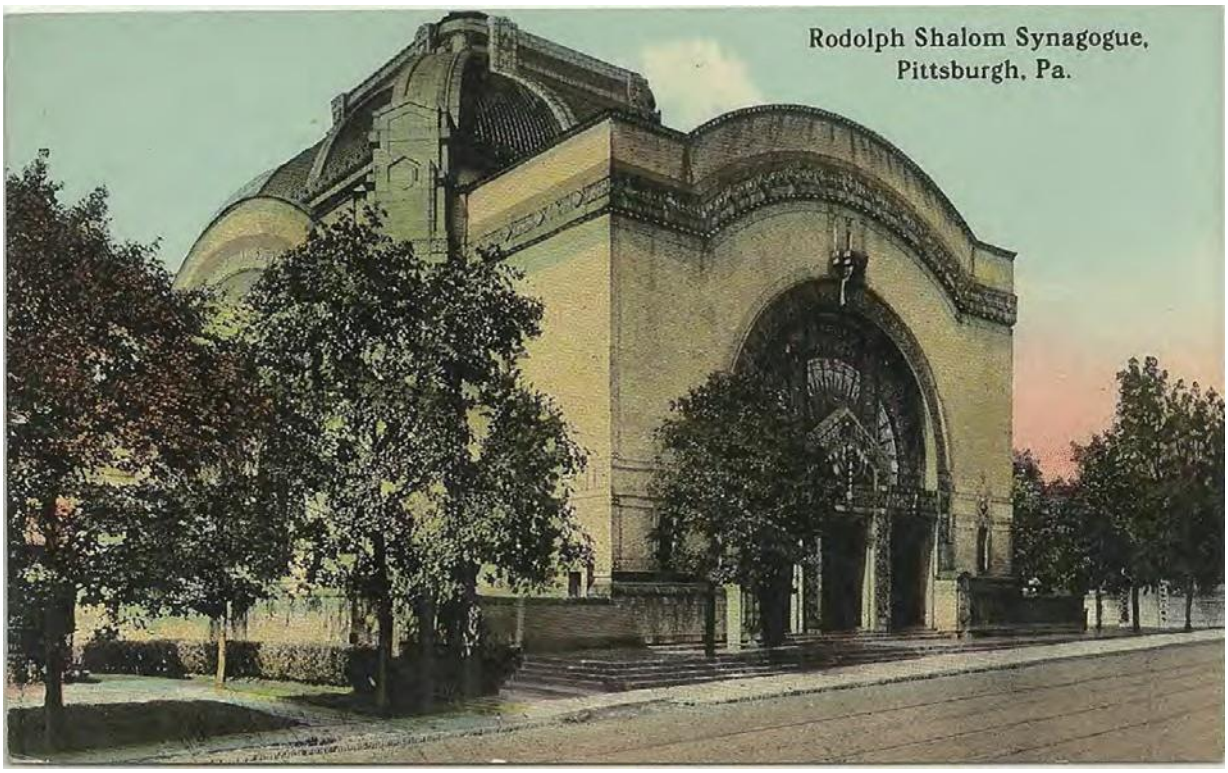

Rodolph Shalom Synagogue,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

RODEF SHALOM CONGREGATION

4905 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-2953
TEL 412 621-6566
FAX 412 687-1977
RODEFSHALOM.ORG

November 9, 2021

Ms. Sarah Quinn
Historic Preservation Planner
Historic Review Commission
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219

Re: Individual Historic Landmark Nomination – Temple Rodef Shalom

Dear Ms. Quinn,

On behalf of Rodef Shalom Congregation, it is with tremendous pleasure that I am able to present to you an individual historic landmark application for Temple Rodef Shalom (4905 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Penna. 15222).

Chartered on November 9, 1856, we are Pennsylvania's oldest Jewish congregation west of the Allegheny Mountains. Our history is inextricably interwoven into Pittsburgh's, Pennsylvania's, and the nation's and we are thrilled to have the opportunity to formally recognize and celebrate these narratives with the City.

Thank you for your partnership on this project.

Sincerely,

Matthew W.C. Falcone
President, Board of Trustees, Rodef Shalom Congregation

THE RODEF SHALOM - HISTORIC NOMINATION STAFF REPORT

Name of Property.....Rodef Shalom
Address of Property.....4905 Fifth Avenue
Property Owner .....Congregation of Rodef Shalom
Nominated by: .....Matthew Falcone
Date Received: .....November 9, 2021
Parcel No.:.....52-K-27-0000-02
Ward: 7th
Zoning Classification: .....RM-H
Neighborhood.....Shadyside
Council District: .....8th - Strassburger

FORMAL ACTION REQUIRED BY THE HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION:

1. Act on the Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for Historic Designation (1 December 2021)
2. Conduct a public hearing for the Historic Designation (2 February 2022)
3. Review the Report prepared by staff for the property in question, and make a recommendation to the City Council on the Historic Designation (2 February 2022)

FORMAL ACTION REQUIRED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

4. Conduct a public hearing for the Historic Designation (8 March 2022)
5. Review the recommendations of the Historic Review Commission and make a recommendation to the City Council on the Historic Designation (22 March 2022)

FORMAL ACTION REQUIRED BY THE CITY COUNCIL:

6. Conduct a public hearing within 120 days of the Planning Commission vote (20 July 2022).
7. Review the recommendations of the Historic Review Commission and the City Planning Commission and take action on the historic designation

FACTS

1. On November 9, 2021 the staff of the Historic Review Commission accepted an application for the nomination of Rodef Shalom to be designated as a City Historic Structure.

2. Description of Rodef Shalom (as *extracted from the nomination form*)

SANCTUARY

Form/Materials

The sanctuary portion of Rodef Shalom consists of a monumental, square-planned auditorium (the sanctuary proper) topped by a convex mansard roof, or square dome, in green tile with a central skylight, along with a two-story, projecting entry vestibule that faces Fifth Avenue. When originally constructed, the sanctuary had an adjoining rear wing, which was used for Sunday School, social programs, administration and other functions. Today, virtually no recognizable trace of this wing remains, it having been subsumed by subsequent additions and multiple renovations.

The expansive exterior walls are finished in cream-colored brick from the Kittanning Brick & Fire Clay Company and terra cotta trim in warm cream shades along with more ornate polychromatic bands, both from the Perth Amboy Terra Cotta Company (later, the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company). At the time of the building's completion, the architectural press noted the vibrancy of the colors, calling out "blue, yellow and white decorations" among the palette. Today, the multi-colored glazes are quite faded, with muted reds and greens being the most discernable surviving tones.

Vestibule/Front Facade

The vestibule is rectangular in plan, with semi-elliptical bays at the east and west ends of the first story and a low, curved parapet crowning the front façade (behind which is concealed a barrel-vaulted roof covered with EPDM, a rubber membrane system). The vestibule measures approximately 75-feet wide, 25-feet deep and 65-feet high.

The front façade is symmetrical, five bays wide and finished in cream-colored brick in two tones laid in Flemish bond. At its base, in bays 1 and 5 (counting from west to east), the brick facade rests upon a granite foundation then rises approximately five feet to an ornate terra cotta stringcourse featuring a torus decorated with bundled bay leaves (a.k.a. Grecian laurel), that encircles the vestibule and sanctuary. As noted above, the brickwork beneath the stringcourse extends beyond the vestibule to the east and west to form projecting wings walls. Above the stringcourse, the plane of the facade steps back approximately fourteen inches. In bays 1 and 5 at the first story level, there are narrow, rectangular stained-glass windows set within a recess framed in terra cotta and topped by an eight-pointed terra cotta star with a pyramid projecting from its center. The windows illuminate stairs to the second-floor balcony.

At the center of the front façade, in bays 2, 3 and 4, four granite steps lead from the front brick terrace to a triple entrance. Each entry contains a pair of paneled, Kalameined doors (i.e., wood doors, wrapped in copper for fireproofing and treated originally to provide a green patina). They were subsequently painted black, ca. 1990.

Over each pair is a black, iron grille in an open, fish scale motif, behind which is a glass transom. To each side, decorative terra cotta brackets at the tops of the door jambs provide the appearance of support for each doorway lintel.

The triple entrance is contained within a great arch that springs from projecting piers of granite, brick and terra cotta that flank the front stairs, with a three-bay wide, semicircular, stained-glass lunette above that illuminates the balcony level (see "Stained Glass" below for details on this and other major windows in the sanctuary). The terra cotta voussoirs of the arch contain the inscription, "My House Shall Be Called A House of Prayer for All People" from Isaiah 56:7. Two terra cotta tablets representing the Ten Commandments sit above a terra cotta bracket at the keystone. Wide bands of polychromatic terra cotta with intertwining leaves and fret-like ribbons separate the elements within the arch. Over the center doorway, the design culminates in a pediment featuring an inset menorah. The cream-colored, top and bottom borders of the horizontal bands above the doors continue across the front façade and encircle the vestibule and sanctuary. Interspersed in this band, typically above or adjacent to windows, the motif of the eight-pointed star with projecting pyramid is repeated. Near the top of the façade, an ornate terra cotta band featuring diamonds and eight-pointed stars serves as a frieze. Once polychromed but now faded, it follows the arc of the curved parapet and also encircles the rest of the building. Notes on the Hornbostel drawings indicate that it was to contain three colors of terra cotta glaze. The very top of the wall terminates in a delicate terra cotta cornice with a leaf-and dart motif, which is also carried around the building.

The side walls of the vestibule are two bays wide and identical to one another. While simpler in detail than the front façade, they present a unified design by repeating the materials and encircling bands of terra cotta from the front elevation. On each wall, the stringcourse in bay 1 (counting from south to north) is interrupted by a narrow, rectangular stained- glass window set within a terra cotta recess that illuminates an interior landing to original basement restrooms (now unused). Bay 2 is slightly recessed and contains the previously mentioned semielliptical bay on each facade, which has a simple, planar, terra cotta stringcourse, is capped by a domed terra cotta roof, and contains a narrow, rectangular stained-glass window that illuminates historic men's and women's waiting rooms. Above, in each wall, is a taller, arched stained glass window that illuminates the stairs to the balcony.

Sanctuary/Auditorium

Behind the vestibule, the large volume of the sanctuary measures approximately 100-feet on each side at its base and rises almost 100 feet to the apex of the skylight. In plan, it has the shape of a canted square—a square with its corners clipped or chamfered—a shape which is repeated elsewhere in the building's design and also in Hornbostel's Machinery Hall (now Hamerschlag Hall) at Carnegie Mellon.

Chamfering the four corners softens the voluminous cube of the auditorium and provided bearing points for proposed steel trusses that were originally intended to support the roof, but were subsequently abandoned by Hornbostel shortly after construction began in favor of self-supporting Guastavino tile. Centered on each

chamfered wall is a projecting brick pier, which tapers in width and depth as it gets higher. On the interior of the sanctuary, these projections create voids, or alcoves, in the four corners of the main floor.The southeast and southwest chamfered walls and their piers continue the materials and bands of ornamentation from the side walls of the vestibule. At these two corners, the piers contain a narrow, rectangular stained-glass window at the first story level (illuminating the rear corners of the auditorium). Above, at all four chamfered corners, the tapered piers step back approximately three feet and are ornamented with planar terra cotta motifs that resemble the form of the pediment over the center doorway.

The east and west facades are symmetrical and identical to one another, except for the motifs in their stained glass windows. They are simpler in detail than the walls of the vestibule and southern chamfered walls, containing only one tone of cream-colored brick laid in a simpler common bond, with a course of header bricks every sixth course. However, the side walls continue the unified design by continuing the encircling bands of terra cotta ornamentation. In the center of each wall are three monumental, arched stained glass windows. The two outer openings measure approximately 9 feet wide by 32 feet tall and contain windows from the synagogue's previous temple on Eighth Street downtown. The center opening is the tallest, measuring approximately 9 feet wide by 36 feet tall, with each containing windows designed for the building.

The side facades also repeat the curved parapet of the front façade, (behind which are concealed wide cheneaus, or rain gutters). Rising behind the cheneaus and extending between the tops of the four chamfered corner piers, is the canted square base of the dome, whose brick walls are capped by polychromatic terra cotta cresting (though now faded) featuring torches alternating with stylized leaf motifs (which conceal cheneaus for the main roof).

The rear façade of the auditorium is largely concealed by the later renovations and additions that replaced the original rear Sunday School wing. However, visible at the center of the rear wall is the flat-roofed, projecting, rectangular mass of the equipment room for the sanctuary organ. It is covered with EPDM and continues the same materials as the side walls of the sanctuary, but with simplified bands of horizontal terra cotta ornamentation.

Dome/Main Roof

The square dome over the sanctuary is in the form of a coved vault, which is formed by the intersection of four quarter- cylinder surfaces or coves. The form is decidedly French and can be readily seen in historic convex mansard roofs and, most notably, in Jacques Lemercier's Pavillon de l'Horloge, which was added to the Louvre around 1640, and from which the term"Louvre dome" is derived. The dome at Rodef Shalom is open at the top to allow for a large central skylight.

As noted, the roof vault is executed in Guastavino tile, as is a second, lower vault that forms the ceiling of the sanctuary. Patented by Spanish building engineer and builder Rafael Guastavino, his Tile Arch System features interlocking layers of thin terra cotta tiles laid in mortar to create a lightweight, strong vault without the need for wood or steel

beams for additional support. The roof is covered in glazed, grass green, interlocking Ludowici tiles. The groins formed at the corners are clad in broad, flat bands of terra cotta. Originally intended as caps over the steel trusses, they remained in the revised design as decorative features, connecting the chamfered piers to the skylight. Like the piers, the width of the caps diminishes as the building height increases. On each side of the dome, two smaller, parallel, terra cotta ribs were retained for the same reason.

At its base, the square dome measures approximately 88 feet on each side per measurements scaled from Hornbostel's drawings, though a clear span of 90 to 92 feet has historically been reported. From the base, the dome rises approximately 24 feet to the canted square base of the central skylight, which measures approximately 46 feet on each side. The base of the skylight rises approximately 6 feet and is finished in a frieze of terra cotta that features multiple bands of decorative horizontal moldings with cartouches at the chamfered corners and Stars of David above the junctures of the smaller roof ribs. The skylight itself rises an additional five feet and is supported by intersecting diagonal ribs with a smaller framework supporting each glass panel. When the roof is viewed from above, the diagonal braces of the skylight continue the lines of thediagonal ribs, which in turn continue the vertical lines of the chamfered piers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WING

Form/Materials

The religious education wing (also known historically as the religious school) is located to the northwest of the sanctuary, with its primary entrance facing Devonshire Street. Designed by Ingham & Boyd and completed in 1938, it adjoined the rear Sunday school wing, which underwent considerable renovation and partial demolition as part of the same building campaign(see Construction Chronology: Religious Education Wing). The wing is rectangular in massing and consists of two floors with a partially exposed basement on its north facade. Exterior walls of the west/primary façade are cream-colored brick laidin a Flemish bond, while secondary facades (i.e., north and south) are cream colored brick laid in a common bond. All facades contain cream-colored terra cotta and limestone accents, many of which contain subtle Art Deco motifs. Roofs throughout the wing are flat and covered with EPDM.

West Façade

The west/primary façade of the religious education wing is five bays wide and is set back about forty feet from Devonshire Street. The space between the sidewalk and building is occupied by two flights of broad concrete steps with four aluminum handrails that create travel paths aligned with three arched entries in the center bay. Flanking the lower flight and first landing are low limestone cheek walls. Flanking the second flight are rectangular limestone piers whose caps step back and terminate in an Art Deco-inspired fluted band. Flanking the top landing are ornamental aluminum railings from Pittsburgh's Blumcraft Company, which contain stylized Art Deco motifs of leaves and sheaves of grain. Extending from each side of the top landing is a terra cotta water table featuring palm leaf motifs. Evergreen hedges line both sides of the

stairs. To the north is a large shade tree and some low hedges on the edge of the rear parking lot.

The west façade features an entrance vestibule at the head of the stairs in the center bay, which projects about two feet beyond the main mass of the building. As noted, it contains three tall entry arches, which relate visually to the three arched window openings on each side of the sanctuary. The intrados and side walls of each arch are clad in terra cotta decorated with stylized Art Deco floral and leaf patterns, including fiddleheads, and a variation of the eight-pointed terra cotta stars found on the 1907 sanctuary. At the top of each arch is a recessed leaded glass light fixture. Set within each two-story arch are paired, single-lite, stained wood entry doors with a six-lite window with cast iron mullions above, all of which are surrounded by deep-green (nearly black) marble panels. The marble lintels above each door feature Art Deco wave designs. Above each entry arch is a flush, semicircular brick arch consisting of eight concentric header (or rowlock) courses. Above this is a frieze of terra cotta, bounded on its top and bottom by simple blocks of limestone that extends across all five bays of the west façade. It features motifs of grapes and leaves interspersed with two carved, bas-relief, stone medallions (one featuring urns overflowing with fruits and vines, the other featuring a menorah). The walls of the center bay extend above the frieze and are capped by fluted, Art Deco-inspired bands of carved stone that match those found on the cheek walls of the entry stairs.

On each side of the center vestibule, in bays 2 and 4 (counting from north to south) is a two-story, single bay that projects about one foot from the main mass of the building (i.e., from bays 1 and 5). In the basement level, each contains a narrow, punched window covered by an aluminum grill featuring Stars of David and other geometric designs. Aligned above each basement window is a similar, two-story window and grille, each containing a decorative limestone sill with a projecting pyramid motif reminiscent of that found on the sanctuary. The outermost bays of the west façade (1 and 5) continue the same materials and design elements, but contain no openings.

South Façade

The south façade of the religious education wing is fourteen bays wide. Counting from west to east, doors are located in bays 1 (at grade), 5 (stairs down from the first floor to grade) and 9 (ramp down to grade). The latter two being later additions. There are also doors at grade in a single-story brick vestibule addition that projects from bays 13 and 14 (late- twentieth century). Interspersed among the doors are three window wells that provide illumination to basement classrooms. The water table from the west facade continues across this façade, as does the simple limestone band that tops the frieze (on this façade, it becomes the parapet cap). However, the terra cotta frieze that originally extended across this façade is no longer present, having been removed as part of parapet repairs in the late-twentieth century. Bays 2 through 13 contain Art Deco-inspired inset window bays with narrow stacked windows separated by limestone spandrels. The windows are one- over-one, double-hung sashes, with the top sashes being smaller than the bottom sashes (ca. 2000-03). A similar window is located above the doors in bays 1

and 14. At the base of these is a carved limestone spandrel panel featuring vertical Art Deco wave motifs; above is a carved limestone lintel featuring a Star of David.

North Façade

The north façade is identical to the south façade, with the following exceptions: it is sixteen bays wide (with doors to grade in the eastern- and westernmost bays); it has a partially exposed basement level with one continuous window well (the windows are set below the terra cotta water table that continues from the west façade and they align with the stacked windows on the floors above); the terra cotta frieze and both bands of limestone from the west façade continue across the top of the façade (serving as a cornice). Between the window well and the sidewalk that runs along the south edge of the parking lot are planting beds and enclosures for mechanical/electrical equipment. The enclosures are constructed of piers of matching brick and black aluminum fencing and gates. Similar fencing runs along the north edge of the window well.

SOCIAL HALL WING

Form/Materials

The social hall wing (designed by Sharove & Lefkowitz and completed in 1956) is located to the north and east of the sanctuary, with its primary entrance facing Morewood Avenue. It consists of a series of rectangular volumes with flat, EPDM-covered roofs. The wing provides space for two primary functions: An Administration/Reception Area (two floors plus basement) immediately north of the sanctuary, adjoining the religious education wing (largely in the footprint of the 1907 Sunday School wing); and The Solomon B. Freehof Social Hall—a cavernous single-story assembly space of over 7,800 square feet (plus adjacent support spaces) to the east. Walls are clad in cream-colored brick laid in a common bond along with limestone accents (visually unifying both wings and the sanctuary).

East Façade

The east/primary façade of the social hall wing is nine bays wide and set back about forty feet from Morewood Avenue. The space between the sidewalk and building is occupied by a concrete plaza that leads to a stylized, seven-baywide, central entry portico of rectilinear limestone blocks. Bays 4, 5 and 6 (counting from south to north) contain paired, stained wood, 4-panel entry doors with a single-lite transom above. Bay 4 has been modified to contain a concrete ADA ramp with stainless steel handrails (late-twentieth century). Bays 1 and 9 are recessed about six feet behind the portico and are solid brick (i.e., no openings), with a limestone water table and limestone parapet (they conceal anterooms off the main vestibule). In front of these outermost bays, to each side of the entry plaza, are two-tier, rectangular, limestone planters containing evergreen shrubs and small ornamental trees. To the north are two large shade trees and some low hedges that create a buffer from the rear parking lot.

South Façade

The south façade of the social hall wing faces Morewood Lawn and Fifth Avenue and consists primarily of three volumes/planes (Photo 26). To the west, and projecting

farthest to the south, is Wechsler Gallery (originally a simple vestibule that welcomed visitors entering from Fifth Avenue across Morewood Lawn; it was renovated ca. 2000-03 to also be a museum/display space). Its first story consists of a stylized, three-bay wide, entry portico of rectilinear limestone blocks.

Above, is a sculpture by Kent C. Bloomer (b. 1935), titled *Relief* that was installed in 1965. Bloomer, who taught at Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon University) won an invitational competition to create an outdoor sculpture that would visually connect the 1907 sanctuary and 1956 social hall. Constructed on a Styrofoam base covered with epoxy, fiberglass and Wirand (an innovative, lightweight reinforced concrete product), the sculpture features seven parallel rows of waves, the amplitude of which decreases as the rows ascend. The result is a dynamic work with strong horizontal and uplifting qualities. Its visual effect changes throughout the day and the year as the shadows cast by the waves are constantly moving.

In the center of the façade is the five-bay wide south wall of Freehof Hall, with Deaktor Terrace extending across its base. Executed in brick with a water table and parapet of limestone, the façade's three center bays contain two- lite glass doors topped by transoms consisting of three horizontal lites. This horizontal fenestration is repeated in the two flanking bays, where four lites are arranged above an operable fifth lite at the bottom. The doors and windows are all accented with broad, flat surrounds of limestone. To the east, and recessed slightly to the north, is the vestibule's south anteroom. Its façade is two bays wide, with each bay containing windows similar to those in the center façade (except that they contain frosted glass to conceal restrooms for the social hall and have limestone window surrounds that are smaller in scale). The lower limestone planter, limestone water table and limestone parapet continue from the east façade.

North Façade

The north façade of the social hall wing also consists primarily of three volumes/planes. The largest extends from the religious education wing eastward to about the midpoint of Freehof Hall (it contains various administrative functions, the social hall kitchen, and an addition to the kitchen from 2000) and is interrupted at its middle by the two-story porte-cochere addition (ca. 2000-03; see description below). This façade contains a limestone-capped water table and limestone parapet and ribbon windows that primarily consist of three one-over-one double-hung sashes grouped together. In the kitchen area, the ribbons are half the height and consist of three adjacent single-lite sashes. To the east (and recessed a full bay to the south) is a two-bay wide section of the north wall of Freehof Hall. It repeats the water table, parapet and window details from the hall's corresponding south façade. To the east, and recessed slightly to the south, is the vestibule's north anteroom. Its façade matches that of the south anteroom and conceals kitchen/event support space.

PORTE-COCHERE

The porte-cochere (2001) projects from the center of the north façade of the building. Part of the renovations by The Design Alliance, it is basically rectangular in massing and

consists of two stories: a ground level that is open to allow vehicles to pass through from west to east and a second story containing classrooms and offices (for the Adult Learning Center). Exterior walls are cream-colored brick laid in a common bond (to complement the rest of thebuilding), with pre-cast concrete accents.

The design of the porte-cochere draws directly from the form and details of the 1907 sanctuary. For example, the east and west façades are simplified expressions of the Fifth Avenue entry facade. Their design clearly references the front façade's rectangular entry area (in this case, expressed as a single large opening in each façade for vehicles); its large, semicircular lunette (and the sunburst design that was present in the 1907 window); voussoirs that repeat the inscription "My House Shall Be Called A House of Prayer for All People;" the pediment that rises into the center of the window; and the low, curved parapet at the top. On the north side of the porte-cochere, a projecting, two-story enclosed stair tower reflects, in a simplified manner, the form of the sanctuary itself, complete with chamfered corners and a green, convex mansard roof (albeit executedin standing-seam metal rather than tile).

3. History of Rodef Shalom (as *extracted from the nomination form*)

The temple at 4905 Fifth Avenue is the third in the history of Rodef Shalom Congregation, the oldest and historically largest Jewish congregation in western Pennsylvania.

Founding and Early History of Rodef Shalom Congregation, 1847-1860

In 1847, twelve Jewish immigrants on the North Side, then Allegheny City, formed a burial society, Bes Almon—Mourners' House—for the purpose of establishing a Jewish cemetery on Troy Hill. The next year, the group began meeting in a rented room for religious services as the Shaare Shamayim congregation. Pittsburgh's Jewish population grew with the advent of direct train service into the city in 1852. In 1855, Shaare Shamayim split into two factions, one Polish, the other German.

Calling itself Rodef Shalom, or "Pursuer of Peace," the German congregation received its official charter in 1859. Its articles of association expressed the need for a German religious society to facilitate Jewish worship and establish a school for the instruction of the young in "the Hebrew religion as well as general branches of knowledge."

Rodef Shalom Congregation's first home was a rented hall on St. Clair Street in Allegheny which it occupied beginning in 1859. At this time, it had about 35 members and 50 pupils. Shaare Shamayim merged back together with Rodef Shalom in 1860. Since Shaare Shamayim never obtained an official charter, the congregation kept the name Rodef Shalom.

Eighth Street Temples and the Pittsburgh Platform, 1861-1904

Also in 1860, the congregation started a day school and purchased property on Hancock Street (now Eighth Street) between Penn Avenue and Hancock Way in downtown Pittsburgh. The location placed Judaism prominently in the center of the city and proclaimed that Jews were in Pittsburgh to stay. The congregation hired the German architect Charles Bartberger to design the first of two temples there. At its

dedication in 1862, this was the only synagogue in western Pennsylvania. Its members prayed and sang in their native German.

In the late nineteenth century, Rodef Shalom established itself as a leader in a transition from Orthodox Judaism to a more liberal observance of Jewish law, known as Reform Judaism. The Reform movement started in Germany as an Enlightenment effort to reconcile ancient texts and traditions with modern reason. In the United States, its less demanding system held appeal as a blend of Jewish ethical tradition and American democratic ideals. In 1863, a majority of Rodef Shalom's congregation voted to realign its practices with Reform Judaism: services were shortened, women were permitted to sit with men in the temple, men were not required to wear skull caps or prayer shawls, and an organ was introduced to accompany traditional songs. The minority, who were mainly from Poland, Lithuania, and Holland, broke off and formed the Orthodox Tree of Life congregation.

In 1885, Rabbi Lippman Mayer, leader of the congregation from 1870-1901, hosted a national convention of like-minded rabbis that led to the Pittsburgh Platform, an enduring articulation of the definition of Reform Judaism. It held that Judaism was a religion, not a nation; that the Bible was an ethical guide, not the infallible word of God; and that American Jews need not keep kosher. The Pittsburgh Platform guided Reform Judaism until 1937, when the movement adopted a different platform.

For the first decades after the Civil War, the congregation had a stable membership of between 100-150 families, most of whom still resided across the river in Allegheny and spoke German as their daily language. But at the end of the nineteenth century, surging immigration from central and eastern Europe diversified the congregation and caused its membership to outgrow its first sanctuary. Rodef Shalom demolished this and built a second, larger temple, designed by architect Charles Bickel, on the same site in 1901. It raised the funds, in part, through the sale of pew certificates entitling the holders to assigned pews in desirable locations in the sanctuary. This mode of organizing the worship space, and the congregation, by financial position would follow the congregation through its next twenty years of physical and social history.

Under Rabbi J. Leonard Levy, who succeeded Rabbi Lippman in the same year the new temple was dedicated, the congregation continued to swell. It reached 300 families by the time the 1901 temple opened. By 1905, 450 families were members. While many were new immigrants, others were the children of established members. They had been born in the United States and spoke English as their native tongue. Rabbi Levy was an Englishman who been deliberately selected, in part, for his ability to lead an Americanizing congregation in English. As a result, the congregation began to transition from services in German and Hebrew to services in English and Hebrew. This congregation sold the Eighth Street property to its neighbor, the Second Presbyterian Church, and sought a new, still larger home.

Planning and Construction of Rodef Shalom in Shadyside, 1905-1907

For its next move, the congregation looked beyond Allegheny and Downtown Pittsburgh, east to the burgeoning neighborhoods of Oakland and Shadyside.

Oakland's bucolic, non-industrialized character had made it a desirable country retreat before the Civil War. Oakland was annexed to Pittsburgh in 1868, and in the late nineteenth century, a series of improvements in public transit made the area increasingly accessible for residential and commercial development. Just beyond Oakland, Shadyside developed as a leafy upper-middle to upper-class streetcar suburb, with Fifth Avenue the spine of so-called Millionaire's Row. In the decades just before and after the turn of the twentieth century, the establishment of Schenley Park, Schenley Farms, and the unparalleled concentration of cultural and educational institutions in the Oakland Civic Center cemented the area's attractiveness to Pittsburgh's social elite.

These wealthy new residents of Schenley Farms and Shadyside brought their religious institutions with them, building new, monumental houses of worship in Oakland and eastward. Bellefield Presbyterian Church, already established in the area, worshipped in a new stone church designed by Frederick Osterling beginning in 1889; the next year, Shadyside Presbyterian moved into a large, Romanesque church by Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge amid the mansions of Amberson Avenue. First United Presbyterian Church moved from its original home downtown into a new building by Thomas Boyd in Oakland in 1896; the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh began construction of a new St. Paul's Cathedral to the design of Chicago architects Egan and Prindeville in 1903; and the First Congregational Church by Thomas Hannah (now St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church) was completed in 1904.

In this context, "[a]n architectural statement was in order." Rodef Shalom Congregation brought comparable wealth and aspiration to the site it chose for its new synagogue at the juncture between Oakland and Shadyside. In 1905, it paid $60,000 for the lot fronting Fifth Avenue in the middle of the block between Devonshire Street and Morewood Avenue from the estate of Bernard Rafferty. The lot was vacant; Rafferty had cleared it of the house of its previous owner, Samuel Keys, but died in 1891 before building on it himself. The property was one of three fronting Fifth Avenue in this block. To its west stood the large brick Queen Anne Style mansion of the Pinkerton family. To the east, the former E.M. Ferguson estate, which extended through the block from Fifth Avenue to Castleman Street, had been subdivided into three residential lots along Morewood Avenue ca. 1895. William R. Holmes had purchased two of the lots, building on one and leaving the other, at the corner of Fifth and Morewood, vacant.

Rodef Shalom formed a building committee headed by Marcus Aaron and held a competition for the architect of its new sanctuary. It provided a "Programme" stipulating an auditorium to seat 1450 with no more than 350 in a rear gallery; space for a full pipe organ and choir gallery; and provision for "other functions in the fields of educational, charitable, and social work." The Programme specified the nature and size of Sunday school classrooms, a Sunday school auditorium, and a rabbi's study, and called for the incorporation of four stained glass windows, known as the Memorial Windows, salvaged from the 1901 temple on 8th Street. It called for construction and finishes to be inexpensive—not to exceed $150,000—but elegant, with exterior walls of local brick and terra cotta, interior walls of tinted plaster with hardwood trim, leaded glass windows, and steam and forced air heat. The area of the building was not to exceed one million

cubic feet, and it was to be designed for the contingency that the adjoining lots would someday be occupied by buildings built by others—perhaps a reason for the skylighted inner dome.

The committee invited six architecture firms to submit designs, for which they were paid $250 each. The six were: Allison & Allison of Pittsburgh; Charles Bickel of Pittsburgh; Albert Kahn of Detroit; Palmer and Hornbostel of New York; Pilcher &Tachau of New York; and George Post & Sons of New York. It awarded the project to Palmer & Hornbostel. Henry Hornbostel was a New York architect educated at Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Hornbostel had been brought to Pittsburgh by Andrew Carnegie to serve as the first Dean of Architecture at the Carnegie Technical Institute, precursor to Carnegie Mellon University, and had designed the school's campus. From the 1890s through 1921, Hornbostel worked in partnership with George Carnegie Palmer. For the design of the sanctuary's vaulted dome, Hornbostel originally specified a steel frame structure. Just before construction, he changed the structure from steel to Guastavino tile for a savings of $11,000. To design the new structure of the dome, he engaged Rafael Guastavino himself, a Spanish builder who pioneered the modern use of strong, weatherproof, fireproof terra cotta tile in the Catalan vault.

The building committee had asked for a design "fitting … for a synagogue in some style other than Moorish or Roman adaptation," which it believed were cliche and overdone. It wanted a design both traditional and modern: "[T]he appearance of the building should be that of a house of worship for Jews and of modern aspect." At Rodef Shalom, Hornbostel employed the same material vocabulary of buff brick and glazed terra cotta that distinguished his campus buildings for Carnegie Tech. The vividly-colored glazes used at Rodef Shalom were among the earliest applications of this process to produce polychromatic terra cotta ornament.

Built by contractor Thomas Reilly, the sanctuary and adjoining Sunday school and administration wing were completed in time for Rosh Hashanah services in 1907. The cost of the building, $250,000, was substantially more than what the congregation had budgeted and placed it into debt. At the request of Rabbi Levy, it was not dedicated until the debt was cleared in 1917. Rabbi Levy died only three days after the final payment was made, resulting in the temple's dedication during his funeral.[50]

Beginnings of a Campus, 1911-1937

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Rodef Shalom Congregation continued to grow and diversify along with the Jewish populations of Pittsburgh and the United States. The move to Shadyside allowed the congregation to develop not only a new temple, but a multi-purpose campus to serve the broad needs of its large congregation. In 1911-12, it again commissioned Palmer & Hornbostel to design an addition to the rear Sunday school/administration wing. Known as the Fanny Edel Falk Memorial, this consisted of a swimming pool and library behind the existing building and a third floor over the eastern portion of the wing containing a gymnasium and caretaker's apartment.

As the twentieth century progressed, many members of the congregation began to question the assigned pew system which had helped fund the second Eighth Street temple, but organized Rodef Shalom's worship space by an aristocracy of wealth. This system had been effectively transferred to the Shadyside temple, where it was overseen by a Pew Committee. In the early 1920s, the Board of Trustees formed a new, special committee to study the issue of assigned pews. The outcome, issued in 1922, abolished the assigned pews system. By allowing all members to seat themselves in the sanctuary on a first-come, first-served basis, it democratized the worship space of Rodef Shalom. Membership soared from 549 in 1920 to 1,128 in 1922.

With this extraordinary growth came a large increase in school enrollment, and the congregation redoubled its efforts to purchase the properties adjacent to the temple. In 1928, it was able to acquire the former Pinkerton estate to the west from its then-owner, Edward F. Jackman. However, plans to build were put on hold when the country plunged into the Great Depression the next year. Instead, the congregation converted the existing house on the lot into makeshift classrooms. In 1933, the financial crisis at the temple was so dire, closure loomed as a real possibility, but the congregation eked by.

By 1937, circumstances had improved to the point where a special committee was able to raise $325,000 to raze the former Pinkerton house and build a religious school on the property.

The Religious School, 1938

Constructed in 1938 to the design of the reputable local firm of Ingham & Boyd, the school has a symmetrical design facing Devonshire Street. Its plan consists of two classroom wings flanking a central 320-seat auditorium (Levy Hall). Interior to the complex, the congregation modified its former Sunday school auditorium into a small chapel, the Cohen Chapel. S.M. Seisel Company was the contractor.

For this commission, Ingham & Boyd partnered with Alfred M. Marks, a Carnegie Tech-educated architect and Rodef Shalom congregation member whose contribution appears to have been the design of Levy Hall within the school. Marks went on to design, with partner Elkan Avner, the sanctuary for Tree of Life congregation in Squirrel Hill (1963).

The Falk Memorial addition was diminished in the course of this new work and ultimately removed with the subsequent addition of Freehof Hall (see below). In 1926, the construction of the Young Men's and Women's Hebrew Association (the "Jewish Y") nearby on Bellefield Street provided swimming and athletic facilities to Jewish patrons, making it unnecessary for Rodef Shalom to maintain its own. Accordingly, the congregation removed the third-floor gymnasium and infilled the swimming pool on its campus to create a social hall. To this, it added a kitchen.

Solomon B. Freehof Hall, 1954-1956

World War II delayed further expansion plans. It was not until 1949 that the congregation was finally able to acquire the key corner property long held by William R.

and Nathaniel Holmes at Fifth and Morewood. In 1954, the congregation purchased an additional lot just north of the Holmes property fronting Morewood. Like many of the congregation's previous land purchases, this one was made through an intermediary. In his 1996 study of the physical spaces of Rodef Shalom, Rosenzweig suggests that the wealthy gentile property owners of west Shadyside might have been unwilling to directly facilitate the expansion of the Jewish synagogue.

However, amid the general prosperity and baby boom of the 1950s, expand it did. By June of 1954, the congregation had raised over $708,000 and set a goal of $900,000 toward the construction of a new addition to its campus, Solomon B. Freehof Hall. Architects Alexander Sharove and Harry Lefkowitz fully embraced a powerful but minimalist Modern aesthetic in the design of this wing, which was completed in 1956 facing Morewood Avenue. A new classroom wing was also constructed at the north of the complex, connecting the new Freehof Hall to the 1938 school and expanding the school's capacity to 1200 students. Along with Freehof Hall and the social hall, this framed an open courtyard, Aaron Court. At the time of Freehof Hall's dedication the congregation counted over 2000 members.

Modern Development, 1961-Present

The final property acquisition, a lot fronting Devonshire just north of the school, was recorded in 1961, completing the present site of the Rodef Shalom Congregation. The present parking lot was constructed north of the temple and through the block from Morewood to Devonshire shortly afterward. An entry vestibule was added on the parking lot side in 1979, and the Biblical Garden was created on the Pinkerton-Jackman lot in 1986. The fencing of this part of the property likely dates to that time. A comprehensive exterior and interior restoration of Rodef Shalom by the New York firm of Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut, & Whitelaw took place in 1989-1990. In 2000-03, a porte-cochere and stair/elevator tower on the parking lot side of the complex replaced the 1979 entry vestibule; Aaron Court was enclosed; and Deaktor Court was created along the south side of Freehof Hall.

4. Significance of Rodef Shalom *(as extracted from the nomination form)*

The *Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11, Historic Preservation, Chapter 1: Historic Structures, Districts, Sites and Objects* lists ten criteria, at least one of which must be met for Historic Designation. The nominator is of the opinion that Rodef Shalom meets several of the criteria as follows.

§ 1101.04 (b)(3): Architecture.

Temple Rodef Shalom is significant as a skillfully designed example of Beaux Arts and Modern French design principles uniquely and creatively adapted to the specific program needs of a progressive, early-twentieth-century Jewish congregation. As noted, Henry Hornbostel had been educated at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, which espoused the combining of classical architecture from ancient Greece and Rome with Renaissance ideals. The result being an "elaborate, historic, and eclectic architecture, designed on a monumental scale."

The Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide developed by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission indicates thatthe Beaux Arts style was utilized in Pennsylvania largely during the time period from 1885 to 1930:

> The Beaux Arts style, named for the premier French school of architecture, the École des Beaux Arts, was introduced to the United States by American architects like Richard Morris Hunt [1827-1895], who attended the prestigious school in the late nineteenth-century. Hunt designed the Newport, Rhode Island mansion of Cornelius Vanderbilt, "The Breakers," in this style in 1892. The Beaux Arts style was most often seen in places where turn-of-the-century wealth was concentrated, major urban centers, and resort communities. The popularity of this style was advanced by the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. With its grandiose treatment of classic architectural forms, the Beaux Arts style was seen as an ideal expression of both corporate wealth and civic pride. Buildings of this style are both formal and monumental with abundant and opulent decorative details. The Beaux Arts style is especially suited for public buildings designed to deliver a strong symbolic message, such as libraries, museums, court houses, train stations, and government offices. Privately owned Beaux Arts style mansions delivered a message as well, one of personal wealth. This style was popular in an era of great American palace-building marked by eclectic use of historic architectural themes and elements.
>
> The Beaux Arts style uses formal symmetry . . . to create a grand and imposing architectural statement. Exterior decorative details may include quoins, balconies, terraces, porches, and porticoes as well as ornamental windows and grand entrances. This style also featured lavish interiors including pilasters, arched openings, elaborate chandeliers, coffered ceilings, or marble fireplaces. The State Capitol Building in Harrisburg, completed in 1906 and designed by Joseph Huston, is a penultimate example of this style. Envisioned as a "palace of art," the Capitol building has opulent detail and classically inspired design. Described by President Theodore Roosevelt at its 1906 dedication as "the handsomest State Capitol I ever saw," the State Capitol is Beaux Arts style architecture at its most extravagant.

For Hornbostel, his formal education served merely as a starting point. For the design of Rodef Shalom, he stripped the Beaux Arts style back to its essential elements and compositional strategies—like symmetry, monumentality and order—and deliberately omitted the near-requisite classicism of the 1893 Exposition's White City, which architects before him had felt compelled to apply to earlier American synagogues. Instead, he provided the Rodef Shalom Congregation with originality and responsiveness to their desired architectural Programme, believing that the classical Beaux Arts tradition was not dogmatic, but rather was alterable to suit contemporary needs. This more flexible adaptation of the style has come to be known by architectural historians as Modern French Architecture.

Hornbostel scholar Charles Rosenblum states that "Hornbostel . . . used classical orders and other historical motifs only when they suited his purposes, and he could just as easily stray from the use of canonical historical form. He was fascinated by the forms and materials of industry, and he was eager to incorporate them prominently into his architecture, whether or not they directly conformed to architectural tradition. He embraced bridges and skyscrapers—new, technological construction types—that his more conservative colleagues sometimes refused even to acknowledge as architecture. He enjoyed inventing new forms of ornament. Hornbostel saw Beaux Arts training not as a narrow set of historical forms to be applied to all building, but as a set of principles to be reworked to suit contemporary materials, conditions and building types. His permutation of the Beaux Arts was formally progressive rather than anachronistic."

Hornbostel's design for Rodef Shalom, which was widely and repeatedly published, is significant for directly reflecting the principles of the Pittsburgh Platform, which articulated "a

view of the Hebrew Bible that is distinctly inflected by Enlightenment philosophy in an effort to reconcile ancient texts and practices with the views of a Progressive age." The Platform concluded, "We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past." These final words of the Platform could easily have described Hornbostel's approach to Beaux Arts architecture and the design of Rodef Shalom, "in which a belief system with roots in an almost impossibly ancient past willingly changed to accommodate the reason and culture of the contemporary age."

The result is a building that stands out as a unique visual and architectural landmark on Fifth Avenue—amidst all of its other Beaux Arts designs—and that continues to serve its congregation well, allowing it to grow and adapt more than a century after it was conceived. Walter C. Kidney, the late architectural historian of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, praised Hornbostel's originality: "Using his favorite materials, cream-colored brick and terra cotta, he created a compact, massive structure that appears as a simple enclosure of the inner spaces. To dramatize the skyline of the building, yet emphasize the space within, he covered the temple itself with a great Louvre dome of cream-colored terra cotta ribs and green roof tiles. To enliven the brick wall surfaces, he inserted bands of terra cotta that serve as well to tie together details that might otherwise have seemed to drift in such large plain areas. At the entrance he made very early use of polychrome terra cotta—the glazing technique had just been developed—in frames with mingled geometrical and leaf ornament, and over the central doorway he put a pediment with a menorah against a stained-glass window of leaping flames."

In 1980, the late Franklin Toker, then a noted architectural historian at the University of Pittsburgh, called the Shadyside landmark "one of the most monumental and interesting buildings in Pittsburgh." Within a few years, he intensified his praise, concluding in 1986 that "This may be the best synagogue in the United States, competing works by Peter Harrison, Frank Lloyd Wright, and other luminaries notwithstanding. Hornbostel won the commission in competition against the much better-known Albert Kahn, and the result is one of his two or three best works.

When constructed, the building was noteworthy for a number of design features, including the following:

- Innovative use of polychromatic terra cotta ornament, or architectural faience. Architectural historian and scholar of synagogue architecture Samuel D. Gruber notes that "One of the significant innovations in the [building's] design was the introduction of color—both inside and out. The architectural press of the time stated that the work was 'so artistically accomplished as to present an attractive and harmonious effect. The entrance feature and the frieze that encircles the building executed by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Co., may be regarded as one of the most successful attempts in this direction that has been accomplished in this country. The entire building, with its green dome, buff brick, the polychromatic effect of the terra-cotta, presents an effect highly creditable to the architect and a delightfully restful spot in what would otherwise be a monotonous and uninteresting thoroughfare.'" Walter Kidney noted that "The terra cotta architectural polychromy was among the earliest in the United States. Indeed, the application of several colors of glaze to the same piece of architectural terra cotta seems to have just been introduced in the country. Stanford White's Madison Square Presbyterian Church, dedicated in 1906, when the Rodef Shalom competition was decided, is credited by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company for having led the way with a scheme of yellow, blue,

green, white and gold."

- Massive scale of the domes designed and fabricated by the Guastavino Company. A significant number of sources— both contemporaneous with construction and in the intervening years—have noted that the Guastavino domes at Rodef Shalom were the largest such vaults built by the firm at the time of their completion.
- A prominent site on par with other new East End places of worship. Drew Armstrong notes that "The prominent location and novel architecture of the synagogue made a statement about the position of Pittsburgh's Reformed Jewish community in the local and national contexts which, like the Catholic diocese, the universities and Andrew Carnegie himself, were staking out positions as leaders in civic beautification and social betterment that affected the city as a whole and the outlying region.[66] Gruber adds that the location of the temple amidst the Beaux Arts buildings of Oakland and affluent residences of Shadyside was an important example of a "second settlement synagogue" of the period, "erected as a public building around parks and newly designed civic centers."

§ 1101.04 (b)(4): Identification as the work of an architect.

Over the course of three historic building campaigns between 1907-1954, Rodef Shalom is notable as the work of four major architects at work in Pittsburgh during the first half of the twentieth century: Henry Hornbostel, Ingham & Boyd, Alexander Sharove, and Harry Lefkowitz.

Henry Hornbostel: Henry Hornbostel (1867-1961), primary designer of the 1907 sanctuary, was born in Brooklyn and received his architectural education at Columbia University in New York and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. In the 1890s, he began working for the New York firm of Wood and Palmer, becoming a partner in 1897. George Wood left the firm shortly thereafter, but the partnership of George Carnegie Palmer and Hornbostel—in various permutations, sometimes including other partners—lasted until 1921.

Hornbostel excelled at large-scale building projects, such as campus master plans and monumental government and institutional buildings, and at working creatively within Beaux Arts paradigms to give architectural expression to modern building types, such as skyscrapers, and works of engineering, such as bridges. Hornbostel designed architectural treatments for the Williamsburg, Manhattan, Queensboro, and Hell Gate bridges in New York; campus plans and buildings for Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon University) and the University of Pittsburgh; a monumental city hall for Oakland, CA, and state education building for New York; and B'nai Israel Synagogue at 327 N. Negley Avenue.

Hornbostel was not a conservative designer of traditional houses of worship, and this shows in Rodef Shalom, "a massively reposeful building" which gives "an impressive feeling of shelter and permanence" without resorting to Moorish or Classical cliches.

Ingham & Boyd: Ingham & Boyd was a Pittsburgh firm well-known for its conservative period revival designs, but in its 1938 work on Rodef Shalom's religious school, delivered a treatment that responded to Hornbostel's originality. Charles Tattersol Ingham became a draftsman in the Boston offices of Peabody & Stearns in around 1897, and worked in Pittsburgh on that firm's largest local commissions: Horne's Department Store and the East Liberty Market House. Early in the twentieth century, Ingham returned to Pittsburgh permanently to work for the firm of Rutan & Russell. In 1911, he formed a partnership with William Boyd, Jr., who left design

responsibilities largely up to Ingham while handling the financial and public relations sides of the business. The Pittsburgh Board of Education Building on Bellefield Street and The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania are the best-known Ingham & Boyd designs, while the Frick Teacher Training School (now Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy) also displays the firm's elegant touch. Ingham & Boyd also designed all of the public elementary schools in Mt. Lebanon township and the row houses of Chatham Village on Pittsburgh's Mt. Washington.

Ingham & Boyd's treatment of the Rodef Shalom religious school is less conservative and restrained than many of the firm's designs, yet its originality is in its marriage of Art Deco, then the height of architectural fashion, with the material and design vocabulary established by Hornbostel for the sanctuary 30 years before. In the religious school, Ingham & Boyd showed themselves to be exceptionally responsive to their client's ongoing desire for a modern expression of Jewish tradition.

Sharove & Lefkowitz: Alexander Sharove (1893-1955), a Squirrel Hill-based architect who specialized in Modern synagogue design in the 1950s, was the architect of Solomon Freehof Hall along with Harry H. Lefkowitz. Sharove was born in Virginia to Russian immigrant parents. The family observed Orthodox Judaism. Sharove graduated from the Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon) School of Architecture in 1919 and made his permanent home in Pittsburgh, where he was a member of Rodef Shalom. Sharove designed commercial buildings, apartment buildings, and single-family houses, but came to specialize in houses of worship, especially synagogues.

In the 1920s and 30s, Sharove designed synagogues in a loose interpretation of the Classical Revival Style executed in pale buff brick, seemingly inspired by Hornbostel's work on Rodef Shalom and the campus buildings of Carnegie Tech. Examples include Congregation Poale Zedeck (6318 Phillips Avenue, Squirrel Hill: 1929), Beth Shalom (5915 Beacon Street, Squirrel Hill: 1931), and Temple Beth El in Richmond, VA (1931), in red brick and with a more restrained Colonial Revival touch.

By the 1950s, Sharove had adopted the International Style. In this decade, until his death in 1955, Sharove seems to have been in demand as a designer of Modern synagogues. Commissions include the community building addition to B'nai Israel in East Liberty (1948); Tree of Life (Shady and Wilkins avenues, Squirrel Hill, with Charles and Edward Stotz, 1952), Temple Beth Sholom in Johnstown, PA (ca. 1951), Beth Am in Monessen (1954), Knessett Israel in Kittanning (1954), Beth Israel in Washington (1955), and Agudath Sholom in Lynchburg, VA (1955). Sharove's buildings from this period share certain characteristics: low-slung massing, flat roofs, a mix of stone and brick veneer to differentiate volumes, and, often, integral reliefs and/or frieze bands inscribed with one of the ten Commandments or with the name of the temple.

Sharove spent most of his career in independent practice, but he occasionally partnered with others for specific projects.[69] For Freehof Hall, Sharon worked with Harry Lefkowitz (1901-1973). Lefkowitz was, like Sharove, a local Jewish architect from Squirrel Hill, graduate of Carnegie Tech, and member of Rodef Shalom. His obituary states that he was also a member of Congregation Beth Shalom, for whom he designed the classroom building. Lefkowitz was a committed and accomplished practitioner of Modern design. His other major commissions include the Ohringer Home Furniture Store in Braddock (1941), Quentin Roosevelt Elementary School in Carrick (1959), and Chatham Center (with William Lescaze, 1964).

§ 1101.04 (b)(7): Associated with important events and social aspects.

Rodef Shalom is associated with the Jewish history of Pittsburgh and western Pennsylvania. Since 1907, its campus on Fifth Avenue in Shadyside has been the permanent home of the oldest, most established Jewish congregation in western Pennsylvania, known for its leadership in the philosophy and practice of Reform Judaism. "As the leading congregation [in Pittsburgh], it represented Judaism in the broader community and participated in the issues that faced the Pittsburgh community," such as immigration, assimilation, Zionism, and Nazism. Throughout its history, Rodef Shalom provided for the changing religious needs of its members through successive waves of immigration, the Great Depression, two world wars, the Baby Boom and middle-class exodus to the suburbs, and the changing demographics and economic base of the Pittsburgh region.

Through immigration, Pittsburgh's Jewish population grew substantially from fewer than 100 in 1850 to over 40,000 at its peak in around 1920. This population was far from monolithic, but has been diverse since its beginnings.

Like other immigrant groups, Jews arriving in Pittsburgh sorted themselves into communities in which they shared commonalities, such as their native cultures and dialects, religious rituals, and social traditions. Family ties also played an important role, as many new arrivals settled near family members who could help them find work, community connections, and marriage partners. Many of these factors also affected the new arrivals' economic status, which in turn influenced their choices of residence and synagogue. Thus, Pittsburgh's Jewish population was comprised of many ethnic communities in which immigrants banded together to share their cultural pasts and, moving forward, established their own religious, social, and relief organizations to help assimilate newcomers.

To say "Pittsburgh" today is to include the North Side, but prior to 1907, when it was annexed, the independent city of Allegheny was home to an early wave of central European, German-speaking Jews.[72] It was, in fact, the first community of western Pennsylvania Jews to organize into a congregation, Shaare Shamayim, the precursor to Rodef Shalom, in the 1850s. As German immigrants poured in to Allegheny in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, they formed a strong ethnic enclave. They spoke German in their businesses, banks, schools, and churches, had their own German language newspaper, and participated in German singing, social, and cultural societies. A small but substantial number of these immigrants were Jewish, and they, too, spoke German in their synagogue.

Over time, the German Jews of Allegheny became an established middle class of, mostly, prosperous merchants who owned handsome houses on the tree-lined streets of Manchester and Allegheny West. Rabbi Lippman Mayer of Rodef Shalom lived on Western Avenue, just two blocks from Ridge Avenue, Allegheny's Millionaire's Row. From their beginnings in neighborhood dry goods and grocery stores, some successful Jewish merchants expanded into department stores, such as Kaufmann's and Frank and Seder's. Others built wealth through investment. The wealth of Allegheny's Jewish community allowed it to begin to build synagogues and other Jewish institutions, such as the Concordia Club, founded on Stockton Avenue in 1874.

In her book *Steel City Jews*, Barbara S. Burstin notes that the Allegheny River "separated an acculturating, middle class, central European Jewish immigrant group and their children from newly arriving, impoverished Jewish immigrants primarily from Eastern Europe. The lifestyles, ideals, habits, and traditions of each Jewish population differed dramatically." It was the former

group of more established German Jews which founded and sustained Rodef Shalom through its early decades.

When the congregation moved to Shadyside in 1907, it placed further distance—physical and social—between itself and more recent immigrants from Eastern Europe and Russia who lacked their wealth and sophistication. These differences were not only based on socioeconomic class, but also on religious observance. More recent immigrants tended to be Orthodox Jews, whereas Rodef Shalom had been proudly Reform since 1863.

The Jews who arrived in Pittsburgh later in the nineteenth century came from Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Russia, most seeking to escape religious persecution and pursue economic opportunity. Many settled in the Hill District. These so-called "Hill Hebrews" often lived in tenements without running water, indoor sanitation, or central heat.

Barred by discrimination from working in Pittsburgh's steel mills, Jewish workers found jobs as unskilled laborers in bakeries and cigar and textile factories. Yet they found time, energy, and funds to establish and participate in a number of Jewish institutions. In the 1910s, the Hill was home to 11 synagogues, all Orthodox; several Hebrew schools, English-speaking Jewish Sunday schools, and institutions perpetuating Yiddish language and culture; the Irene Kaufmann Settlement House; Montefiore Hospital; and the Labor Lyceum, a Jewish union hall and socialist community center.

Not coincidentally, at a national level, this age of immigration gave rise to the Progressive Movement, which sought to makeurban life safer and healthier for new arrivals and to help them assimilate as Americans. From its temple on Fifth Avenue, Rodef Shalom Congregation embraced Progressive goals as part of its Reform view of Judaism as a progressive religion with a mission of social justice. While maintaining their own cultural identity and liturgical practices rooted in Reform Judaism, members of Rodef Shalom engaged with the poorer, Orthodox Jews of the Hill by supporting the institutions that helped and uplifted them at a time when social services were almost entirely provided by religious groups. "In this area, the Jewish community made significant contributions for the general community as well as taking care of its own." Members of Rodef Shalom either founded or heavily supported the Jewish Home for the Aged, Montefiore Hospital, the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, the Hebrew Institute, and the Gusky Orphanage. Rodef Shalom also directly supported Pittsburgh's Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, various overseas relief agencies, and a number of immigrant synagogues in the small towns of westernPennsylvania.

Over time, separate immigrant identities merged into a common, yet still multi-faceted, history and culture of Pittsburgh Jews. In the early twentieth century, the children of the original "Hill Hebrews" grew up. Driven by desires for economic success and social acceptance, many of them attained education, entered the middle class, and moved to areas further east, such as Squirrel Hill and East Liberty. Some formed new congregations, such as B'nai Israel in East Liberty, while others joined established ones such as Rodef Shalom. This period of Jewish middle class attainment coincided with Rodef Shalom's elimination of the assigned pew system, which had sorted its congregation in the sanctuary according to its financial means and status before 1922. Membership in Rodef Shalom had always been open to all Jews, regardless of language, citizenship, or country of origin, but now, a taint of elitism dropped away. Accordingly, the congregation's membership soared in the 1920s with new members from various backgrounds who embraced the democratization of Pittsburgh's historically most patrician temple. "Changes at [Rodef Shalom] Temple, in its facilities, its rabbis, and its own administrative policies directly and indirectly fostered growth and integration."

Many of Rodef Shalom's new members were also likely drawn by its Reform practices, which resonated with 1920s progressivism and modern, democratic American culture. The congregation's vote to adopt Reform Judaism in the 1860s evolved into leadership of the movement in 1880s and beyond. Rabbi J. Leonard Levy (served 1901-1917) promoted assimilation of immigrant Jews to American culture during a time when the Jewish presence in the United States was rapidly expanding, and he urged immigrant members of his congregation "to replace what they had known and practiced in Eastern Europe" with "a new and vital American Judaism." In 1909, President Taft visited Rodef Shalom, the first time an American president ever delivered an address from the pulpit in a Jewish house of worship in "a stunning recognition of the successful acculturation of Judaism into the mainstream of American life."

In the mid-twentieth century, under the leadership of Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof (served 1934-1966), Rodef Shalom supported the expansion of the Reform movement in southwestern Pennsylvania through the establishment of new Reform congregations elsewhere in Pittsburgh and its expanding suburbs: Temple Sinai in Squirrel Hill, Temple Emanuel in the South Hills, and Temple David in Monroeville. The congregation's decision to invest in the restoration of its Shadyside temple in 1990 instead of merging with one of these congregations or moving itself to the suburbs demonstrates its commitment to remaining the anchor of Reform Judaism in Pittsburgh, even as the city faced the need to rebuild itself in the face of devastating economic collapse and population loss at the end of the twentieth century.

With origins in a particular enclave of middle-class German Jews from Allegheny, Rodef Shalom's long history is fundamental to the larger story of Jewish religious and architectural expression in Pittsburgh.

§ 1101.04 (b)(10): Familiar visual feature.

Rodef Shalom's location at the gateway between residential Shadyside and the City Beautiful-inspired institutional district of Oakland, along with its imposing size and light, polychromatic building envelope, make it a landmark of unmistakable prominence on Fifth Avenue.

5. Integrity

Location

The building remains in its original location, where it continues to be a prominent visual anchor on Fifth Avenue, connecting Oakland and Shadyside in Pittsburgh's East End. It also continues to reflect the formal, monumental, civic and institutional architecture of its surrounding neighborhood, which was a significant part of Pittsburgh's expression of the City Beautiful movement at the turn of the twentieth century.

Design

The 1907 sanctuary retains most of its original exterior design features, including its Beaux Arts and Modern French style; monumental, square-planned auditorium with chamfered corners, convex mansard roof and two-story entry vestibule; brick and granite entry plaza flanked by Rookwood electroliers; fenestration patterns, including numerous stained glass windows; method of construction, especially the double vaults of Guastavino tile; and materials. Similarly, the wings from 1938 and 1956 (now historic in their own right) retain most of their original exterior design features, including their rectangular massing; architectural styles (minimalist Art Deco and Modern, respectively); and materials.

Materials

Original materials remain largely intact. On the exterior, cream-colored brick continues to unify all four building campaigns. The sanctuary retains its granite foundation, polychromatic terra cotta accents (though faded), green Ludowici tile roof, and central skylight. The religious education wing retains its Blumcraft railings and window grilles; Art Deco limestone entry piers, parapet caps and accents; terra cotta and marble entry accents; the majority of its terra cotta frieze; and clerestory stained glass windows. Though simpler in design from the outset, the social hall wing retains its rectilinear limestone accents.

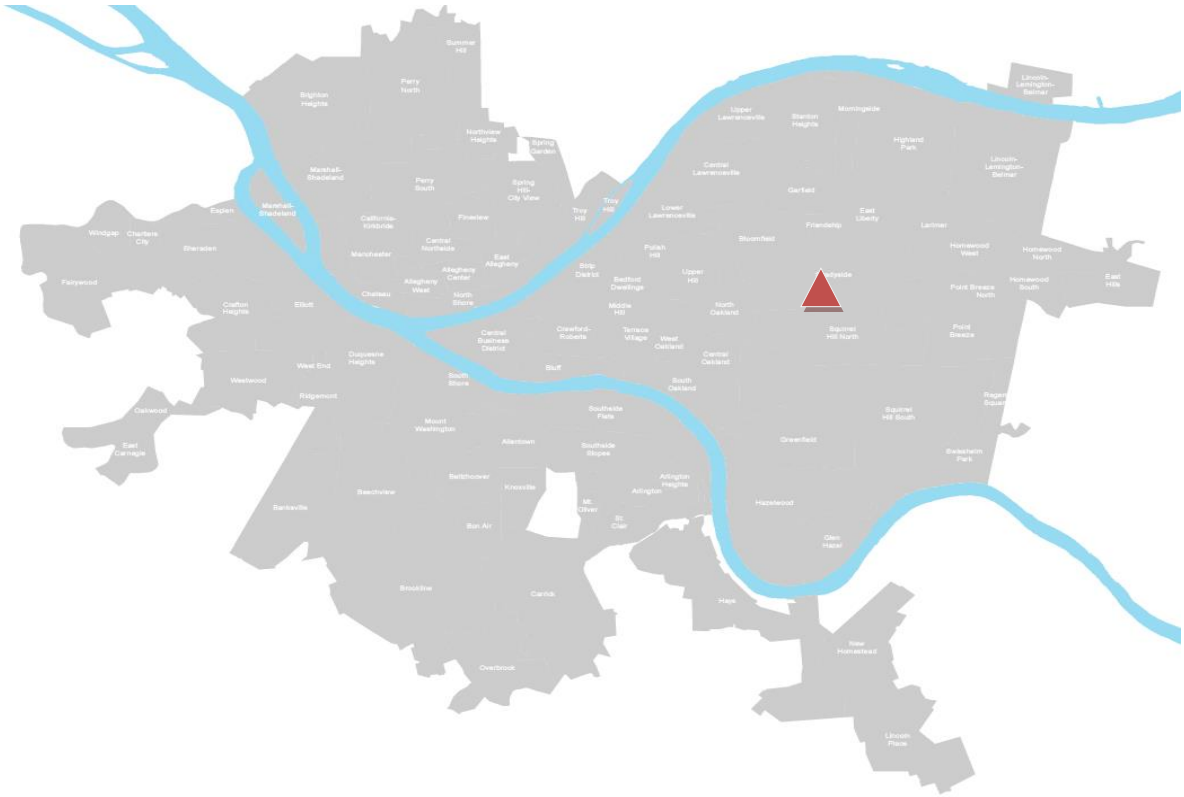
Workmanship

Decorative art and craft skills continue to be expressed in the building's ornate exterior electroliers and adjacent cast iron gates with their stylized menorahs and antelope heads; the then-innovative polychromatic terra cotta decorative elements; the six-armed wood chandeliers in gilt and blue finishes (along with their matching wall sconces and vestibule ceiling fixtures); the numerous stained glass windows and skylight.

6. Photos


Rodef
Shalom
CONGREGATION
Chartered 1856

7. Maps



8. Recommendation of the Historic Review Commission

The Historic Review Commission held a public hearing regarding the designation of Rodef Shalom. On 2 February 2022 the Historic Review Commission voted to recommend to City Council that it designate The Rodef Shalom as historic.

9. Recommendation of the City Planning Commission

The City Planning Commission held a public hearing regarding the designation Rodef Shalom. On 22 March 2022, the Planning Commission voted to recommend to City Council that it designate Rodef Shalom as historic.

10. Meeting Minutes

HRC MINUTES -1 DECEMBER 2021 – PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION HEARING

Pittsburgh HRC –December 1, 2021
Rodef Shalom
4905 Fifth Avenue

Historic Nomination
Owner:
Rodef Shalom Congregation
Ward: 7th
Lot and Block: 52-K-27
Nominator:
Matthew Falcone
Inspector:
Council District:
Nominations Received: 11/9/21
National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:
Proposed Changes: Nomination for historic designation.
Discussion:
1. Ms. Quinn gives a short presentation on the property. She states that the nominator found that the property is significant under Criterion 3, exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship, Criterion 4, identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States, Criterion 7, association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States, and Criterion 10, unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh. She states that the property retains integrity and recommends that the Commission provide a determination of positive viability.
2. Ms. Aguirre states that she is surprised that the building is not already listed.
3. Mr. Falcone states that the congregation is appreciative of everyone's consideration.

4. Ms. Aguirre asks if everyone is agreement with the criteria presented.

5. Mr. Snipe says yes.

6. Mr. Dash says yes.

Motion:

1. Mr. Dash moves to provide a determination of positive viability based on Criteria 3, 4, 7, and 10.

2. Mr. Hill seconds.

3. Ms. Aguirre asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries

HRC MINUTES – 2 FEBRUARY 2022- RECOMMENDATION

Pittsburgh HRC –February 2, 2022

Rodef Shalom

4905 Fifth Avenue

Historic Nomination

Owner:

Rodef Shalom Congregation

Ward: 7th

Lot and Block: 52-K-27

Nominator:

Matthew Falcone

Inspector:

Council District:

Nominations Received: 11/9/21

National Register Status: Listed: X Eligible:

Proposed Changes: Nomination for historic designation.

Discussion:

1. Ms. Quinn gives a short presentation on the property. She states that the nominator found that the property is significant under Criterion 3, exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship, Criterion 4, identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States, Criterion 7, association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States, and Criterion 10, unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh. She states that the property retains integrity and recommends that the Commission provide a determination of positive viability.

2. Ms. Aguirre states again that she is surprised that this building wasn't already

listed. She asks for public comment.

3. Mr. Falcone speaks as president of the congregation and thanks the Commission on behalf of the board and congregation. He states that the building's history is interwoven into the history of the city, state, and country, and they are looking to celebrate that.

4. Ms. Aguirre asks for additional public comment; there is none. She states that the nomination is extensive and the criteria are well defined. She states that she feels it can be recommended to City Council.

5. Ms. Loysen agrees.

Motion:

1. Mr. Green moves to recommend that Rodef Shalom be designated a local historic landmark based on Criteria 3, 4, 7, and 10.

2. Mr. Hill seconds.

3. Ms. Aguirre asks for a vote; all are in favor and motion carries.

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES –22 MARCH 2022- RECOMMENDATION

City of Pittsburgh

Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2022 3:00pm Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Christine Mondor

In Attendance

Chairwoman Christine Mondor
Vice Chairwoman LaShawn Burton-Faulk
Secretary, Becky Mingo
Rachel O'Neill
Fred Brown
Dina (Free) Blackwell
Holly Dick

Staff Present

Corey Layman, Zoning Administrator
Andrew Dash, Director of City Planning
Kate Rakus, Principal Planner
Svetlana Ipatova, Recording Secretary
Anne Kramer
William Gregory
Kathleen Oldrey
Kevin Kunak
Sarah Quinn
Tiffany Krajewski

Index

A. Approval of Minutes
On motion moved by Ms. Blackwell and seconded by Ms. Dick, the minutes of the March 8, 2022 meeting are approved.

B. Correspondence (See Attachment B)
The Commission is in receipt of the following correspondence:

DCP-ZDR-2021-12955 6100 Penn Avenue

- Rob Pfaffman

DCP-HN-2021-01137 Tito House

- Alan Ackerman

DCP-ZDR-2021-12955 – UPMC Presby Bed Tower

- Wanda Wilson, Executive Director, OPDC
- Georgia Petropoulos, CEO, Oakland Business Improvement District (OBID)

Council Bill 2021-1906 and DCP-MPZC-2021-01666 – Oakland Crossing UC-MU

- Caroline Mitchell
- Joan P. Dickerson
- Carlino Giampolo
- Georgia Petropoulos, CEO, Oakland Business Improvement District (OBID)
- Elena Zaitsoff for Oakcliffe Community Organization
- David Panasiuk, President, Oakcliffe Community Organization
- Eric Day
- Wanda Wilson, Excective Director, Oakland Planning Development Corporation
- Mark Anthony Thomas, President, Pittsburgh Regional Alliance
- Mark Oleniacz
- Tom McIntyre, Business Manager, IBEW Local #5 and Chad Jones, Executive Director, Western PA Chapter, National Electrical Contractors Association

C. Development Reviews (See Attachment C for staff reports)
Hearing and Action

1. DCP-HN-2021-01526 – 4905 5th Avenue Historic Nomination for Rodef Shalom Synagogue. Shadyside Neighborhood

Ms. Quinn made presentation in accordance with the attached staff report.

There being no comments from the Public, the Chairwoman called for questions and comments from the Commissioners.
There being no comments from the Commissioners, the Chairwoman called for the Motion.
MOTION:
That the Planning Commission of the City of Pittsburgh provides a positive recommendation to City Council for the nomination of 4905 5th Ave, DCP-HN-2021-01526 for listing as a City-designated historic site.

MOVED BY: Ms. Dick SECONDED BY: Ms. Burton-Faulk

IN FAVOR: Dick, Blackwell, Burton-Faulk, Brown, Mingo, Mondor, O'Neill
RECUSED:
OPPOSED:
ABSTAINED:
MOTION CARRIED