



# HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

**Historic Preservation Staff Signature:**

**Fee Schedule**

Individual Landmark Nomination: \$100.00  
District Nomination: To be determined

**\*\*Nomination is incomplete without historic preservation staff signature**

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY:

Simonson School / Colonial School / Maimonides Inst. / Anathan

2. CURRENT NAME OF PROPERTY:

Anathan House

3. LOCATION

a. Street: 1620 Murray Ave.

b. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15217

c. Neighborhood: Squirrel Hill

4. OWNERSHIP

d. Owner(s): The National Council of Jewish Women - Pittsburgh Section

e. Street: 1620 Murray Ave.

f. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, P.A. 15217

g. Phone: 412-421-6118

5. CLASSIFICATION AND USE – Check all that apply

☐ Type

Ownership

Current Use:

X Structure

☐ Private – home

☐ District

☒ Private – other

☐ Site

☐ Public – government

☐ Object

☐ Public - other

☐ Place of religious worship

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6. NOMINATED BY:

a. Name: The National Council of Jewish Women – Pittsburgh Section

b. Street: 1620 Murray Ave.

c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15217

d. Phone: (412) 421-6118 Email: [info@ncjwpgh.org](mailto:info@ncjwpgh.org)

7. DESCRIPTION

Provide a narrative description of the structure, district, site, or object. If it has been altered over time, indicate the date(s) and nature of the alteration(s). (Attach additional pages as needed)

*If Known:*

a. Year Built: 1917

b. Architectural Style: Charles J. Rieger

c. Architect/Builder: Frederick Fischer

Narrative: See attached.

8. HISTORY

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include a bibliography of sources consulted. (Attach additional pages as needed.) Include copies of relevant source materials with the nomination form (see Number 11).

Narrative: See attached.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

*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. Describe how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of these criteria and complete a narrative discussing in detail each area of significance. (Attach additional pages as needed)

The structure, building, site, district, object is significant because of (check all that apply):

1. ☐ Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
2. ☒ Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
3. ☒ Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
4. ☒ Its 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;
5. ☐ Its exemplification of important planning and urban design

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techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;

6. ☐ Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
7. ☐ Its 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;
8. ☐ Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
9. ☐ Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
10. ☐ Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.

Narrative: See attached.

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#### 10. INTEGRITY

In addition, the ordinance specifies that "Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration". (Attach additional pages as needed)

Narrative: See attached.

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#### 11. NOTIFICATION/CONSENT OF PROPERTY OWNER(S)

##### *1.3(a)(2) Community information process.*

*Preceding submission of a nomination form for a District, the Historic Review Commission shall conduct at least one (1) public information meeting within or near the boundaries of the proposed district, which shall include at least one (1) member of the Department of City Planning and one (1) Commission member, to discuss the possible effects of designation. Notice shall be given to the owners of property in the proposed district in accordance with Section 1.3(b) below. The final public information meeting shall be held no more than six months before the nomination form is submitted.*

##### *1.3(a)(1)(a) Subsection F.*

*In the case of a nomination as a Historic District, by community-based organizations or by any individual, but in either event the nomination shall be accompanied by a petition signed by the owners of record of twenty-five (25) percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed District.*

- Please attach documentation of your efforts to gain property owner's consent.-

\*\* The nomination of any religious property shall be accompanied by a signed letter of consent from the property's owner.

#### 12. PHOTO LOGS: *Please Attach*

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**13. BIBLIOGRAPHY:** *Please Attach*

**14. NOMINATION FORM PREPARED BY:**

- a. Name: Matthew Falcone
- b. Street: 417 Lockhart Street
- c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15212
- d. Phone: (412) 417-5910 Email: mfalcone@preservationpgh.org
- e. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **CHECKLIST: Anathan House**

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- ☒ **#1-6 Nomination Form:** Address, Ownership, Classification, Nominator Info.
  - ☒ #7: Description
  - ☒ #8: History
  - ☒ #9: Significance
- ☒ **#10 Integrity**
- ☒ **#11 Consent of Property Owners**
- ☒ **#12 Photographs of Property:** numbered and labeled
- ☒ **#13 List of Supporting Documents**
  
- ☒ **Fee**
- ☒ **Hard-Copy nomination**
- ☒ **Electronic nomination (Word Format for text).**

**Nomination form is incomplete without the signature of Historic Preservation Staff.**

**Please email [HistoricReview@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:HistoricReview@pittsburghpa.gov) to schedule a meeting.**

**Anathan House**  
**Historic Nomination Form**  
**Addendum**

## 7. Description



*Photo. 1. Anathan House, Primary (Eastern) façade.*

Anathan House is located in the northern portion of Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill neighborhood at 1620 Murray Avenue. The historic resource's boundaries are that of the tax parcel as outlined in the image below in red.





Anathan House has four facades, not all of which are visible from the public right of way. The primary (eastern) façade faces onto Murray Avenue and is 2 ½ stories tall and divided into five separate bays. The central bay contains the main entrance to the building on the first floor, with a full lite door set in a stonework arch and doorlite surrounds. Two engaged, iconic pilasters frame the door and doorlites. On the second floor, three sets of one-over-one windows embedded in a stonework surround that stressed verticality by both engaging and disrupting the division line between stories. A small, two paned window caps the central bay. Flanking the central bay on either side are two bays containing two large, double hung windows on the first and second floors. Small, two-paned windows crown the bays on either side.



*Photo. 2. Anathan House, Entrance Detail.*

The brick porch is a prominent notable feature of the building, which provides access from the north side of the building to the main entrance. Framing the porch, decorative Flemish bond brick is interrupted by four large pilasters, each crowned with large concrete planter. The building has a hipped, single roof and a wooden cornice supporting a metal gutter. Two large red brick chimneys rise from the roofline on either side of the building. It should be noted that all windows appear to be modern replacements that purposefully emulate the original glazing pattern of the building.





*Photo. 3. Anathan House, Southern Façade.*

The northern façade of the building contains the contemporary entrance, which is comprised of two metal fire doors. The second and third floor are punctuated by one-over-one double hung windows. To the right, a wooden ramp rises and wraps around the back of the building to provide a graded, handicapped egress. The southern facade of the building is defined by the sun room/observatory, which is a wooden framed structure atop a brick foundation, similar in height to the front porch. The back of the building is similarly divided into three stories, and five bays. A large, three-story steel fire escape is affixed to the building's rear. A small wooden porch provides access to the first floor while a set of concrete stairs provides access to the basement.

Most of the building's utilities are located in this area, with several air conditioning units sitting on a concrete slab.



*Photo. 4. Anathan House, Rear (Western) Façade.*



## 8. History



Fig. 1. 1910 Plat Map Detail, Squirrel Hill. The lot where Anathan House will be constructed is marked with a blue star. Accessed:

<https://historicippittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A20090323-hopkins-0024/viewer>

### Site History – Pre-Construction

The land where Anathan House would later stand was originally connected to several Native American tribes that changed over time. The Adena Tribe, the Hopewell Tribe, the Monongahela People were the original inhabitants of the land and, post-European contact, were later joined by refugees from other tribes, such as the Delaware, Shawnee, and Iroquois. Ultimately European colonists would settle this land, which became known as the Township of Liberty. Liberty incorporated into the City of Pittsburgh in 1868 through annexation.

The land was privately held until July 29, 1903, when the Trustees of the Sixth Presbyterian Church sold two lots to Midford and Amelia Martin for \$12,000 in 1903 with the following condition:

*The property conveyed was subject to the following restrictions: there shall not be more than four buildings erected upon the property, and they should be dwellings (not flats) and should not cost less than \$5,000 each and should not be less than 25 feet west from Murray Avenue.*

The Martins kept one of the lots and sold the other to Gilbert A. Zirckel for \$6,000 [ACDB: 1281:354]. He then sold the lot on October 31, 1916 to W. MacGilvray Shiras for \$10,500 [ACDB 1853:508].

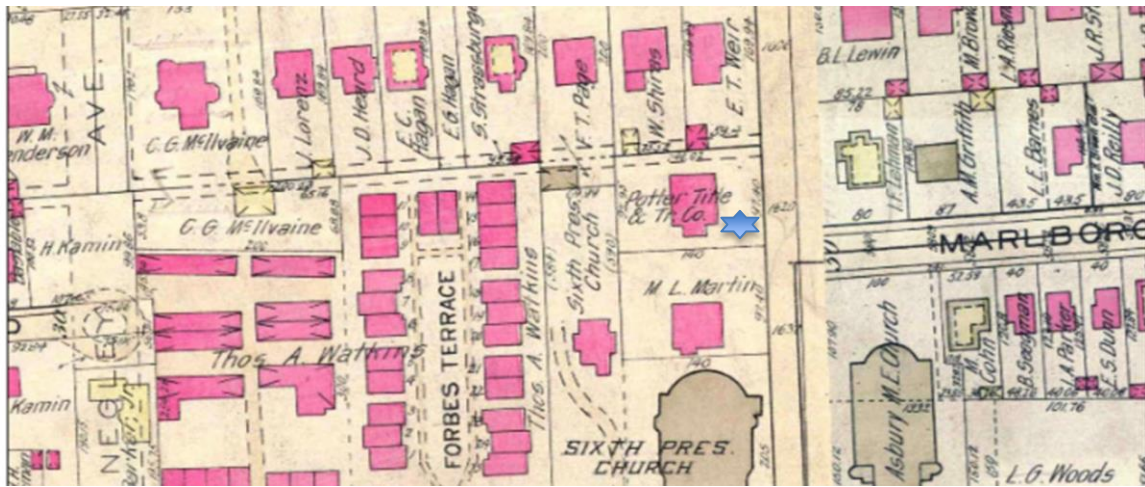


Fig. 2. 1923 Plat Map Detail, Squirrel Hill. Anathan House is marked with a blue star. Accessed: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3A23v0217b/viewer>

### Site History – Construction

After acquiring the lot, MacGilvray Shiras had 1620 Murray Avenue built in 1917.



Fig. 3. MacGilvray Shiras

The Builders' Bulletin, a local trade publication published in its March 10, 1917 issue that a "contract for a residence on Murray Avenue near Aylesboro was awarded to F. L. Fischer, 1148 S. Negley Avenue. Owner, MacGilvray Shiras c/o Carnegie Steel Company. Chas. J. Rieger, Germania Bank Building, Architect." The Squirrel Hill News reported on September 19, 1940 that construction of 1620 Murray Avenue was commissioned by parents of the students at Miss Jessie Simonson's School, which had been previously located at 1540 Asbury Place. The article published nearly a quarter of a century after the building was constructed specifically mentioned "Judge Stone, C. W. Williams, and Shiras McIlvried," as the parents who founded the school. "Shiras McIlvried" certainly refers to MacGilvray Shiras, whose daughter, Mary, was a student. "C. W. Williams" is likely Homer D.

Williams the president of Carnegie Steel whose daughter, Marjorie Belle Williams attended Simonson's School. "Judge Stone" refers to Judge Stephen Stone, whose daughters Natalie and Margaret were students of Miss Simonson. There is no known documentation, aside from The Squirrel Hill News, tying Stone and Williams to the construction of 1620 Murray Avenue, but their rumored participation is worth noting.

Although it appears that the building was always intended as a school, and the property was conveyed to Jessie Simonson on March 1, 1917, before construction had been completed, the original building permit was issued for a residence. The Pittsburgh Daily Post,

reporting on the building permit, stated that the building would be a residence costing \$50,000. Allegheny County mortgage records (Mortgage Book 1631: 133) show that on November 30, 1917 Jessie Simonson received

a mortgage from Allegheny Cemetery in the amount of \$25,000. The mortgage documented that the property contained “a two and a half story steel and hollow tile building.” That same day, Simonson signed the property over to Potter Title and Trust to get the loan. Having erected thereon a two and a half story steel and hollow tile building. The first listing for 1620 Murray to appear in Pittsburgh city directories was Jessie Simonson and Simonson’s Private School in 1918.

**Plans for \$50,000 Home.**  
McGilvray Shiras of the Carnegie Steel Company has had Architect Charles J. Rieger make plans for a \$50,000 residence, for a site in Murray avenue, near Aylesboro avenue, Squirrel Hill. The general contract has been awarded F. L. Fischer.

*Fig. 4. The Pittsburgh Daily Post, March 13, 1917*

#### Site History Post-Construction

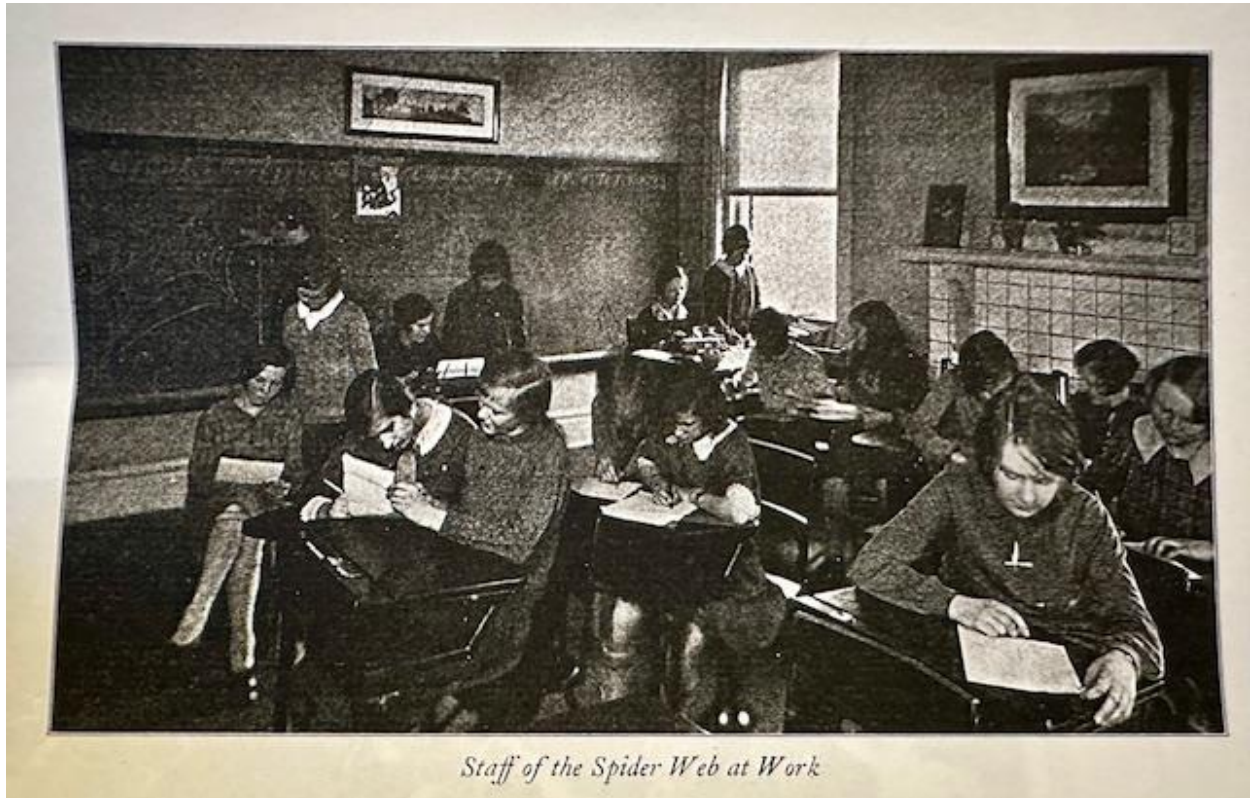


*Fig. 5. Music Appreciation. Group 8 of Simonson’s Private School holding Self-Made Japanese Fiddles. 1927.*

For this reason, it is unclear exactly when she founded Miss Simonson’s Private School.



Miss Simonson's School was a day school for wealthy children in the area, focusing on the arts and in its later years, preparing the students for college. One of the school's alumni would be the poet and publisher, James Laughlin, who founded New Directions Publishing. Laughlin was the wealthy great-grandson of steel pioneer James H. Laughlin. In his autobiography *The Way it Wasn't*, he describes the school as "Miss Simonson's School for the right children of East End Pittsburgh."



*Fig. 6. Staff of the Spider Web (the School's Year Book) at Work. 1927.*

Simonson and at least some of her staff lived at the school, however 1620 Murray Avenue was absent from the census in 1920. When the 1930 census was enumerated Simonson, now 59, was listed as the owner of the building and stated that it had a value of \$45,000.

No teachers lived at the school

The school operated out of 1540 Asbury Place until it moved to 1620 Murray Avenue in 1917. In 1932, the school merged with the Thurston School, and retained Miss Jessie Simonson as the Associated Director of the primary school. In 1935, the Thurston School merged with the Winchester School to become what is now Winchester Thurston.

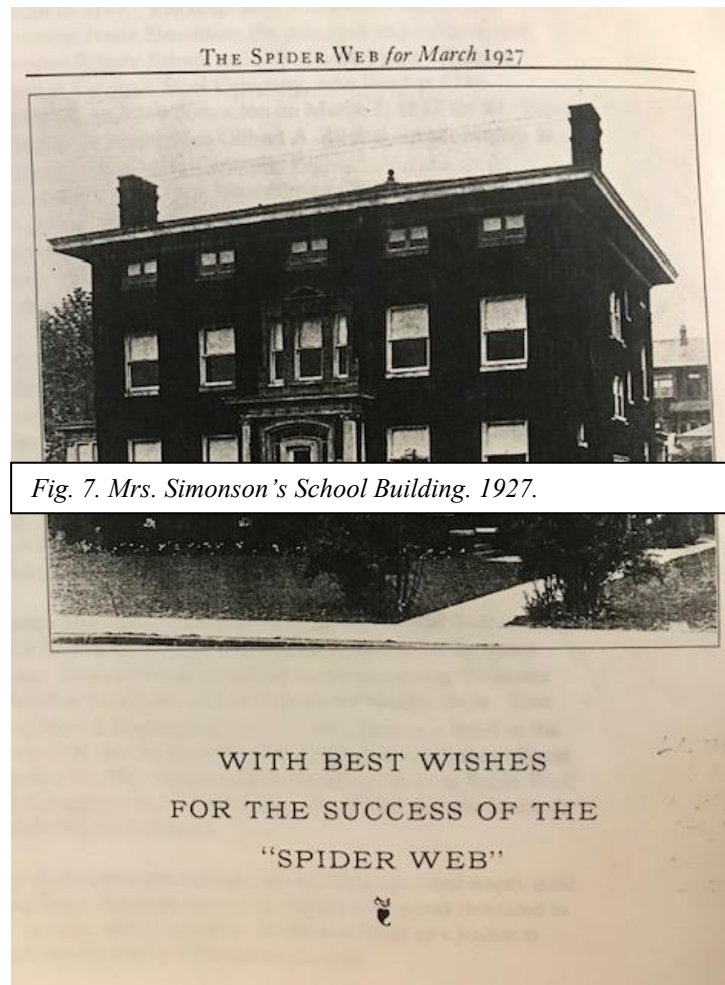






Fig. 8. "Tea for Three Like 'Big Society' People at Colonial School," *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, September 28, 1932.

### *The Colonial School*

After Miss Simonson's school merged with The Thurston School in 1932, the Colonial School began operating out of 1620 Murray Avenue. According to an article published in the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph* on April 29, 1934, the school was named "Colonial School," because the address of the building was 1620, the same year the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The Colonial School closed abruptly in 1940. By September 19, 1940 the *Squirrel Hill News* reported that a cultural center was being planned for 1620 Murray Avenue and that the Colonial School had been "discontinued."

### *Squirrel Hill Art Center*

After the Colonial School closed in 1940, 1620 Murray Avenue was used as a center for arts and culture. Newspapers from the time show that the property was used for many art exhibits and classes and was also the Squirrel Hill unit of the Red Cross surgical dressing center. These units were made up of women who would knit bandages and make surgical sponges and other dressings to aid the Allies during World War II. Simonson lost the property to sheriff's sale in 1941 and the Squirrel Hill Art Center discontinued operation around that time.

### **Maimonides Book To Be Published**

The Maimonides Institute of Pittsburgh plans to publish in the near future a new source for the study of Moses Maimonides, Jewish medieval philosopher and codifier of Biblical and Talmudic law.

Efforts directed by Rabbi Wolf Leiter, head of the institute, to study Maimonides in a scientific and more systematic manner have resulted in the discovery of one of the primary sources of the scholar—a segment of the response of Joseph ibn Migas, head of the Talmudic Academy at Lucena, Spain, in the 12th Century.

*Fig. 9. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, June 27, 1953*

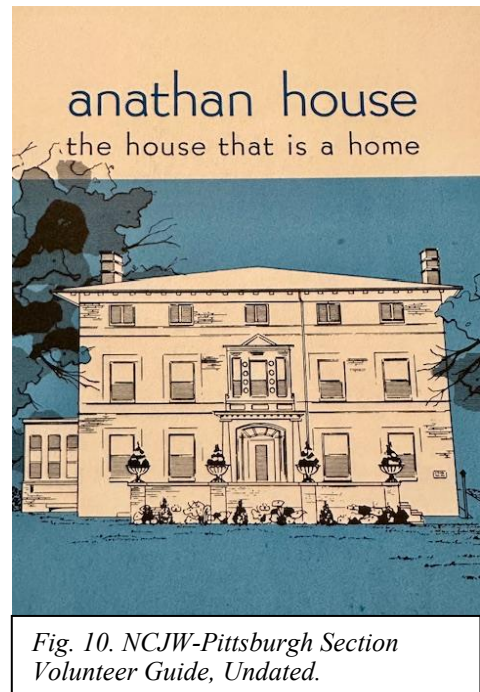
### *Maimonides Institute of Jewish Studies*

The Maimonides Institute of Jewish Studies purchased 1620 Murray Avenue in 1942. The founder and director of the institute was Rabbi Wolf Leiter, who was born in Ukraine in 1891 and immigrated to the United States in 1920. In 1922 he moved to Pittsburgh and became leader of the Macheskei Hadas Congregation, a position he held for over 50 years. The Maimonides Institute focused on publishing important scholarly works and excerpts from its first publication, *Mitorotan Shel Rishonim*, 1946, became part of a new edition of the Talmud. In addition to scholarly studies, the institute hosted community services, such as classes, clubs and social events.

### *National Council of Jewish Women*

On March 10, 1961 NCJW-Pittsburgh Section filed an occupancy permit to use the building as a community club by its members and of elderly people of the community for the purpose of advancement in religious, philanthropic, civic, and education pursuits and activities. The neighbors of Squirrel Hill repeatedly challenged this zoning in court and after a nearly two-year zoning battle, on October 3, 1962, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court settled the zoning request in favor of NCJW-Pittsburgh Section.

On December 4, 1962 the Anathan Foundation bought the house from the Maimonides Institute for \$60,000 and ownership was turned over to the National Council of Jewish Women, Pittsburgh Section. According to Dorothy Blumenthal in *My Voice Was Heard* (p. 184) and at the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Anathan House, "...the house was in deplorable condition, although it was structurally sound." She goes on to say that Mrs. Anathan gave NCJW-Pittsburgh Section \$60,000 to remodel the house so that it would be tailored to meet the needs of NCJW-Pittsburgh Section and



*Fig. 10. NCJW-Pittsburgh Section Volunteer Guide, Undated.*

its Council Lounge project, which catered to the social health of the senior community. New wiring, plumbing, plaster, and most importantly a new elevator would be installed. On September 8, 1963 the house was dedicated as *the Simon J & Bessie Frank Anathan Center for Older People*.



*Fig. 11. Anathan House Dedication, September 8, 1963.*



## 9. Significance

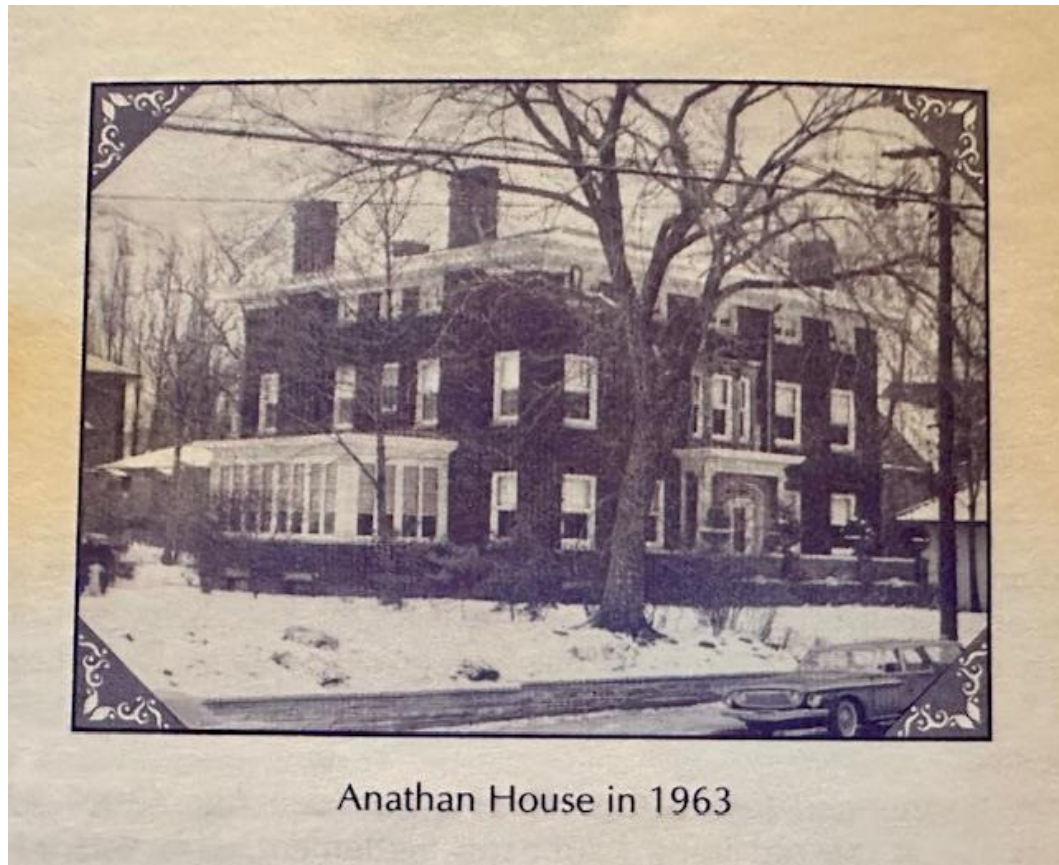
- 1) *Its location as a site of significant historic or prehistoric event or activity*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

- 2) *Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

This resource meets this Criterion.

Anathan House is strongly associated with the National Council of Jewish Women - Pittsburgh Section as it has served as their home, and home for their programming, for the past 63 years.



*Fig. 12. Anathan House. 1963.*

The National Council of Jewish Women – Pittsburgh Section was founded in 1893 when Pauline Rosenberg returned from the Chicago's World Fair, during which 13 women founded the world's first national organization for Jewish women. Since the organization's

founding it has had a profound impact on the social, cultural, and historic life of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, and the nation.

Inspired by the events of the Columbian Exposition, NCJW-Pittsburgh Section was originally called “the Columbian Council”, a name which it kept for several decades until it adopted the national nomenclature of the National Council of Jewish Women for its sections. During the early years of the then Columbian Council, the organization manifested its mission as a direct service organization and focused on better the lives of women, children, immigrants, and the poor. Here in Pittsburgh, they were responsible for founding the first free kindergarten in Allegheny County, establishing the first parole officer for children within the Allegheny County Court system, and, perhaps most significantly, founding the Columbian Settlement School (which was later renamed the Irene Kaufman Settlement) in the Hill District.

The Columbian Council opened an entirely volunteer-run Settlement house in the Hill District in 1896. Originally the settlement house offered educational and recreational activities to Jewish immigrants but by 1909 the services were in such high demand that the Columbian Council approached the Henry and Teresa Kaufmann to expand the operation. The newly minted Kaufman Settlement would go on to be one of the largest and most successful settlement houses in America, offering services to all who lived in the Hill District. The settlement offered everything from baths to classes on English, attire, cuisine, and styling hair. Perhaps most significantly, it also provided classes in art, which is where local and nationally-acclaimed artist Samuel Rosenberg would get his start. The Kaufmann Settlement would

continue to change over time and eventually became two prominent successor organizations, the Hill House and the Pittsburgh Jewish Community Center. Throughout its history, NCJW’s Columbian Settlement School project would enrich the lives of thousands of Pittsburghers.



*Fig. 13. Irene Kaufmann Settlement. 1922.*

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, NCJW – Pittsburgh Section would continue to have a tremendous social and cultural impact on the lives of Pittsburghers through the creation of its “Council

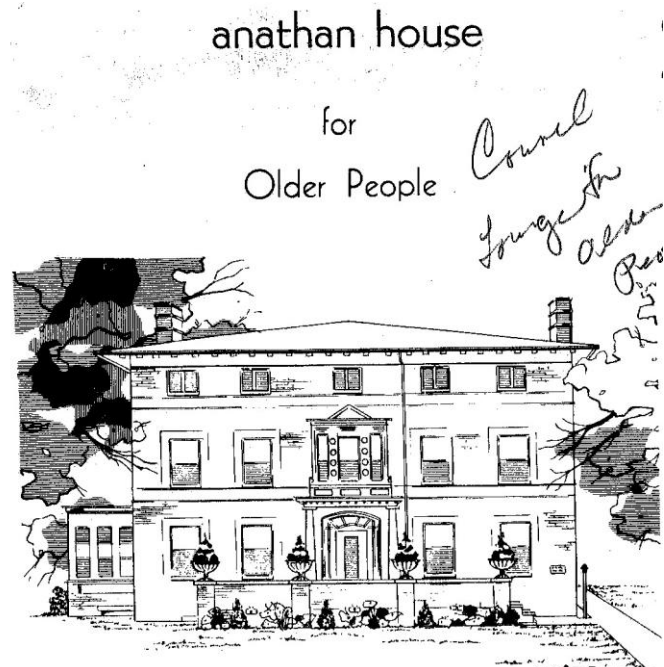


*Fig. 14. Bessie Anathan.  
Undated.*

Lounge for Older People”. The non-sectarian project was the first forerunner in Pittsburgh, and the Commonwealth, to what is known today as a “Senior Center”. Founded in 1949, through a generous gift by Bessie Anathan (long-time NCJW-Pittsburgh Section member and president), the center operated out of a rented space in Squirrel Hill on Forbes. The Lounge, which primarily focused on the recreational needs of seniors, was widely popular and NCJW-Pittsburgh Section looked to expand its services and footprint. In 1961, Bessie Anathan, felt that the rented location was no longer suitable because “there was a long slight of steps to be climbed, which had become difficult for some of our Seniors” and provided a large donation so that NCJW could acquire a space more suited for the program and the section. The building was shortly

acquired and remodeled, most notably with an elevator to accommodate the needs of seniors.

On September 8, 1963, after a length legal battle with the neighbors over zoning that was eventually settled by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, NCJW-Pittsburgh Section renamed the Council Lounge project the “Anathan House for Older People” and moved into 1620 Murray Ave. In addition to the recreational opportunities previously provided, medical care, educational opportunities, and other related services now played a prominent role in the program. In 1973 the Anathan House for Older People project merged with the Jewish Community Center Senior Adult Program and was expanded to the NCJW Anathan House-Jewish Community Center for Senior Adults in Greater Pittsburgh. In 1988, after continued growth, the program moved from Anathan House and continues to this day through a collaboration between the Jewish Community Center (their AgeWell Program) and the Jewish Association on Aging (their Anathan Adult Day Memory Care Services).



*Fig. 15. ‘Anathan House for Older People’. Undated.*



Interestingly, the supportive programming NCJW-Pittsburgh Section provided to older members of our community would be the inspiration for one of the most historically-impactful projects the organization would initiate from Anathan House. Between 1968 and 2001 the volunteer members of the National Council of Jewish Women – Pittsburgh Section conducted 516 oral interviews of members of the Jewish community, with special focus on the immigrants, and descendants of immigrants, who lived in the Hill District. Now digitized and housed at the University of Pittsburgh Archival Service Center, the thousands of hours of audiotape collected provide an intimate look at the “academic, business, civic, cultural, medical, political, religious, and social evolution and development of Pittsburgh”. After the oral history interviews of Ellis Island, NCJW – Pittsburgh Section’s archive, remains the nation’s second largest oral history archive dedicated to the experiences of immigrants.



*Fig. 16. ‘Oral History Interview’ NCJW-Pittsburgh Collection. Undated.*

Throughout its history, NCJW - Pittsburgh Section remained steadfastly true to its mission of service and advocacy for women, children, and the underserved, often creating programs and initiating change that grew to be stewarded by others to that stood independently on their



*Fig. 17. Silent Witness Initiative. NCJW-Pittsburgh Collection. Undated.*

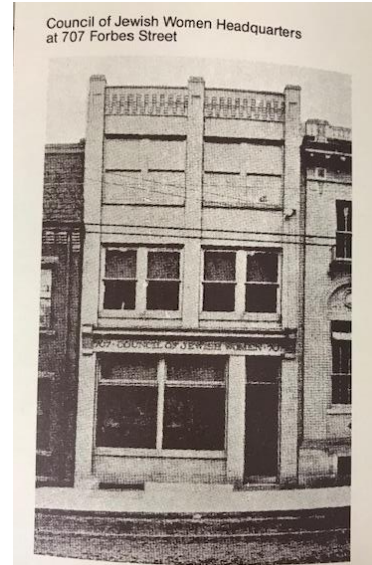
own. For example, NCJW – Pittsburgh Section’s Committee for Jewish and Non-Jewish Blind would eventually become the statewide organization, the Pennsylvania Association of the Blind. Over the years Anathan House would be home to programs, initiatives, and organizations that supported these objects. These initiatives include the Penny Lunch program (1911), the Student Aid Project (1925), the Council Service Shop, currently Thriftique (1927), the League for Handicapped (1929), the Council Lounge for

Older People (1949), the Council House (1957), the local Headstart program (1963), Friends Indeed (1975), Children’s Rooms in the Courts (1980), Council Care (1983), Home Instruction for Preschool Youngsters (1987), Komen Pittsburgh Race For The Cure (1993),



Partners in Conversation (1994), the Silent Witness Initiative (1997), and the Center for Women (2013).

When evaluating the significance of NCJW - Pittsburgh Section's Anathan House, it is important to contextualize it with other buildings that may embody part of NCJW's history. Unfortunately, very few buildings that have a connection to NCJW-Pittsburgh Section's history and work remain today, making 1620 Murray Avenue the strongest. The other most likely candidates would be the second Rodef Shalom Temple (formerly located on 8th Street, in downtown Pittsburgh), where the NCJW-Pittsburgh Section regularly met and held meetings (demolished in the 1960s, currently a parking lot), 707 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa., which was the first Council Headquarters building (demolished, currently a parking lot). Other buildings that were associated with the NCJW-Pittsburgh Section's work also no longer remain. The Irene Kaufmann Settlement House (1835 Center Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.) was demolished and replaced in 1972 with a late modernist building and the Home for Working Girls (4815 Center Ave.) has also been demolished and replaced with a contemporary shopping plaza.



*Fig. 18. Council of Jewish Women Headquarters, Undated.*

The only other existing structure connected to NCJW's history is the Hanuer-Rosenberg House, which served as NCJW-Pittsburgh's nascent home. While it does hold an important place in NCJW-Pittsburgh Section's history, its primary significance is derived for being most closely associated with Pauline Rosenberg, NCJW - Pittsburgh Section's founder and first president. Anathan House, by contrast, has served as the headquarters for NCJW-Pittsburgh Section for more than 60 years and has a the strongest connection with the organization, and its programing, through time.



*Fig. 19. NCJW – Pittsburgh Section. 1993.*

- 3) *Its exemplification of an architectural type, style, or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship*

This resource meets this Criterion.

The Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission defines Colonial Revival as:

*One of the most frequently produced and enduring popular styles in America is the Colonial Revival style. It can be seen in a seemingly endless variety of forms throughout the state and the country and still continues to influence residential architecture today. Basically, the Colonial Revival style was an effort to look back to the Federal and Georgian architecture of America's founding period for design inspiration. This enthusiasm to explore the architecture of America's founding period was generated in part by the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876 celebrating the country's 100th birthday. This trend was further promoted by the Columbian Exposition of 1893, held in Chicago.*

*Like most revival efforts, the Colonial Revival style did not generally produce true copies of earlier styles. Generally, the Colonial Revival style took certain design elements - front façade symmetry, front entrance fanlights and sidelights, pedimented doorways, porches and dormers - and applied them to larger scale buildings. These colonial era details could be combined in a great variety of ways, creating many subtypes within this style.*

Anathan House meets this definition as it is a mix of Italian Renaissance Revival and Colonial Revival styles. Italian Renaissance Revival features of Anathan House include its rectangular form, low hipped roof with wide overhang, shorter third-floor windows, and the symmetrical facade of the main block, as well as its pedimented window on the second floor, and columns around the entry way. Most Italian Renaissance houses constructed in Pittsburgh were built in East End neighborhoods such as Squirrel Hill, Highland Park and Schenley Farms between about 1905 and 1920. The style was used almost exclusively in the construction of expensive houses built for occupancy by upper middle-class or wealthy families. The Colonial Revival features at Anathan House can also be seen in the use of red brick and the four chimneys imbedded into the outer walls of the building.

Though Italian Renaissance Revival and Colonial Revival homes in Pittsburgh are not uncommon, the synthesis of styles in Anathan House is unique and the extremely high degree of integrity of the building's exterior is exceptional and worthy of preservation. The style employed in Anathan House's design should also be considered a unique execution of style and design in a building meant to serve as a school but situated in a predominantly residential neighborhood. The exterior appearance of the building conveys to the view that of a large residence while the interior floor plan serves blends together elements of public and private

space. This unique design synthesis makes perfect sense given the intended function of the initial use of the building and is reflective of PHMC's note in that colonial detailing is present throughout a building of a much larger scale than what was common in America's colonial period.

- 4) *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history of development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States*

Charles J. Rieger was born in Allegheny City and received his education from the Western University of Pennsylvania (now the University of Pittsburgh). He trained with architects in Pittsburgh, New York City, and Boston, where he also attended night classes at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He lived at 5818 Northumberland Place, and had his offices in the Germania Bank Building, which was located on Wood Street. Rieger was known for designing a number of schools in the area, such as Rankin Public School, Braddock Junior High School, New Kensington High School, and First Ward Public School. In addition to schools, he designed the Poale Zedek Synagogue in 1928 and was an associate architect for the Syria Mosque in 1911.

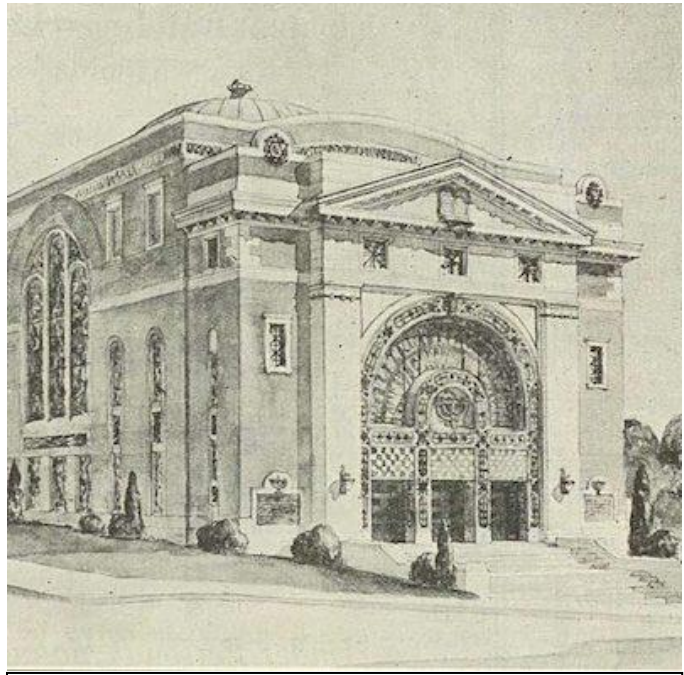


Fig. 15. Poale Zedek Synagogue, Architect's Rendering. 1928.

1620 Murray Avenue is unique among Rieger's work as it is designed to appear as a residence but functioned from its onset as a school. Interior features in the building serve as a further indication of this unique synthesis, with the building containing a large stairwell typically seen in school buildings of the time but a first-floor interior with a layout that was typical of modern homes. A central hall, parlor, a library, a large social hall, and a sun room occupy the first floor and are divided by pocket doors.

- 5) *Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

6) *Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

7) *Its 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*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

8) *Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

9) *Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

10) *Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh*

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

## 10. Integrity



*Anathan House - 1927.*



*Anathan House - 1963.*



*Anathan House - 1974.*



*Anathan House - 2025.*

Anathan House retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, workmanship, and materials.

It remains in its original location purchased by MacGilvray Shiras from Trustees of the Sixth Presbyterian Church and the design remains unaltered from Charles J. Rieger's original execution.

The house's integrity of workmanship and materials are evident in the detailed woodwork, patterned brick, and stonework of the primary and secondary facades as well as, to a lesser extent, the rear façade. Though the windows have been replaced with those comprised of newer material, all original openings have been maintained, and the form and mass are comparable to the originals.

It is often said that the easiest way to measure historic integrity is to think about whether or not someone from when something was first construct would recognize the place if they were brought to the present day. Resoundingly, the answer would be yes.

**Anathan House**

**Historic Nomination Form Bibliography**



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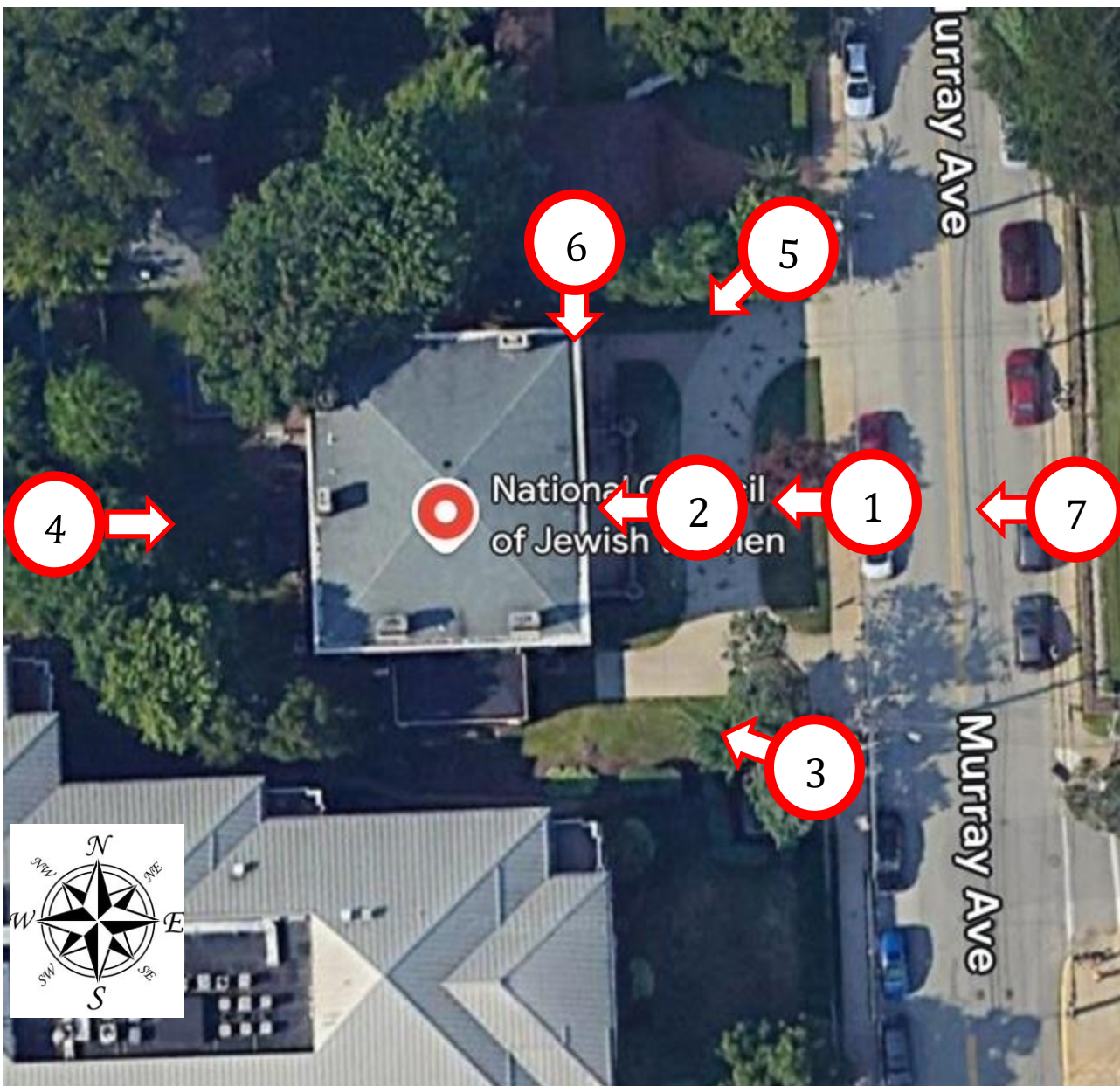
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**Anathan House**

**Historic Nomination Form Photo Logs**

Arial View of Anathan House with Numbered Photo Key.



## Photographs



Photo 1: Anathan House (Sept. 2021). *Primary (Eastern) façade.*





Photo 2: Anathan House. *Entrance Detail.*





Photo 3: Anathan House. *Southern Façade*.



Photo 4: Anathan House. *Rear (Western) Façade.*





Photo 5: Anathan House. Northern Façade from Murray Ave.



Photo 6: Anathan House. Porch Stairs.





Photo 7: Anathan House. Primary Façade and Front Grounds.

**Anathan House**  
**Historic Nomination Form**  
**Supporting Documents**



The 11th Triennial National Convention of NCJW – Washington DC, November 15, 1926



NCJW – Pittsburgh Section. Undated.



DAVID L. LAWRENCE  
MAYOR



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, - the Pittsburgh Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, dedicated to the purpose of advancing human welfare and the democratic way of life, has been in existence for 60 years; and

WHEREAS, - the women of this organization, during these years, have contributed to the civic and public welfare of the citizens of Pittsburgh through non-sectarian community services; and

WHEREAS, - this agency established Council Settlement School now known as the Irene Kaufmann Settlement and conducted Vacation Schools until the City's Bureau of Recreation assumed responsibility; and

WHEREAS, - it has aided immeasurably in citizenship training through education and social action, providing English classes for foreign born at two city high schools during summer vacation; and

WHEREAS, - it organized Council Lounge, Pittsburgh's only full-time recreation center for older people, and is sponsoring the Nursery School for the Deaf, the newest pilot demonstration, in cooperation with the Arsenal Public Health Center and the Audiology Department of the University of Pittsburgh; NOW,

THEREFORE, I, DAVID L. LAWRENCE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh, in recognition of these outstanding contributions for the betterment of our community, do hereby proclaim the week of November 15, 1954, to be NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN WEEK in Pittsburgh.

DONE THIS DAY, November 15, 1954, at the Office of the Mayor, in witness whereof I hereunto set my signature and cause the Seal of the City of Pittsburgh to be affixed.



*David L. Lawrence*  
MAYOR

City of Pittsburgh Proclamation, National Council of Jewish Women. November 15, 1954.



City of Pittsburgh Proclamation, National Council of Jewish Women. January 1989.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
HARRISBURG

January 8, 1975

GREETINGS:

The tradition of volunteerism as practiced for 81 years by the National Council of Jewish Women has been an effective means of changing and improving society through programs of social action, education and community service.

The need for committed individuals to champion the cause of the poor, the aged and the disadvantaged continues to grow as our society becomes more automated and impersonal.

The women of the National Council of Jewish Women have continually prepared themselves, by developing their talents and skills, to translate the ideas of freedom and equality for all into a reality for our community today.

Therefore, I, Milton J. Shapp, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, am pleased to designate the week of January 13-19, 1975, as NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN WEEK in order to further recognize the women of the Council who have made a valuable contribution to our society through their dedicated efforts on behalf of their fellowman.



*Milton J. Shapp*  
MILTON J. SHAPP  
Governor

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Proclamation, National Council of Jewish Women. January 1975.