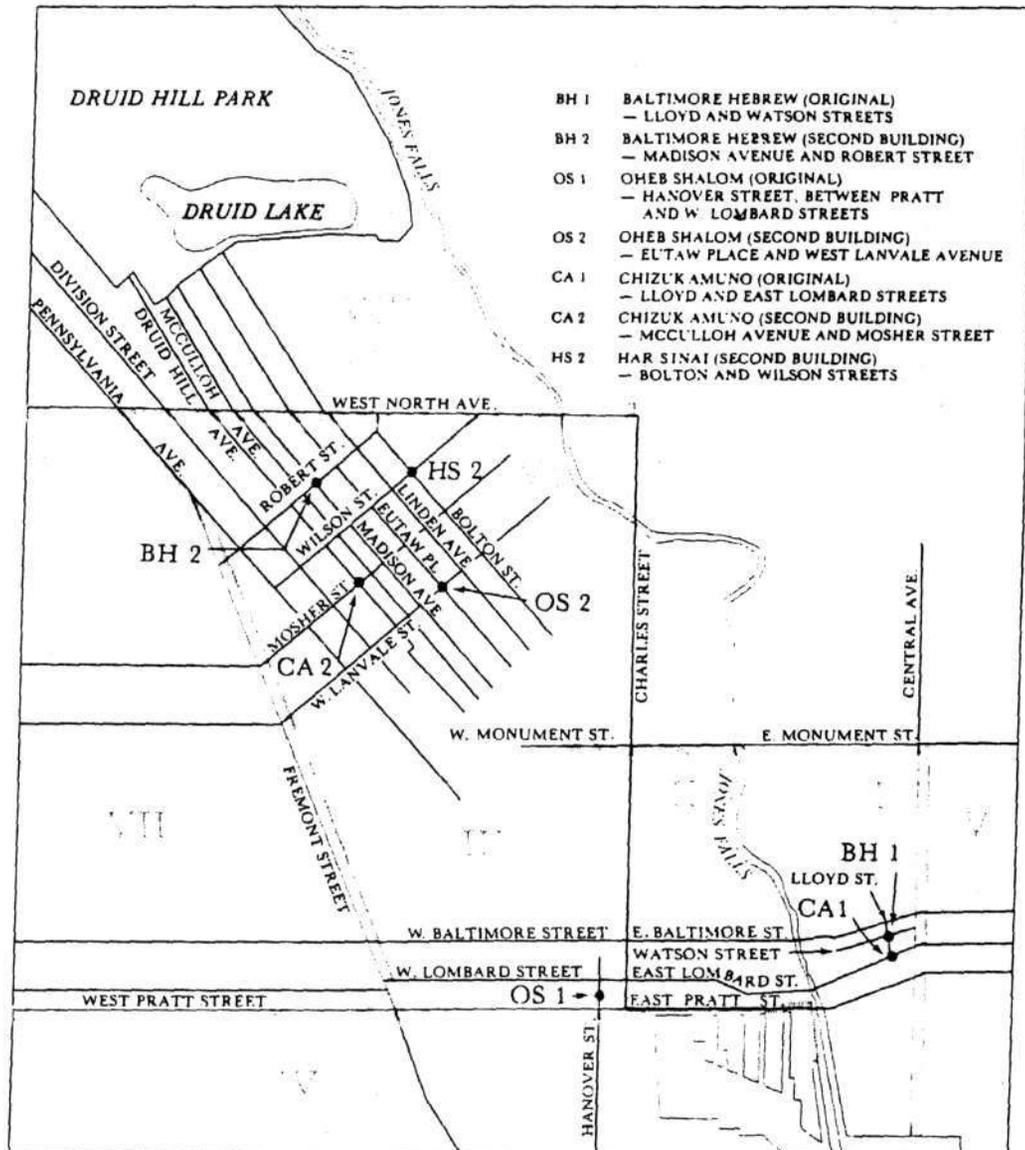


Plate 1

Chizuk Amuno

Map showing the location of Chizuk Amuno. Note its proximity to other synagogues and the early shift from East Baltimore to the northwest portion of the city.

Source: Rozenblit, Marsha L. "Choosing a Synagogue: The Social Composition of Two German Congregations in Nineteenth-Century Baltimore," in Jack Wertheimer, ed. *The American Synagogue*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, 331.

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Plate 2

Chizuk Amuno

Façade of the Lloyd Street Synagogue.

Source: Schein, Jan Bernhardt. *On Three Pillars: The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996*. Baltimore: Chizuk Amuno Congregation, 2000 (no page).

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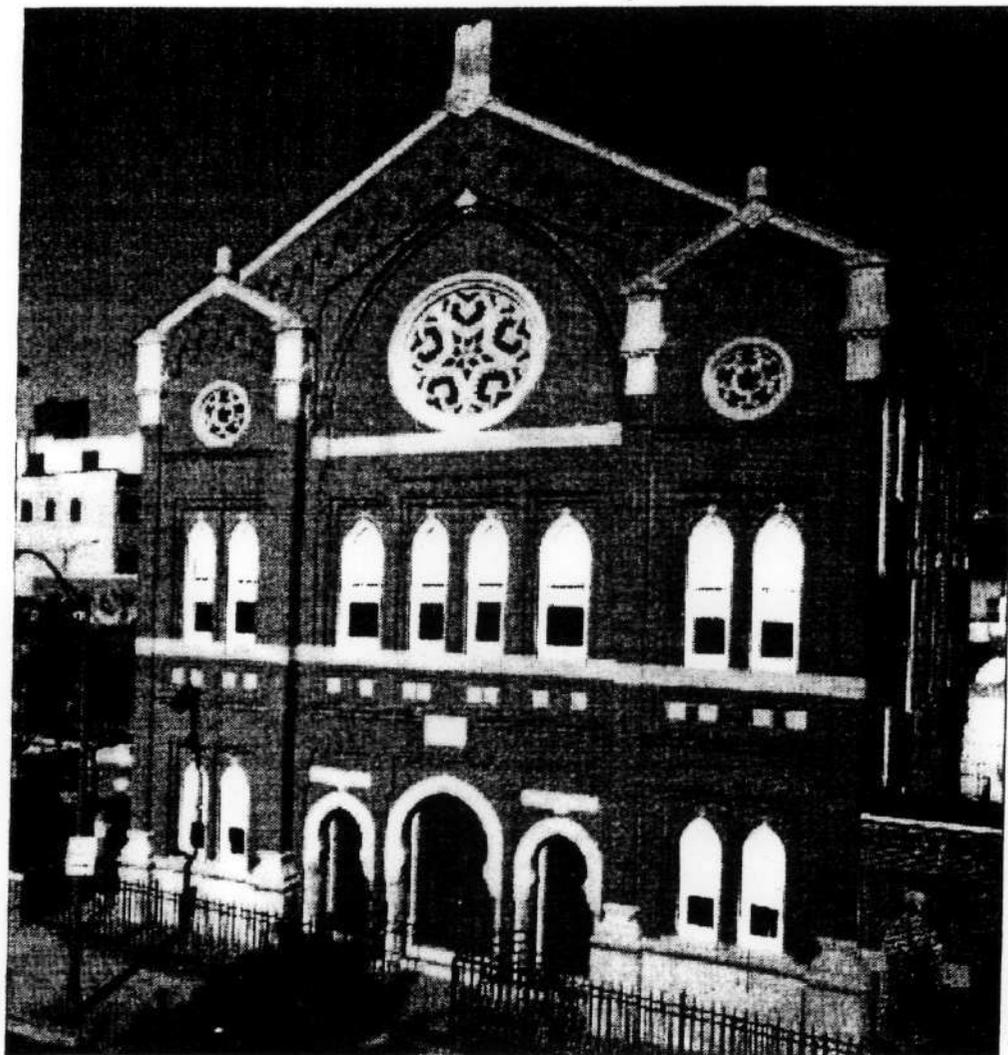




Plate 3  
Chizuk Amuno  
Interior of the Lloyd Street Synagogue.  
Source: Schein, Jan Bernhardt. *On Three Pillars: The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996*. Baltimore: Chizuk Amuno Congregation, 2000 (no page).

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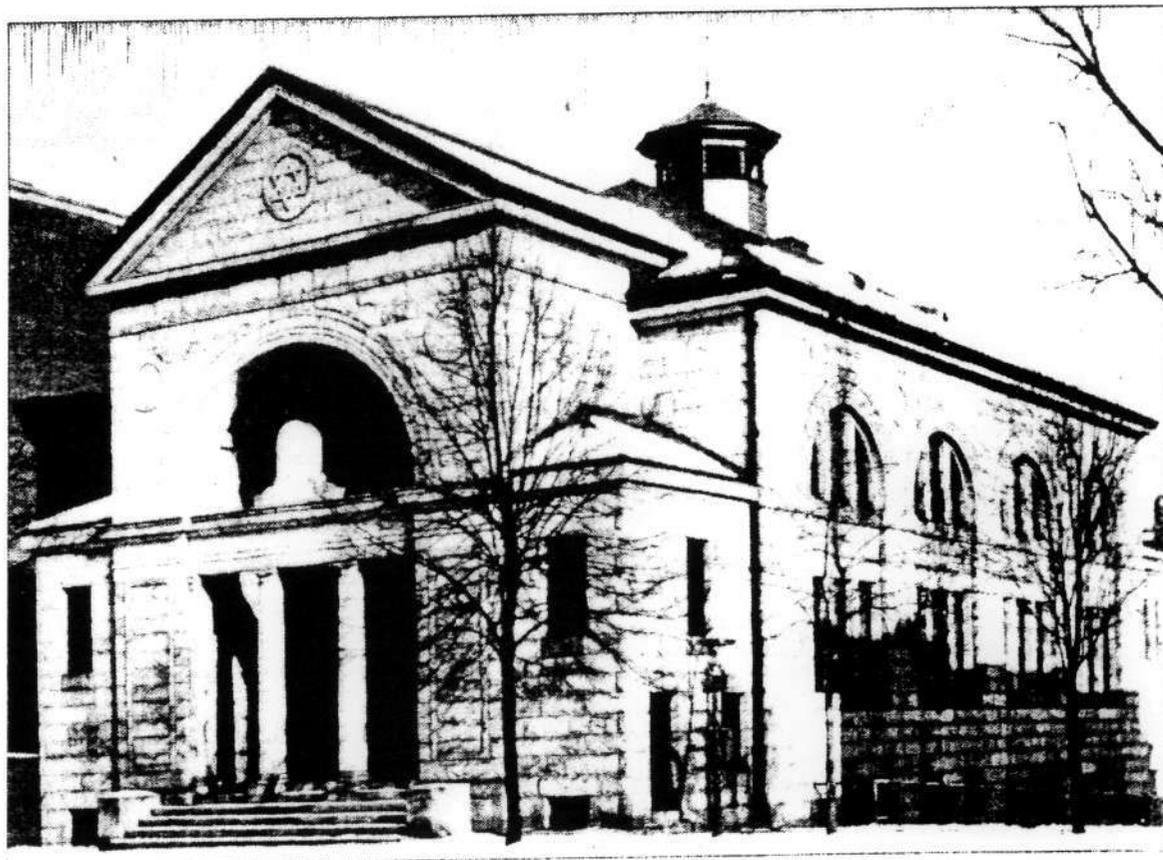


Plate 4  
Chizuk Amuno  
Exterior of the McCulloh & Mosher Streets Synagogue.  
Source: Schein, Jan Bernhardt. *On Three Pillars: The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996*. Baltimore: Chizuk Amuno Congregation, 2000 (no page).

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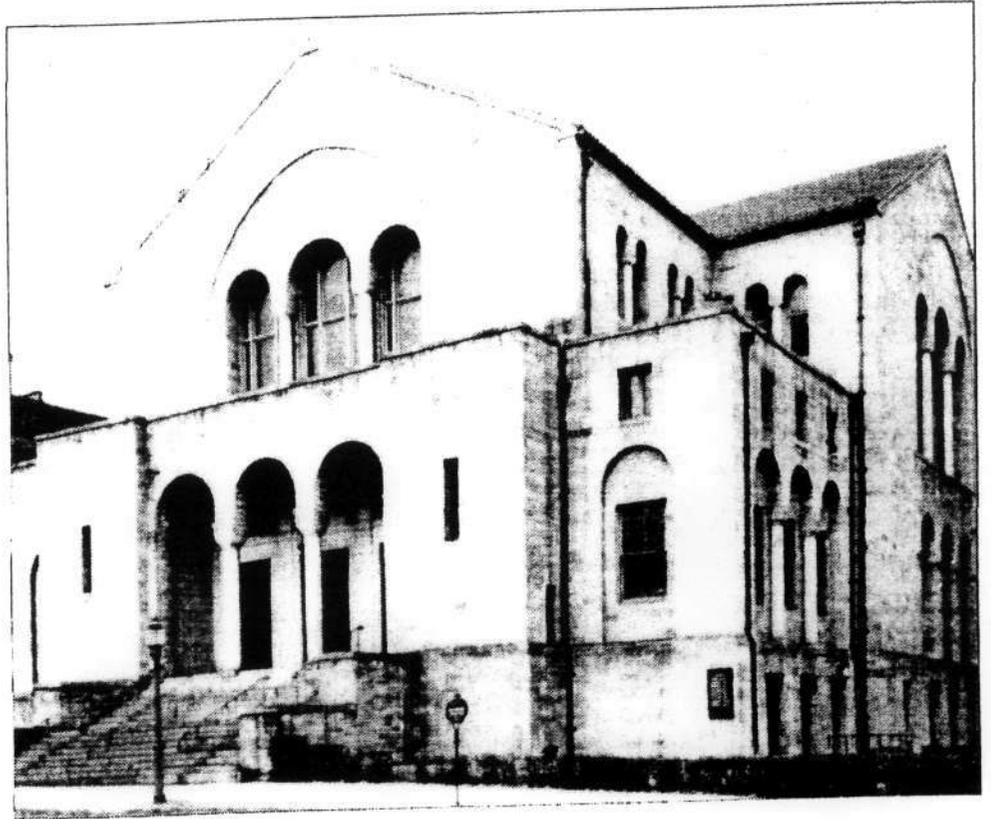


Plate 5  
Chizuk Amuno  
Façade of the Eutaw Place Synagogue.  
Source: Schein, Jan Bernhardt. *On Three Pillars: The History of  
Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996*. Baltimore: Chizuk  
Amuno Congregation, 2000 (no page).

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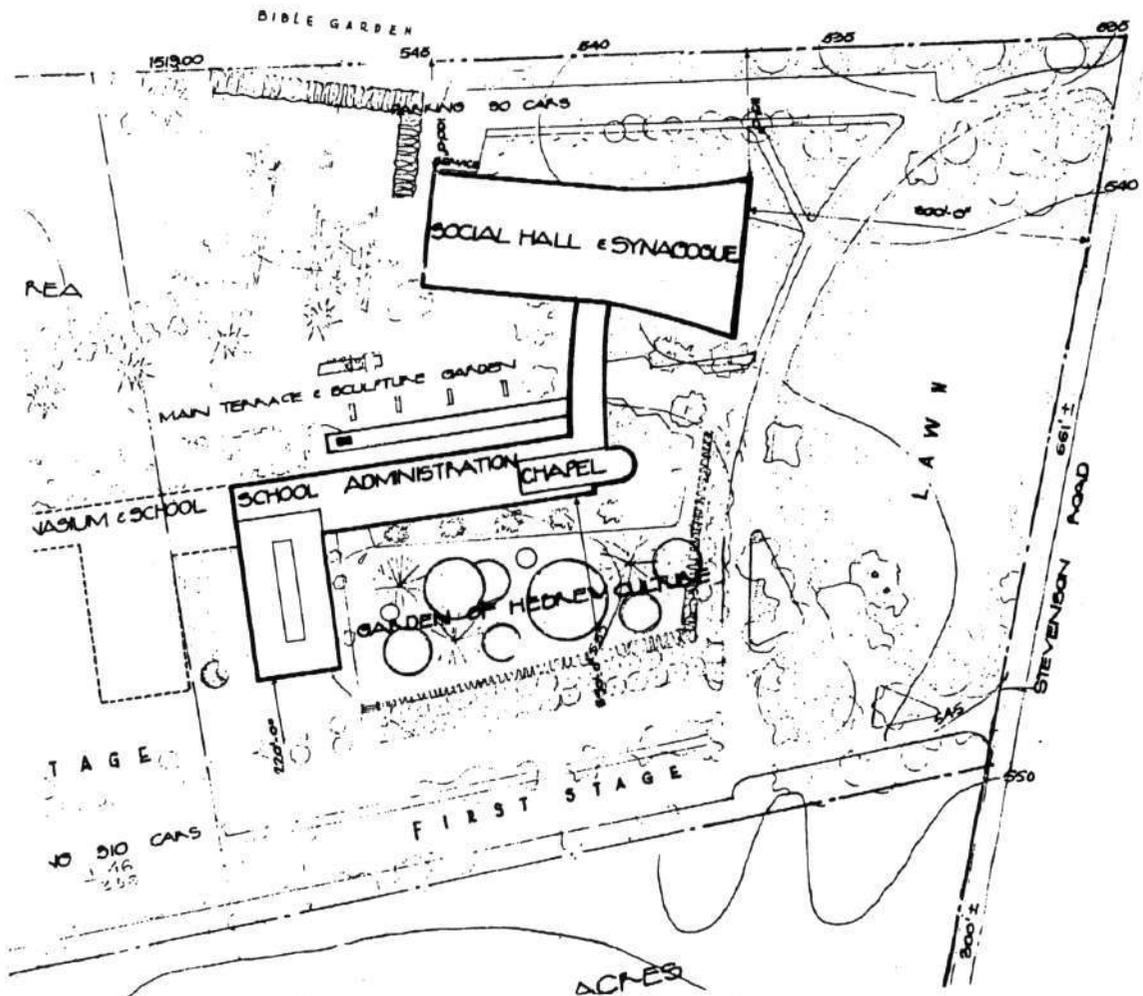
And Now The Future Begins...

Plate 6

Chizuk Amuno

Aerial view of the Chizuk Amuno complex,  
as of the 1986 additions.

Source: Schein, Jan Bernhardt. *On Three Pillars:  
The History of Chizuk Amuno Congregation 1871-1996.*



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 Baltimore, Md. Chizuk Amuno, 1955. Daniel Schwartzman, architect. The site plan outlines the position of the various units.

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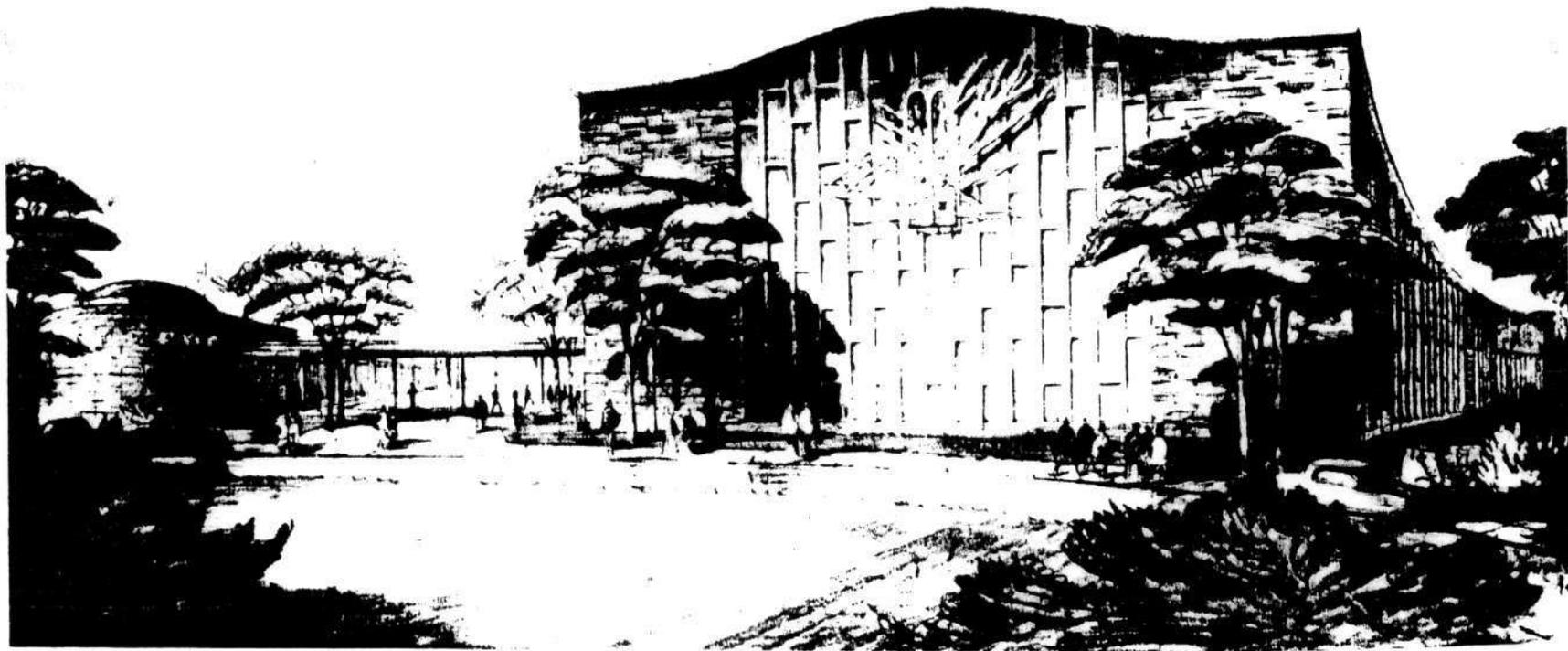
Plate 7

Chizuk Amuno

Original plan for the synagogue. Note the original location of the chapel and the inclusion of a reflecting pool to the west of the north-south corridor. In addition, the site for the "Garden of Hebrew Culture" would eventually be developed as the parking lot.

Source: Wishnitzer, Rachel. *Synagogue Architecture in the United States: History and Interpretation*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955, 172.

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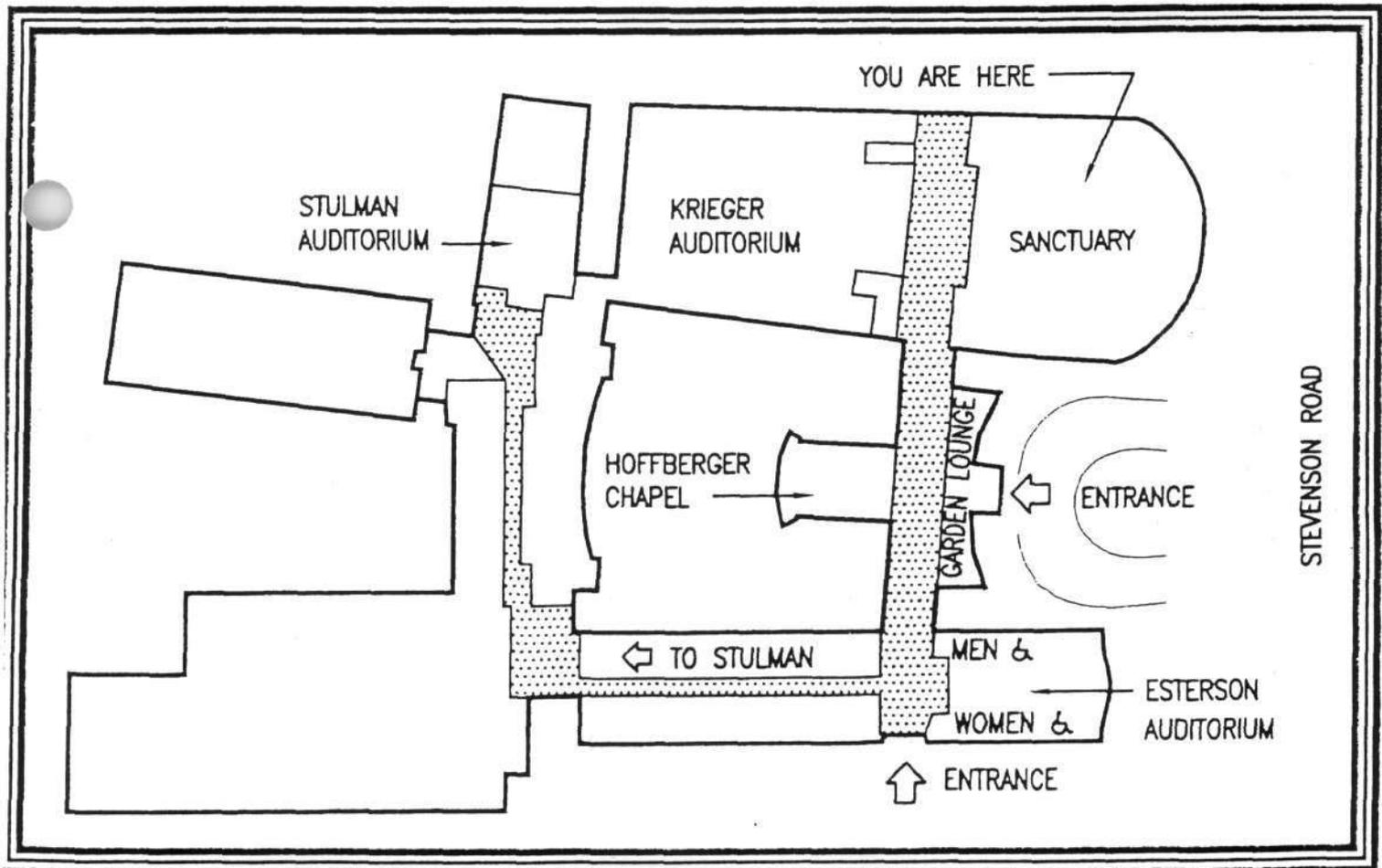
Plate 8

Chizuk Amuno

Rendering of the Chizuk Amuno complex. Originally, the chapel was located further south of the sanctuary (on the far left of the image) and the sanctuary had a flat east façade. Once constructed, this façade is curved and houses Robert Cronbach's sculpture of the Burning Bush.

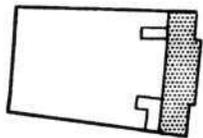
Source: Wishnitzer, Rachel. *Synagogue Architecture in the United States: History and Interpretation*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955, 173.

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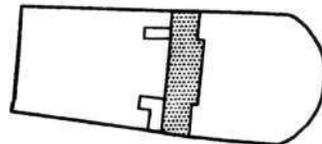


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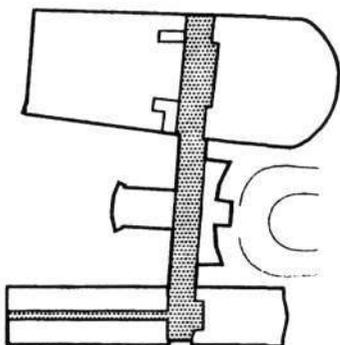
Plate 9  
 Chizuk Amuno  
 Floor plan of the Chizuk Amuno  
 synagogue complex, with all  
 contemporary additions.



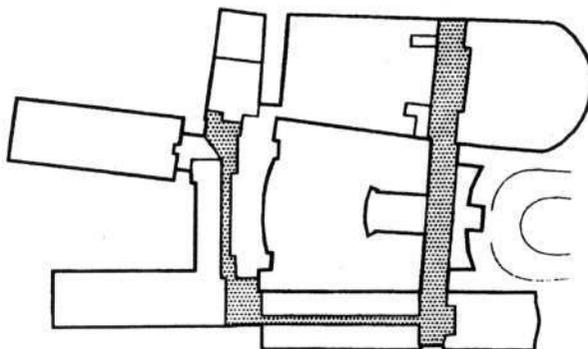
*Social & Educational Center  
1957-1958*



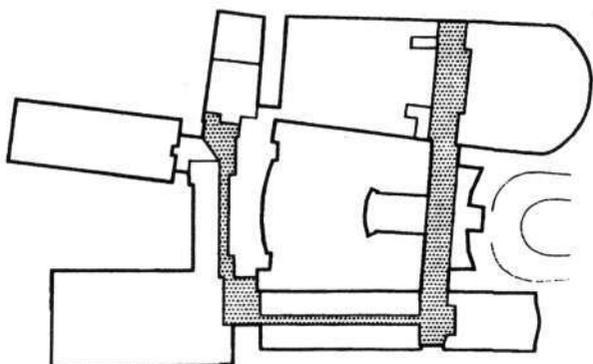
*Sanctuary  
1962*



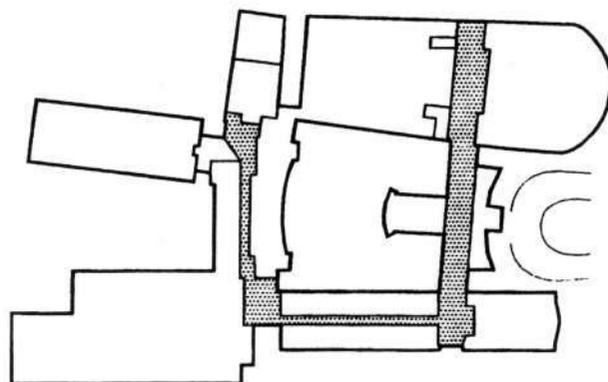
*Administration & Education Addition  
1967*



*Expansion of the Education Building  
to house the new day school  
1988*

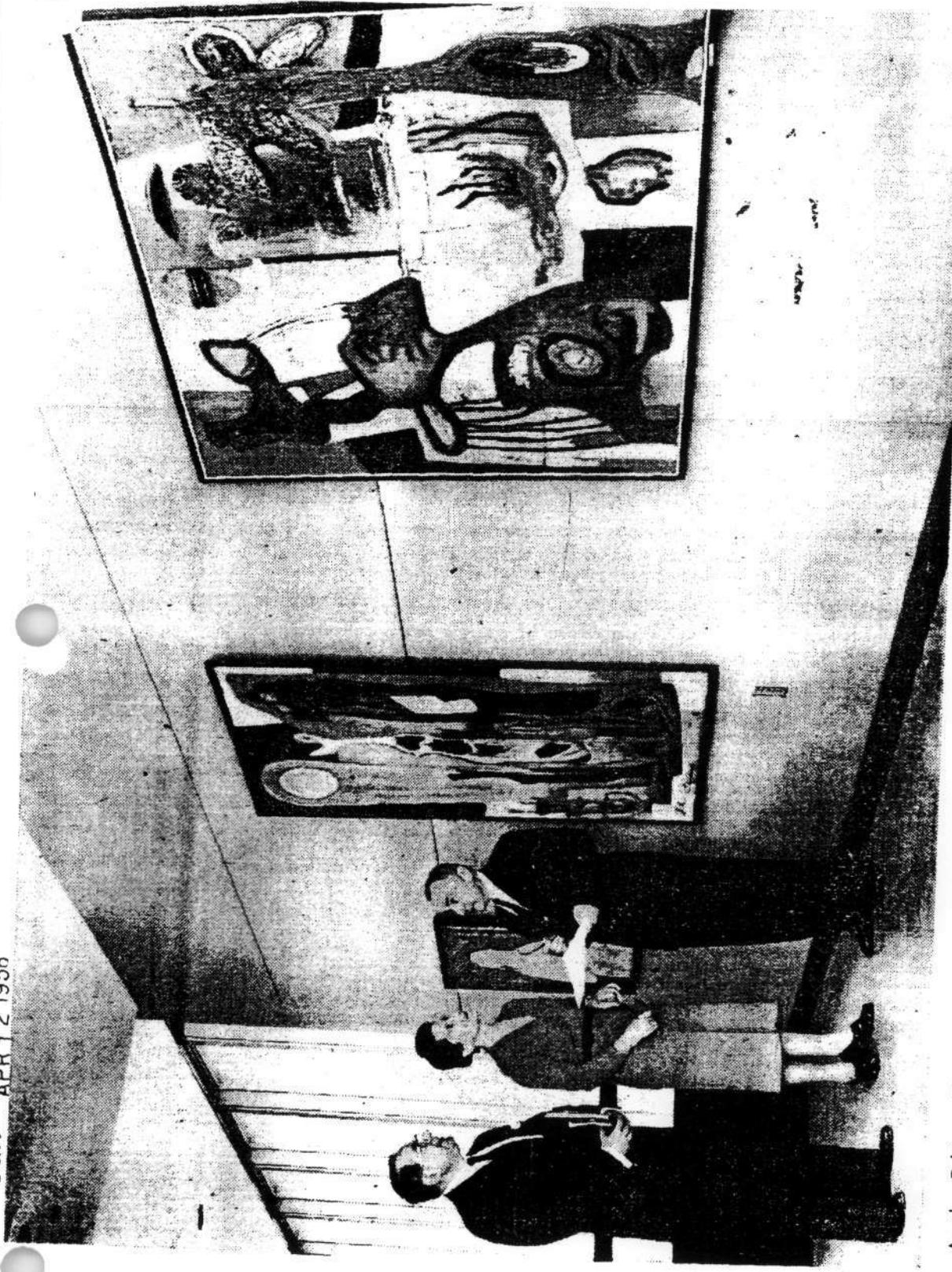


*Expansion of preschool wing  
and construction of kindergarten wing  
1993*



*Expansion of the kindergarten wing  
1997*

SUN APR 12 1958



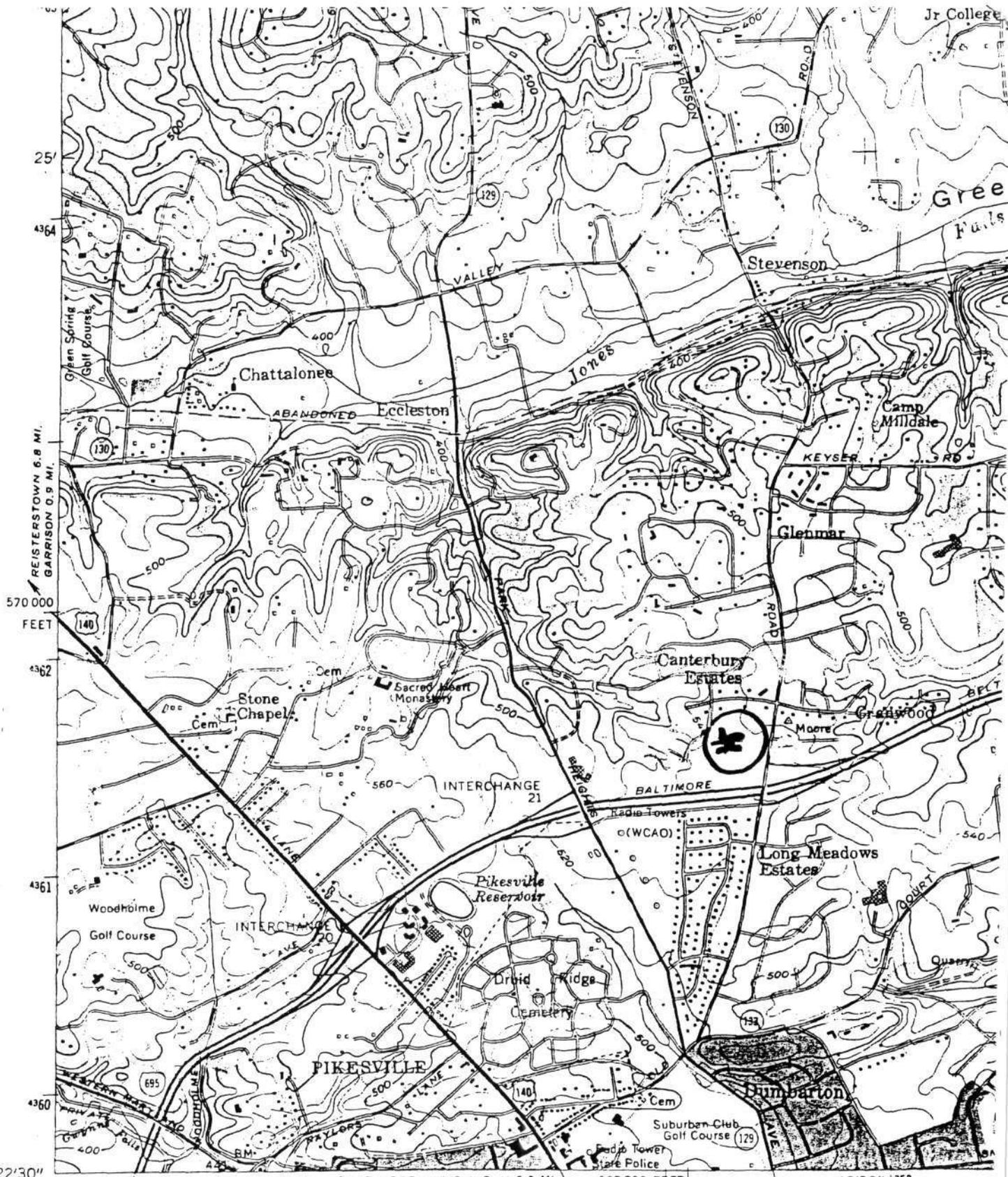
Another Baltimore First—The art gallery of the new Chizuk Amuno Synagogue in Baltimore county, the first synagogue in the country with an art gallery. Rabbi Israel Goldman (left) talks over the first art exhibit with Mrs. Stephen S. Kayser, and Dr. Kayser, curator of the Jewish Museum in New York city.

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Plate 11  
Chizuk Amuno

The gallery at Chizuk Amuno, the first of its kind in the United States.

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, April 12, 1958.



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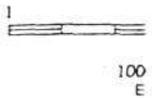
Mapped by the Army Map Service  
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods. Aerial photographs taken 1943. - Field check 1944  
 Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. - 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
 zone 18, shown in blue  
 Red tint indicates areas in which only

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CHIZUK AMUND SYNAGOGUE  
 USGS, COCKEYSVILLE, MD  
 NW 1/4 BALTIMORE 15' QUADRANGLE  
 N 3922.5 - W 7637.5 / 7.5 145.1  
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Chizuk Amuno Congregation

BA-3175

8100 Stevenson Road

Baltimore, MD

Baltimore County, MD

Mary Corbin Sies

April 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

The eastern, curvilinear wall of the sanctuary  
with the Burning Bush Sculpture designed  
by Robert Cronbach.

#1



'94 1 1

BA-3175

Chizuk Amuno  
8100 Stevenson Road  
Baltimore, MD  
Baltimore County, MD

Mary Corbin Sies

April 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

Eastern façade of the Sanctuary, with the  
north wall of the Sanctuary and social  
hall visible to the right.

#2



'94 1 1

Chizuk Amuno Congregation

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Baltimore, MD

Baltimore County, MD

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The north wall of the social hall and sanctuary,  
from the northwest corner of the site.

#3



'94 1 1

Chizuk Amuno Congregation

8106 Stevenson Road

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Baltimore County, MD

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The exterior wall of the sanctuary and  
social hall (north side)



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Formal entrance to the Synagogue Complex.

This entrance leads into the north-south corridor  
that connects the Sanctuary and Social Hall  
to the administration/education wing.

#5



'94 1 1

Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
8100 Stevenson Road  
Baltimore, MD  
Baltimore County, MD

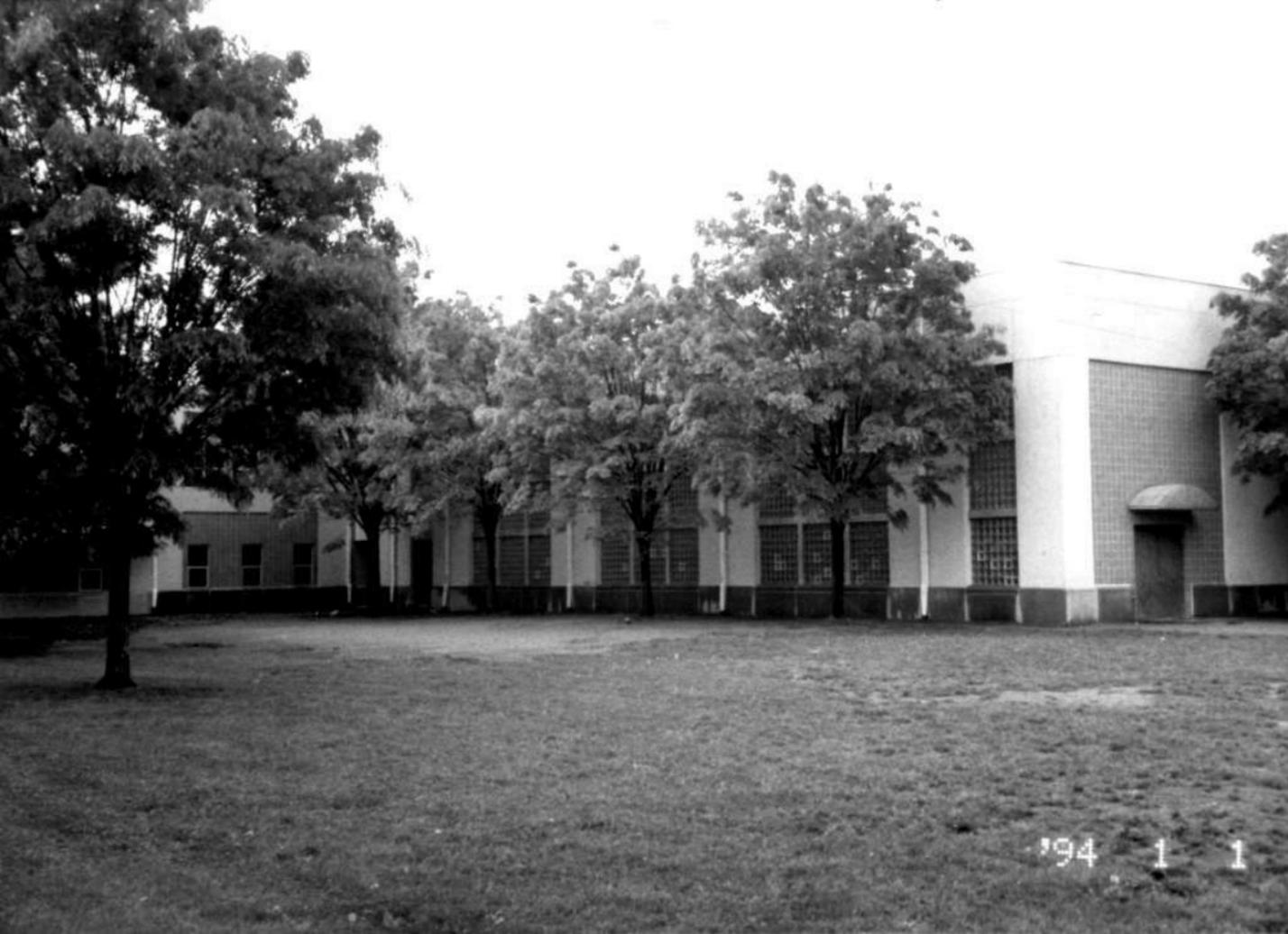
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Entrance to the education building, from  
the parking lot (south side)



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The gymnasium of the education building,  
constructed in 1986.



194 1 1

Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
8100 Stevenson Road  
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Baltimore County, MD

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Exterior Landscaping adjacent to the Elterson  
Auditorium.

#9



Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
8100 Stevenson Road  
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Baltimore County, MD

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The Sanctuary, looking down the central aisle  
towards the bema from the rear

#10

אֵשׁ ה' אֵשׁ חַיִּים  
לֹא תִשָּׂא  
כִּבְדֹתָתְךָ  
לֹא תִשָּׂא  
לֹא תִשָּׂא  
לֹא תִשָּׂא  
לֹא תִשָּׂא



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The Chizuk Amuno Ark, which is covered with  
tapestries designed by Samuel Weiner Jr.

#11



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Mary Corbin Sies

April 2003

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The Sanctuary, looking to the rear wall from the bema



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Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
8100 Stevenson Road  
Baltimore, MD  
Baltimore County, MD

BA-3175

Mary Corbin Sies

April 2003

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The Chapel at Chizuk Amuno, looking towards the  
front and an additional tapestry designed by  
Samuel Weiner, Jr.

#13



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North-South Corridor connecting the Sanctuary  
and social hall to the administrative/  
education wing of the complex

#14



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The first floor corridor in the original  
administration/education wing.

#15



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The second floor corridor in the original  
administration/education wing.

#16



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One of the original classrooms at Chizuk Amuno  
located on the second floor of the administration/  
education wing.