

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Congregation Beth Jacob
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 2401 Avenue K
City or town: Galveston State: Texas County: Galveston
Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
(☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property (☒ meets ☐ does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D


Signature of certifying official / Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

11/29/23
Date

Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: RELIGION / religious facility

Current Functions: RELIGION / religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS / Other: Moorish Revival;
MODERN MOVEMENT / New Formalism

Principal Exterior Materials: FOUNDATION: Concrete
WALLS: Brick, Stone/Limestone, Concrete
ROOF: Synthetics/Rubber

Narrative Description (see continuation pages 7-17)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: A (Religious Property)

Areas of Significance: Ethnic Heritage: Jewish; Architecture (both at local level)

Period of Significance: 1932-1974

Significant Dates: 1932, 1963

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Rapp, Raymond, Sr. (architect; 1932); Kotin & Beerman (architect; 1963 expansion)

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation pages 18-35)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation pages 36-41)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part 1 approved on (date)
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other -- Specify Repository: Congregation Beth Jacob

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one (0.4 acres)

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 29.298488° Longitude: -94.792996°

Verbal Boundary Description: Galveston County parcel number 1000824, recorded by the Galveston CAD (Central Appraisal District) as: "ABST 628 M B MENARD SUR LOTS 5,6 & 7 BLK 84 GALVESTON"¹

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes all the property historically associated with the building. It includes the earliest-constructed portion of the synagogue (1932) and its historic addition (1963) on lots 5, 6, and 7 in Block 84. This legal boundary has remained the same since 1960, when Congregation Beth Jacob acquired the last of the three lots, lot 5, shortly before expanding the synagogue in 1963.²

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Adrienne Vaughan Campbell, Senior Architectural Historian; Izabella Nuckels, Historic Preservation Specialist; Jennifer Brosz, Architectural Historian; and Jenya Green, Architectural Historian, with Gregory Smith (THC)
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Date: October 2023

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 42-46)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 47-56)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 57-86)

¹ Galveston County Clerk, Instrument 2021059469:15, Galveston, August 16, 2021.

² Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 1399:496, Galveston, September 28, 1960.

Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photograph Log

Congregation Beth Jacob
Galveston, Galveston County, Texas
Photographed by Gregory Smith, October 2023 (except as noted)

Photo 1. Northeast oblique.

Photo 2. North elevation, 1932 building.

Photo 3. East Elevation.

Photo 4. Southwest oblique.

Photo 5. Southwest oblique.

Photo 6. Northwest oblique.

Photo 7. Gated entrance, at north end looking south towards main entrance.

Photo 8. Entrance court, at north end looking south towards main entrance.

Photo 9. Main lobby (1963 building), at northeast corner looking southwest towards great hall.

Photo 10. Sanctuary (1963 building), at north end, looking northeast.

Photo 11. Sanctuary, at north end, looking northeast.

Photo 12. Sanctuary, at southeast corner, looking northwest.

Photo 13. Sanctuary, at east end looking southwest.

Photo 14. Great hall (Clark Memorial Hall), at west end, looking northeast towards stage.

Photo 8. *Mikvah*, from doorway in ladies' room, looking southeast. Photo taken in January 2023.

Photo 16. Entrance lobby (first floor, 1932 building), looking west.

Photo 17. Chapel (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking northeast.

Photo 18. North-south hall (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking north.

Photo 19. North-south hall (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking northeast towards chapel.

Photo 20. North-south hall (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking northeast towards chapel.

Photo 21. First floor library, 1932 building, looking west.

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Photo 22. Kitchen, at west-center, looking southeast.

Photo 23. Stair hall (second floor, 1932 building), at center, looking northeast.

Photo 24. Stair hall (second floor, 1932 building), at center, looking northwest.

Photo 25. Typical classroom from 1963 remodel of former Sanctuary (second floor, 1932 building).

Photo 26. Classroom/youth lounge, looking southwest.

Photo 27. Former women's balcony/classroom space, looking northeast.

Photo 28. Star of David stained glass window detail, third floor stairwell (1932 building), looking northeast.

Photo 29. Round window, former location of stained glass Star of David at front of former sanctuary (floor added at balcony level in 1963), looking southeast.

Photo 30 HVAC/mechanical (added at balcony level of former Sanctuary in 1963), looking southeast.

This project was funded in part through a grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, as administered by the Texas Historical Commission. The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior. This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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This project was funded through an Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund grant from the National Park Service that addresses damage inflicted by Hurricane Harvey. In January 2020, National Park Service staff concurred that this property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Description

Congregation Beth Jacob, built in 1932 with a 1963 addition, is at the southwest corner of the intersection of Avenue K and 24th Street in Galveston, Galveston County, Texas (**Photo 1**). The synagogue fronts Avenue K to the north and the south side abuts the alley bisecting Block 84. Storms caused loss or removal of palm trees planted in the sidewalk in front of the synagogue. Late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century residential and commercial buildings occupy the balance of the block. The two-story, original 1932 section, designed as a modernistic adaptation of the Moorish Revival Style by architect Raymond R. Rapp, Sr., is rectangular in plan, with a shallow two-story mechanical room and classroom bay extending from the center of the south (rear) façade. The building rests on a concrete slab foundation and walls are clad in buff-color six-to-one common brick veneer. A soldier course accents the cornice line. The parapet wall, prominently stepped up towards the center of the primary elevation, conceals the flat membrane roof. Simple limestone coping caps the parapet. Round arched, rectangular, square, and oculus window openings are set within recessed bays accented by simple brick corbeling. Wood window sashes feature both clear and stained glass. The overall aesthetic of the 1932 section is formal, with subtle ornamentation applied to symmetrical facades. The modern 1963 addition, designed by architects Benjamin J. Kotin and Tibor E. Beerman, has an L-shaped plan and is positioned at the west and south sides of the original footprint of the 1932 building. The one-story 1963 entryway leads into a Sanctuary and Great Hall with lofted ceilings. The addition continues around the south side of the original synagogue with a two-story section containing a classroom and mechanical/storage room. The lofted ceilings in the Sanctuary and Great Hall accommodate high-set windows. The 1963 addition is characterized by scalloped cantilevered concrete canopies, buff brick cladding, stained-glass windows, marble-clad steel posts, and depth created by canopies, recessed entrances, and brick wing walls. The portion of the 1963 addition that wraps behind the original building accommodates ground- and upper-level rooms. A ribbon of aluminum mid-century school windows spans the rear of the building near the flat roofline. Together, the 1932 building and 1963 addition retain sufficient integrity to convey its architectural and historic significance to the historic period, 1932-1974.

Setting

The City of Galveston is on Galveston Island, a barrier island on the Gulf of Mexico. The city is approximately fifty miles southwest of Houston and runs parallel to the Gulf Coast for nearly thirty miles. To the east of the island, Galveston Bay extends north for thirty miles and serves as a drainage basin for several creeks and rivers. On the north side of Galveston Island are mudflats and salt marshes. Galveston historically developed as a port city, with a ship channel constructed to access it.³ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the city was developed on a gridded street pattern on the eastern part of the island and grew to the west in the mid- to late-twentieth century.⁴

Sited on level terrain, Congregation Beth Jacob is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Avenue K and 24th Street, within the city boundary, south of the central business district, and near one of the city's primary road intersections. It is one block south of Broadway (Avenue J), Galveston's primary east-west route, and a half block east

³ Cox and McLain Environmental Consulting and McDoux Preservation, "Historic Resources Survey: Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Galveston," Cox|McLain Environmental Consulting for the City of Galveston and the Texas Historical Commission (2019). Cox and McLain Environmental Consulting and McDoux Preservation, "Historic Resources Survey: Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Galveston."

⁴ Although the street grid's orientation is skewed from the true cardinal directions, bearings in this section are described as north, east, south, and west.

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of Rosenberg (25th Street), the primary north-south route from Galveston's central business district to the beachfront. The blocks north of the synagogue, up to Broadway, are occupied by one- to two-story mid-twentieth century and twenty-first century commercial buildings, as well as parking lots. The National Register-listed Silk Stocking Residential Historic District is immediately south and east of the synagogue parcel. The residential district features finely appointed one- to two-story late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century homes with moderate setbacks. Palm trees, oaks, hibiscus, magnolia, and oleander are planted on lots and in boulevards. Service alleys bisect blocks with north-south oriented lots. Crushed oyster shell paves some alleys and sidewalks. Other sidewalks are of concrete, glazed tile, or brick.⁵ One-story mid-twentieth century dwellings converted to commercial use and a ca. 1970 apartment complex are mixed in along Rosenberg Street, west of Beth Jacob. The blocks east of Beth Jacob are a mix of late-nineteenth to early-twentieth century two-story residential buildings, many converted to hotels, and one-story early-to-late twentieth century commercial properties.

Congregation Beth Jacob occupies three lots in Block 84, north of the alley. Lots are about 40 feet wide by 120 feet deep. The front of the building faces Avenue K to the north, with wide sidewalks on its north and east sides. Shallow plant beds lined with small pavers are near the central entrance, within the entrance court, and in front of the 1963 addition. A narrow strip of wood picket fence marks the parcel boundary between Beth Jacob and the small, low-profile, mid-century commercial building immediately to its west. A metal outbuilding and prefabricated shed behind the commercial buildings sit very near the west wall of the 1963 Beth Jacob addition. The wood fence continues around the perimeter of the adjacent commercial parcel ending at the southwest corner of Beth Jacob. A vacant lot, parking, and a ca. 1980s commercial building occupy the balance of lots on the block north of the alley. There is a narrow strip of grass between Congregation Beth Jacob's building and the service alley to the south. The lots south of the alley are residential. The 1885 Sweeny-Royston House, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, contributing resource to the Silk Stocking Residential Historic District, and individually listed resource in the National Register of Historic Places, is directly south of Congregation Beth Jacob. A ca. 1890 combination residence/corner store is located on the southwest corner of the block.

Site Chronology

The congregation completed the earliest section of the building, positioned closest to the road intersection, in 1932 in a simplified Moorish Revival style (**Figure 1**). To accommodate growth, in 1963 the congregation built a substantial, one-story, mid-century modern addition. The L-shaped addition wraps around the west and south exterior walls of the 1932 building. Before construction of the 1932 brick synagogue, frame dwellings occupied the site. The 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Galveston (**Figure 2**) shows two, two-story frame dwellings on the two lots fronting Avenue K, west of 24th Street.⁶ Reportedly, the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Association (HOBA) met in the frame dwelling nearest the intersection (Lot 7).⁷ In April 1931, Joseph and Blanch Seinsheimer sold part of Lot 6, Block 84 to Congregation Beth Jacob.⁸ The same year, HOBA sold Congregation Beth Jacob all of Lot 7, Block 84.⁹ After her husband's passing, Mrs. Seinsheimer transferred the balance of Lot 6 to Congregation Beth Jacob at the end of August 1940.¹⁰ The dwelling on Lot 6 was either demolished or relocated. Before beginning construction on the 1932 synagogue on Lot 7 and part of Lot 6, the two-story wood frame HOBA building was shifted to the back of the lot (by

⁵ Bonnye Karger, "Silk Stocking Residential Historic District, Galveston, Galveston County" Texas Historical Commission, 1996), National Register of Historic Places Designation.

⁶ Sanborn Map Company, *Galveston, Galveston County, Texas* (1912, Fire Insurance Map).

⁷ Congregation Beth Jacob, *Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary* (1972), Congregation Beth Jacob, Booklet.

⁸ Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 469:52, Galveston, April 24, 1931; Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 469:52; Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 469:52.

⁹ Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 469:52.

¹⁰ Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 613:346, Galveston, August 31, 1940.

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the alley) and turned 90 degrees east to front 24th Street.¹¹ It was minimally connected to the newly built 1932 Congregation Beth Jacob synagogue as an annex used for religious studies (**Figure 3**).¹² The frame annex was presumably removed when the 1963 addition was built.

Architectural Description

The architectural description begins with the front façade of the 1932 section, working around the 1932 section, clockwise, to the point of beginning. It then describes the front (north) façade of the 1963 addition, continuing clockwise around that section. An account of the synagogue's interior plan and characteristic features and materials follows the exterior description.

Exterior

The front (north) façade of the 1932 section is five bays wide (**Photo 2**). The center bay projects slightly forward from the primary façade. A prominent, two-story, recessed ogee arch, outlined by a soldier course, punctuates the front façade. At mid-level, bricks on each side of the central bay step inward, mimicking the outer curves of the ogee arch. Beneath the ogee, at ground level, shallow red brick steps access the deeply recessed front entrance. The metal-framed glass door with simple glazed rectangular sidelights and transom, all with dark-tinted glazing, appear to be more recent replacements. The semi-elliptical arch over the entrance is constructed of massive limestone voussoirs and supported by engaged limestone piers, each with a subtlety beveled base and block-like quarter-ellipse capital. This invokes a simplified version of the “bracketed capital” common of a Moorish capital and in other Eclectic Revival styles.

“CONGREGATION BETH JACOB” and “בֵּית יַעֲקֹב” (*Beit Yaakov*),¹³ which translates to “House of Jacob” are engraved in limestone blocks above the entrance archway (**Photos 1 and 6**). Brickwork above the name block comprises a blind arcade with three round arches and a string course of header and rowlock bricks. Above, the oculus window centered beneath the ogee arch features an art glass window displaying the Star of David (**Photo 28**). At the top of the center bay, the soldier brick cornice is subtly accented by two additional areas of soldier brick, laid in three courses, creating an inverse-step pattern. Above the coping, an extra course of limestone gives the central bay additional prominence. Two window bays on each side of the center bay are flanked by brick pilasters and capped by three courses of brick corbeling. Below the corbeling, each bay has a simple diamond ornament created by four diagonally placed soldier bricks. The bays immediately flanking the center bay are identical. On the lower level, they feature tall, narrow, round arch window openings with one-over-one wood sash. The leaded glass windows are original and display delicate art-glass patterns. On the upper level, each bay features a band of three wood sash windows with rowlock sills and soldier course headers. On each square window, muntins radiating from a center point divide the window into eight triangular lights. A segment of 23 soldier bricks accents the wall above the band of starburst windows. The two outermost bays on the front façade are also identical to one another, and nearly identical to the aforementioned bays with two exceptions. Due to the stepped parapet, the wall height is shorter on the outer bays, and they do not have any brick ornament between the window bays' upper corbeling and the cornice. Secondly, the lower level has two windows divided by courses of header brick, rather than one long narrow round arch window. The lower window is a small horizontal rectangular wood window with a leaded/art glass pattern matching the base of the previously described windows. Above the header bricks is a shorter round arched one-over-one wood sash window

¹¹ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary. Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

¹² Sanborn Map Company, *Galveston, Galveston County, Texas* (1947, Fire Insurance Map).

¹³ Terms transliterated from Hebrew are italicized throughout, with the exception of names for holidays and other holy days.

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with a leaded/art glass pattern similar to, but not matching, the upper portion of the previously described arched windows.

The east façade (facing 24th Street) exhibits five bays, distinguished, like the front façade, by pilasters and subtle corbeling (**Photo 3**). Each bay, except the northernmost (closest to the primary façade), is punctuated by two openings on the first and second levels. Typical ground level windows are eight-over-eight rectangular wood sash with gold-colored glass, soldier course lintels, and rowlock sills. On the ground level, the first four bays contain, from south to north: two typical rectangular windows; a door and window; a window and a former door opening; and two more typical windows. The south door (second bay from left, facing) is a contemporary metal-framed unit with dark-tinted glass, accessed by a concrete ramp with dark metal pipe handrails. The former door opening in the center bay is boarded over, but the shallow concrete step leading to the door, the door's wood trim, and a wood transom with four square lights, remain intact. The windows north of this door were covered over around the 1960s renovation but revealed and restored during renovations after Hurricane Ike (2008). The upper-level windows in each bay, except the northernmost, are long, narrow, round arched one-over-one wood sash, similar to those on the front façade. These windows contain opaque glass with horizontal divisions between panes rather than the original stained glass. The stained glass was removed at an unknown date. Originally, these large windows lit the 1930s Sanctuary. After the 1960s update, their lower sashes provided light for classrooms. When classrooms were installed, a drop ceiling was added, creating an HVAC space above the classrooms. Thus, the upper, arched sash lights the equipment space. At the northernmost bay, the ground floor contains a high-set, small, horizontal rectangular, fixed, wood sash window. A span of header bricks separates it from the stained-glass round arched stairwell window. Three small square windows with triangular lights, matching those on the primary façade, are at the top of the northernmost bay. These once provided natural light for the traditional women's balcony.

The south (rear) façade has a stepped parapet and a prominent central rectangular bay projecting a few feet from the primary building mass (**Photo 4**). The south façade of the two-story 1932 building is partially covered by the historic 1963 addition. At the time of this nomination, the oculus window at the top of the central bay contained clear glass. It originally featured a Star of David stained-glass window, which was situated above the Ark in the building's original Sanctuary.

At mid-level, the east side of the central bay has a door opening to a metal fire escape, which leads down to the *sukkah*¹⁴ added during the 1960s. The *sukkah* is located where the old Talmud Torah/education building once stood.¹⁵ (See the building to the far left in **Figure 1**.) At mid-level, the east side of the central bay has a door opening to a metal fire escape, which leads down to the *sukkah* added during the 1960s.

The 1932 building's west elevation has three first-story openings sheltered by the 1960s entrance court. From north to south these openings are a high-set horizontal rectangular window, a single door with transom, and a vertical rectangular window. The windows and transom each have a single pane of opaque glass. Based on fenestration patterns shown in historic photos, it is likely the small, high-set window originally contained stained glass, the transom had four panes, and the vertical rectangular window had an eight-over-eight wood sash. This change may have occurred when the 1960s synagogue was added, or it may be a later change. Upper-level west façade openings remain visible above the undulating 1960s concrete canopy and match those on the opposite (east) side of the building, with the original stained-glass windows removed (**Photo 6**). The 1963 addition as constructed adjacent to the west and

¹⁴ Terms transliterated from Hebrew are italicized throughout, except for names for holidays and other holy days.

¹⁵ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.; The Talmud Torah building was a two-story frame residential building, the home of the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Association (HOBA) at 24th and K (facing K), prior to construction of the 1932 synagogue. When the 1932 synagogue was built at 24th and K, the HOBA building was moved behind the new synagogue to face 24th Street, and it used as a Talmud Torah where Rabbi Feigon and his faculty conducted Hebrew and Sunday School classes for 28 years.

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south of the original 1932 sides of the building. The mid-century addition primarily provided the growing congregation a new Sanctuary with greater seating capacity and a Great Hall to host meals and events. The north (front) façade of the 1963 building features two prominent concrete scalloped canopies. The cantilevered canopy west of the 1932 building has a one-story roofline and three curved segments. It shelters the court leading to a central entrance to the building, designed to be the main entrance when the 1960s addition was constructed. A horizontal marble-clad steel beam spans the space between the 1932 and 1963 buildings and helps support the concrete canopy.

“CONGREGATION BETH JACOB” is engraved in the marble. An early twentieth century metal security gate restricts access to the court. Originally set back inside the court, according to personal communication with the congregation, they shifted the gate north towards Avenue K in 2022 to enclose the entire courtyard. West of the court, a wide rectangular bay housing the 1963 Sanctuary bumps out (north) from buff brick wing walls towards Avenue K. A concrete scalloped canopy with six curved segments extends north from the bay. Atop the central bay, the scalloped canopy shelters four arched stained-glass clerestory windows separated by marble-paneled steel beams. The high-set windows rest on a buff brick wall that is slightly wider than the window bay. The wall conceals, at both its east and west ends, three concrete steps leading to side entrances at the front of the Sanctuary. Metal lettering on the front wall reads “THE LORD IS NEAR UNTO ALL WHO CALL UPON HIM.” A metal menorah is centered within the message, which is the English translation of a line from the *Ashrei*, a daily prayer from Psalms 145.¹⁶ The Hebrew text of the prayer is displayed in metal lettering centered below the menorah, and reads קרוב ד' לכל־קראיו (*Karov Adonai L'Chol Korav*).

The east façade of the 1963 section is visible where the tall walls of the Sanctuary and Great Hall rise above the central entrance canopy (**Photo 1**). At the north end of the east façade, six full-height translucent plastic panels allow light into the Sanctuary. Two marble-clad steel beams divide the panels into three pairs. Each panel is a golden color and is printed with black-outlined offset vertical rectangular patterns. The remainder of the east exterior wall has no openings. It extends south to the ell where the 1963 addition wraps the south end of the 1932 building.

The east façade of the ell extension is a buff brick wall with large metal doors opening on an enclosed patio that functions as a space for the *sukkah*. A *sukkah* is a temporary framework that is erected and covered with branches as a space to host ceremonial meals and otherwise spend time in during the week-long celebration of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, a harvest festival, which occurs as one of the High Holidays five days after Yom Kippur.

Rectangular slabs of pebble aggregate make up the flooring in the rectangular outdoor *sukkah* space. On the west side of the *sukkah* is a concrete breeze block wall composed of open squares interspersed with randomly-placed dark reddish-brown glazed tiles. The *sukkah*'s shed roof is an open rafter grid that sits atop wood framing between a leaderboard on the 1963 building's buff brick wall and the breeze block wall. When in use, palm branches are placed atop the roof framework to cover the temporary shelter. A wood fence with a gate is on the south end of the *sukkah*.

The top of the wall on the south (rear) façade is punctuated by a band of fixed aluminum-frame windows alternating between one unit and three-horizontal units topped with off-white spandrel panels. At ground level, east of center, there is a large blank door, approximately the size of a single stall garage door (**Photos 7 and 8**). Its brick matches the adjacent buff brick walls. Personal communication with a member of the congregation indicated this section of the wall was left open until all of the mechanical equipment was in place, after which the entrance was bricked in.¹⁷ East of the mechanical room's blank brick, a high-set square opening is filled in with plywood and a central vent. There are

¹⁶ Temple Beth-El Congregation Sons of Israel and David, "Learning Ashrei," n.d; Elliot A. P. Evans, "The East Texas House," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 11, 4, No. Dec. 1952 (1952).

¹⁷ Gary Druss, Email to Adrienne Vaughan Campbell regarding Congregation Beth Jacob National Register of Historic Places Nomination, January, 2023, url.

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no other openings on the south façade of the 1963 addition. There are no windows or door openings on the west façade of the 1963 addition.

Interior

The interior arrangement of spaces primarily dates to the 1963 renovation. With a larger Sanctuary added in 1963, the original Sanctuary on the second floor of the 1932 building was reconfigured to create classrooms and space for the new mechanical systems. A drop ceiling added above the second-floor classrooms in 1963 concealed new HVAC equipment and ductwork. Although the building has experienced some storm damage, particularly during Hurricanes Ike, in 2008, and Harvey, in 2017, it retains an overall historic relationship of spaces and character-defining features from the 1963 renovation.

The first-floor description begins within the 1963 expansion, at the main entrance, and covers the arrangement of rooms in the addition wrapping west and south of the original (1932) section. It then describes the first-floor plan within the 1932 section, starting at the “religious entrance” on the north end, working south to the back of the building.

The main entrance is centered on the front (north) façade, facing Avenue K. The scalloped concrete canopy shelters an entrance court with exposed aggregate concrete floors, leading to the solid wood slab double doors flanked by glazed panels (**Photo 7**). This door accesses the main lobby.

The main lobby is carpeted. It originally had tile flooring. The ceiling is a continuation of the front concrete canopy, with three long semi-circular segments (**Photo 8**). The west wall is buff brick and features Congregation Beth Jacob’s Dedication and Simcha Plaques, the prayerbook bookcases, and doors to the Sanctuary. On the opposite side of the lobby, wood paneling originally covered the east wall. Water infiltration from Hurricane Ike, in 2008, destroyed the wood paneling and it is now drywall. The 1960s design called for a cloakroom passthrough counter along the lobby’s east wall, but there is not one presently. This wall contains plaques recognizing members’ building endowments and donations. The opening at the south end of this wall is a single wood door with a small window near the top, dating to the 1963 expansion and leading to the original building. The transom area above originally contained a mid-century metal grille. Access to the Clark Memorial Hall, or Great Hall, is on the south side of the lobby, opposite the main lobby entrance. The materials and configuration here are original. The wood double doors each have a long, central, narrow rectangular light and are flanked by wood, built-in, wall-mounted display cases within the surrounding aluminum-framed window wall. The glass panel above the doors has gold lettering that reads, “BEN AND BESSIE CLARK MEMORIAL HALL.” Golden-colored wood paneling is on the wall above the doors, within the arches created by the curved concrete ceiling.

The Sanctuary west of the entrance court and main lobby occupies the northwest corner of the first-floor plan (**Photos 9-12**). This 1963 addition had 242 seats and was designed for the primary religious services for the congregation. From 1963 to 1971, before the congregation changed its affiliation from Orthodox to Conservative, the men of the congregation would sit in the first few rows on the east side of the Sanctuary to respect separation of the sexes during services.¹⁸ The north end of the room is the focal point, where the *bimah* extends nearly the full width of the Sanctuary (**Photo 10**). The north wall is of buff brick with the Ark centered in the bay, a step up from the *bimah* and beneath the arched stained-glass windows set within the scalloped concrete portion of the ceiling. The stained-glass panels represent the Torah scroll, burning bush, a menorah, and the ten commandments. The Holy Ark (*aron ha-kodesh*) is the focal point of the Sanctuary, the wooden cabinet which holds the sacred Torah scrolls. The Ark opens between marble panels inscribed in gold with the first ten letters of the Hebrew alphabet, symbolizing the Ten Commandments.

¹⁸ Druss, Congregation Beth Jacob National Register of Historic Places Nomination.

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The Eternal Light, made of brass and walnut, is suspended from the scalloped canopy over the *bimah* and centered in front of the Ark. The Ark curtains are hand embroidered. The scrolls are placed on risers and adorned with silver. A geometric metal screen is beneath the Ark. Brass and walnut candelabras are located on the buff brick wing walls flanking the Ark. The west interior wall is plaster, likely from the 1960s, and is divided into large rectangular sections by wood trim. The portion of the wall below the horizontal wood rail is a smooth finish, while the wall above the horizontal divider has a rough finish. This wall contains memorial (*Yahrzeit*) lights and names of congregation members who have passed. The folding panel south wall opens to the Great Hall for overflow seating (**Photo 11**). The bottom section of this original feature was replaced after hurricane flooding. The east wall has buff brick at the center, translucent plastic panels to the left (north) and wood paneling to the right (south), near the door to the lobby. Also near the door is a large, metal, geometric, original grille concealing the historic HVAC intake (no longer extant). The original flooring in the Sanctuary was composition tile with select areas of carpeting. The flooring was replaced after damage from Hurricane Ike in 2008. At the time of this nomination, the flooring is blue carpet. Flooding from Ike also damaged the Sanctuary seating, which had to be removed and replaced. Today (2023), there are three sections of seating facing the *bimah* with its reading table and the Ark. Some are folding theatre-type seats and some are long pews. The center block of seating is flanked by aisles. The east and west sections of seating are angled towards the *bimah*, where the readings take place during services. The base of the reading table features a mid-century geometric metal screen.

The Great Hall or Clark Memorial Hall is south of the main lobby and Sanctuary. The Hall occupies the southwest corner of the first-floor plan. The inclusion of the Great Hall in the addition was to accommodate social functions such as weddings and Bar Mitzvah celebrations, dinners for other occasions, lectures, plays, etc. The flooring is original composition tile. The ceiling and soffits are acoustical plaster with a pebble-like texture. The ductwork soffits on the north and south ends of the hall have original light fixtures with cast glass covers. The north wall is the original folding or accoridian partition shared with the Sanctuary. The opposite (south) wall features overlapping redwood panels topped by clerestory windows. The west wall, opposite the stage, is plaster divided into large rectangular sections by wood trim. The lower wall is smooth gypsum plaster, while the panels above are textured. The stage is centered at the east end of the Great Hall. The walls north and south of the stage are covered by alternating large rectangular panels of wood and plaster, and the north wall also features an original geometric metal grille. The original sound system in the Hall is in place, though no longer functional. The stage is flanked to the north and south by dressing rooms that double as storage (south) and a serve-through from the kitchen (north).¹⁹ A first-floor mechanical room is east of the stage and south dressing room. It was added to the rectangular bay that bumps out on the south (rear) façade of the 1932 section. The auditorium's stage, men's dressing room, mechanical room and *sukkah* were placed where the frame Talmud Torah school building was located between 1932 and 1963.²⁰ A space to assemble the outdoor *sukkah* was added in the patio ell east of the mechanical room and south wall of the 1932 building.

Plans obtained from the congregation label the north (front) entrance, centered on the first floor of the 1932 section, as the religious entrance. Here, replacement recessed doors lead to the stair lobby at the north end of the first floor, which retains its 1932 configuration (**Photo 14**). The tile floor in this lobby is likely a post-Hurricane Ike (2008) replacement. A *mezuzah*,²¹ which translates from Hebrew to English as "doorpost," is attached to the doorframe, angled inward. It is on the right side of the doors, near the top, as one enters this stair lobby.²² On each side of the front door, three wood

¹⁹ Note, the north dressing room occupies the southwest corner of the 1932 building, remodeled in 1963.

²⁰ Although it is spelled "succo" in floor plans on file with Congregation Beth Jacob, personal communication between Stantec and long-time congregation members indicated Sukkah is the generally accepted spelling.

²¹ The *mezuzah* contains, in an artistic casing, a small scroll of parchment (*k'laf*) with two passages from Deuteronomy that detail important commandments. Among other commandments, the passages instruct followers to write the commandments upon the doorposts and gates of one's house. Affixing the *mezuzah* fulfills this biblical instruction and is a visible symbol of Jewish identity and commitment.

²² Union for Reform Judaism, "Beliefs & Practices: Lifecycle Rituals: What Is a Mezuzah? Why and How Do We Use It?," 2023.

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steps, with a circle-end starting step, lead north to a slab door with a diamond light. The steps have a tapered round newel post and turned balusters. The steps continue through the door to their respective landings. One continues up, eastward, to the east end of the second-floor stair lobby. The other continues up westward, to the west end of the second-floor stair lobby. A wood door with six lights over two vertical rectangular panels is located on both the east and west ends of the stair lobby. The doors have back band trim and hexagonal knobs with stepped-back plates. These doors lead to the women's and men's restrooms at the east and west ends of the stair lobby, respectively. Prior to the 1963 renovation, the restrooms were in this location, but designation for men's and women's were swapped. The door to the women's restroom also accesses the entrance to the *Mikvah*, or ritual bath, located just southwest of the first-floor stair lobby. The previously mentioned restrooms contain vinyl tile floors, simple paneled wood privacy partitions, an under-stair closet, and wall-hung lavatories on tiled walls.

Double doors, with six opaque gold-colored lights over two raised vertical rectangular panels, lead to a central north-south first floor corridor (**Photo 18**). Historically, a combination chapel and library was on the east side of the corridor and administrative offices were on the west side. The north-south first floor corridor leads from the stair lobby to an east-west corridor towards the back (south end) of the building. The wood-laminate flooring in these halls and adjacent first-floor rooms was installed to replace floors damaged by the 2008 Hurricane Ike flooding.

The chapel occupies the majority of the first floor, east of the central north-south corridor (**Photo 17**). Originally there was a smaller chapel in this location. It had multi-pane windows with opaque gold glass. The chapel accommodated smaller services. During the 1960s remodel, it was expanded to include a library.²³ During the 1960s remodel, the congregation installed vertical wood paneling on the walls and reportedly, for security reasons, covered up the 1930s windows. Bookshelves were located along the west wall. From the old Sanctuary, the original Ark, reading table, candelabra and Eternal Light were relocated to the chapel. The daily Yahrzeit Plaque is located on the wall near the Ark. After 2008 hurricane damage, the walls were replaced with drywall. The original eight-over-eight wood sash windows with textured gold-colored glass were uncovered in relatively good condition. Several broken panes were replaced in-kind using matching glass from a window stored upstairs. Sometime after the 2008 hurricane renovation, the west wall was removed. Restored arched stained-glass memorial windows were installed between studs, creating a window wall at the north end of the west wall. Bookshelves were removed. Remaining walls were scaled back to create open spaces between support beams.²⁴

Opposite the chapel, the space west of the north-south hall is occupied by the *Mikvah*²⁵ and current and former office space. A ca. 1963 description of the historic remodel plans says the *Mikvah* was updated. It is unclear to what extent. An exterior door on the west façade that originally led to the *Mikvah* was closed off during the 1963 renovations. It was then only accessed via the door to the ladies' room in the front stair lobby (**Photo 15**). As one enters the small room, there is a small shower with metal and frosted-glass doors opposite the entrance. Left (east) of the entrance, there are two steps up to a narrow landing next to the bath. Two metal water valves are here on the east wall. It is customary to wash the body thoroughly before entering the *Mikvah*. The *Mikvah* is south of the small landing, entered down steep steps. A tile half-wall screens the stair within the ritual bath. The *Mikvah* is clad almost entirely in rectangular white tile, except the flooring which is white hexagonal tile. There is a metal tank and pipes over the *Mikvah* at its east end. Members of the congregation indicate that the water used for the ritual bath was rainwater. A cistern on the roof collected rainwater and pipes brought the water to this tank.

²³ The library is now across the hall in the former Rabbi's office.

²⁴ Lindsay Peyton, "Old Windows Shed Light into 'Shul By the Shore' in Galveston," *Houston Chronicle*, September 9, 2014.

²⁵ A *Mikvah* is a bath used for the purpose of ritual immersion in Judaism. The ritual bath may be used by men or women for a wide range of purposes, including prior to marriage, following menstruation, and as part of the conversion process.

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On the west side of the north-south corridor, there is a door accessing administrative offices. South of this is the space historically used as the Rabbi's office. It was converted into the Congregation Beth Jacob library after the historic period and the east wall was removed so the space is open to the hallway (**Photo 21**). The room is lined with bookshelves and filing cabinets. The door at the east end of the south wall is presumably storage. South of the chapel and modern library a short segment of the north-south corridor is partitioned with double doors matching the those from the lobby into the corridor. Beyond these doors, on the east side of the north-south corridor, there is a louvered door to what was a janitorial supply closet in the 1963 update, and a small alcove with a drinking fountain.

Continuing south, there is an east-west cross corridor. Plans describing the proposed 1963 remodel indicate the first floor of the original synagogue, at this approximate location, contained a vestry, gift shop, kitchen, stage, and dressing room. The rooms off the east-west corridor also date to the 1960s remodel, except for finishes replaced ca. 2008 after Hurricane Ike. Off the north side of the east-west cross corridor, the congregation installed, in 1963, new men's and women's restrooms with respective lounge areas, storage rooms and, adjacent to the main lobby, a coat room.

A double kitchen, touted for its modern finishes and banquet serving capabilities in the 1963 dedication, is located at the south end of the 1932 section, off the east-west corridor (**Photo 22**). The kitchen is a very important space for preparing kosher food. It has separate preparation areas for meat and dairy. Its improvements in 1963 included bright yellow décor, wall and floor cabinets, and stainless-steel appliances and working surfaces. In 2008, the Hurricane Ike flooding destroyed the appliances and the kitchen needed extensive repairs. A dressing room, that doubles as a serve-through from the kitchen to the Great Hall, is west of the kitchen. The 1960s renovation plans called for an emergency staircase in the original building. Behind (south of) the kitchen, in the 1932 rectangular bay abutting the mechanical room, there was originally a spiral stair and a storage pantry. It was removed at an unknown date and replaced with an external metal fire stair. There is an enclosed exterior doorway between the pass-through from the kitchen to the mechanical room that was the exterior access to a spiral stair that is no longer extant.

Second Floor

On the second floor of the 1932 synagogue, the second-floor stair lobby (**Photos 23-24**) remains intact and features wood floors, wood stairs, uncased archways in the hall east and west of the balcony stairs, wood trim surrounding the stained-glass stairwell windows, and a 1931 marble plaque honoring the support of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Hauser. Centered on the north side of this stair lobby, another set of stairs with a tapered round newel post, rounded starting step, and turned wood balusters, winds up to the former women's balcony. A closet with a two-panel wood door is tucked under this set of stairs. The hall archways are east and west of the balcony stairs. The railing parallel to the stairwell coming up from the first floor is also supported by turned wood balusters.

Here, the lobby once accessed the Sanctuary (**Figure 4**). When the congregation built a new Sanctuary with greater seating capacity in 1963, they partitioned off this former Sanctuary area into classrooms. Plans touted ten classrooms (eight flanking the center hall, one at the south end, and one [ultimately two] in the former Sanctuary balcony), a youth lounge, materials closet, emergency stairway, and two-way contact from each room with the Rabbi's office.

The second floor stair lobby leads to a central north-south corridor. Four classrooms with offset doors are on each side of the corridor. These typical classrooms retain wood flooring, simple base trim, chalkboards, coat hooks, fluorescent lights, and metal and wood school desks (**Photo 25**). On the second floor, the rectangular bay at the south end was the location of the Ark and *bimah* in the original Sanctuary before the 1963 expansion (**Figure 4**). As updated in the 1963, the classroom corridor ends at this south bay. A door on the east side of the corridor accesses an exterior metal fire escape, which leads to the *sukkah* below. A small storage room is west of the corridor. A door at the south end of the corridor leads to the 1963 large classroom addition above the first-floor mechanical room. Congregation members indicate this large classroom was intended as a youth lounge (**Photo 26**).

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Upper Balcony/Attic

From the second-floor stair lobby, a central stair leads to the former women's balcony. The balcony once overlooked the 1932 Sanctuary. Although referred to as the women's balcony, an interview with a gentleman who grew up in the congregation suggests it was, for some period, the children's balcony.²⁶ 1960s plans called for this to be renovated as the tenth classroom. During the 1963 renovation walls were extended from the former balcony railing to the ceiling. Either in 1963 or more recently, this was partitioned with wood paneling into two rooms for additional classroom or storage space. These rooms have early wood floors, plaster walls, and simple base trim. The original ribbons of small windows with triangular panes still light these spaces and provide visual interest.

In 1963 a drop ceiling added above the second-floor classrooms created HVAC attic space (**Photo 30**). The drop ceiling was installed at about mid-sash level when measured against the long round arched windows. The lower rectangular sashes light the classrooms. The upper arched sashes light the open mechanical/attic space. The ghosting of the top of the Ark and the oculus window centered above are visible on the wall at the south end of the attic. This oculus opening once housed a stained-glass window with a Star of David but is now filled with clear glass.

Hurricane Impacts

According to a local news reports, in 2008 Hurricane Ike flooded Congregation Beth Jacob with three to four feet of water. The kosher kitchen needed new appliances and a range hood. The synagogue needed new seating. A combination of pews and benches were acquired from a courthouse in Waller County, the nearby Mt. Olive Baptist Church, and Congregation Emanu El in Houston. The first-floor flooring in the 1932 building was replaced with wood-laminate flooring with assistance from the Galveston County Recovery Fund. Damaged and moldy first floor walls and doors has to be removed and refurbished or replaced. A Maryland-based restoration company, Bengal Enterprises, volunteered their services for cleaning and drying. Youth groups repainted the walls.

Following Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Congregation Beth Jacob applied, in May 2019, for a National Park Service Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Grant. The application requested grant funding for roof repair, and repair to electrical infrastructure and walls impacted by related water damage.²⁷ Congregation Beth Jacob's grant request was successful, and this nomination fulfills a requirement of the Emergency Supplemental Fund Grant to list the awarded property in the National Register of Historic Places.

Integrity

The Congregation Beth Jacob synagogue complex retains requisite historic integrity to convey its significance under Criteria A and C. The 1932 Raymond R. Rapp, Sr.-designed synagogue and sizable 1963 Modernist addition by Kotin & Beerman remain in their original location, near two primary Galveston roads and between commercial and residential properties. Many residences from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century remain intact across the alley in the Silk Stocking Residential Historic District. Beth Jacob's block retains historic homes and a historic neighborhood corner store/dwelling. A small mid-century commercial building remains next to the mid-century synagogue addition. Some vacant lots and commercial properties less than 50 years old are nearby. Although their presence impacts the historic setting to a small degree, it does not to a degree of detriment that lessens the overall feeling and association of Beth Jacob within the neighborhood.

²⁶ Irving Pozmantier, interviewed by Joshua Furman, July 25, 2019.

²⁷ Congregation Beth Jacob and Peggy Green, National Park Service Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Grant Application: Hurricane Harvey Disaster Assistance, Texas Historical Commission, 2019.

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The exterior design, workmanship, and materials of the 1932 and 1963 sections of the complex remain intact. Both components reflect handsome architectural designs incorporating distinctive contemporary forms from the early and mid-twentieth century period. The 1932 section retains its buff-colored brick cladding, prominent stepped front parapet, symmetry created by the rhythm of recessed bays and window openings, Moorish and round arched brickwork, engaged columns at the recessed entry, wood windows, stained glass, and important religious motifs such as the Star of David depicted in the round stained glass window. The mid-century building retains cantilevered scalloped canopies over the main entrance and Sanctuary, stained glass, the buff brick, translucent plastic panels, high-set windows with spandrel panels, and marble panel-clad steel beams. The panels of stained glass depict four scenes: the Torah scroll, the burning bush, a menorah, and the ten commandments.

The designs are supported by the retention of period interior forms and materials reflecting the evolving uses of the property for religious and cultural purposes. The congregation's mid-century growth necessitated a larger Sanctuary, more entertaining space, and classrooms. The synagogue retains the 1963 Sanctuary with mid-century finishes and important ritual items. Although the flooring material was updated after Hurricane Ike, the Sanctuary features important elements such as the Ark, Torah, Eternal Light, *bimah*, pulpit, candelabras, reading table and memorial panels. Contrasting brick, wood paneling, and translucent plastic panels are original. Mid-century metal geometric screens or grilles are beneath the Ark, the reading table, and in a grate near the Sanctuary exit to the lobby. The folding doors between the Sanctuary and Great Hall provided flexibility to accommodate more seating during the High Holidays. The Great Hall accommodated meals and social events with its stage, and the dressing room doubling as kitchen pass-through to serve food in the Hall. The Hall retains mid-century wall paneling and tile flooring. The kitchen features separate meat and dairy preparation areas to respect food preparation laws. The main lobby retains display cases, built-in bookshelves and the characteristic scalloped concrete ceiling. Classrooms added in 1963 to the second floor of the original synagogue building retain wood floor and trim, chalkboards, coat hooks, and storage areas. The 1932 second floor stair hall retains its original wood flooring, open arches, newel posts, balusters and handrails. Wood flooring remains in the additional classroom/storage space created by partitioning the former women's/children's balcony with paneling in 1963. Although flooring and wall finishes on the first floor had to be removed due to hurricane flooding, the event created restoration opportunity as well, such as revealing and restoring the original wood sash multi-light chapel windows with gold glass panes. Overall, the Congregation Beth Jacob complex, built in 1932 and expanded in 1963, retains integrity to convey its local historic and architectural significance to the 1932 to 1974 period of significance.

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Statement of Significance

One of two Jewish congregations still active in Galveston, Congregation Beth Jacob was consolidated from two Orthodox Jewish congregations around the time of the Great Depression, and the group built a synagogue in two major phases to serve as a space for worship, education, and gathering. The synagogue has been in continuous use by the congregation since 1932, and it has remained a center for the local Orthodox community. It was constructed with two distinct architectural styles, a modernistic Moorish Revival synagogue designed by Raymond Rapp, Sr. and completed in 1932, and a 1963 Modern Movement addition designed by architects Tibor E. Beerman and Benjamin J. Kotin. The building is an excellent example of both architectural styles, and a rare local example of Moorish-inspired architecture, a style applied to many synagogues in Texas during the early twentieth century. Congregation Beth Jacob is nominated for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage: Jewish, significant at the local level for its association with the Jewish community in Galveston and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, significant at the local level. Congregation Beth Jacob satisfies the National Park Service Criteria Consideration A for religious properties because it derives its primary significance from historical importance and architectural distinction. The period of significance under Criterion A begins in 1932, coinciding with the completion of the Rapp-designed building, and ends in 1974 for its continued association with the Jewish community. The periods of significance under Criterion C are 1932 and 1963 for the two separate dates of construction.

Judaism in Coastal Texas

Jewish communities have been part of coastal Texas since the 1820s, with community institutions being formally established starting around the 1850s. Prior to 1821 when Mexico defeated Spain in the Mexican War of Independence, only Catholics were permitted to reside in the Spanish colony that would become Mexico and then Texas.²⁸ During the mid- and late-nineteenth century, Jewish immigrants were attracted by economic opportunities in Texas, especially on the Gulf Coast and in the thriving port city of Galveston. The early twentieth century Galveston Movement, summarized in this section, helped to establish small communities of Jewish immigrants across the state.

A secondary source asserts that in late 1821, Samuel Isaacks settled on the Brazos near current-day Rosenberg in Fort Bend County, although the source did not specify how the earliest settler self-identified religiously.²⁹ Isaacks, of Tennessee, came to Texas with Stephen F. Austin's first colony of 300 settlers.³⁰ In 1826, Adolphus Sterne opened a business in Nacogdoches, and three years later, Jamaican-born Jacob de Cordova, previously living in Philadelphia, established businesses in Houston and Galveston.³¹ The first permanent Jewish Texas settlement was in Velasco, south of Galveston on the Gulf Coast, and was led by merchants Abraham C. Labatt, Jacob Henry, and Jacob Lyons.³² By 1836, there were Jewish communities of various sizes in Bolivar, Nacogdoches, Goliad, San Antonio, and Galveston. The earliest Jews in Texas were likely Sephardi: Jews with ancestry traced to the Iberian peninsula. After Texas joined the United States in 1845, Jewish settlers from Germany, eastern Europe, and other parts of the Americas settled across the state.³³ During the 1880s and 1890s, Russian Jews also began to immigrate to Texas, fleeing persecution in their homeland.³⁴ Typical religious organization began with the creation of a cemetery-benevolent society and the

²⁸ James L. Kessler, "Jews," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2022.

²⁹ S. J. Isaacks, "Samuel Isaacks," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2019. and Kessler, "Jews."

³⁰ Isaacks, "Samuel Isaacks." Isaacks, "Samuel Isaacks."

³¹ Encyclopedia Judaica, "Texas, United States," Jewish Virtual Library, 2008; Natalie Ornish, *Pioneer Jews of Texas*, series ed. (Texas A&M University Press, 2011).

³² Henry Cohen, "Settlement of the Jews in Texas," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No. 2 (1854).

³³ Kessler, "Jews." Kessler, "Jews."

³⁴ Cyprus Alder and Henry Cohen, "Galveston," In *Jewish Encyclopedia*, The Koppelman Foundation, 1906.

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subsequent establishment of a formal or informal congregation. The first Jewish cemetery in the state was founded in Galveston in 1844, followed by cemeteries in Galveston, San Antonio, Victoria, and Jefferson.³⁵

Coastal Texas, and the Galveston/Houston region, in particular, hosted some of the earliest and most prominent Jewish institutions and settlers to Texas, including merchant Joseph Osterman and his wife Rosanna, businessman and alderman Isadore Dyer, London-born Rabbi Henry Cohen, and Texas land agent Phineas de Cordova. Jewish Texans were instrumental in setting up early businesses and community institutions along the coast. In 1852, Rosanna D. Osterman invited Rabbi M. N. Nathans from New Orleans to dedicate the first Jewish cemetery in Galveston; he is thought to be the first rabbi to officiate in the state. Congregation Beth Israel of Houston was the state's first chartered Jewish congregation in 1859; it switched from an Orthodox to Reform congregation during its early days. Temple B'nai Israel of Galveston was chartered in 1868 and is the oldest Reform congregation in Texas.³⁶

During the 1870s, Jewish Texans began to establish benevolent associations across the state, including aid societies, literary societies, and Sunday schools. Many of the benevolent associations were also affiliated with the maintenance and operation of local Jewish cemeteries. Auxiliary chapters of the New York-based Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA), first founded in 1874 as an organization for "the mental, moral, social, and physical improvement of Jewish young men," organized in cities around the United States. YMHA groups often functioned as social clubs.³⁷ A chapter was chartered in Galveston by 1894, comprised of Orthodox Jews, many of whom fled Russian persecution in 1891.³⁸

London-born Dr. Henry Cohen arrived in Galveston in 1888, after a brief time in Woodsville, Mississippi, to serve as rabbi of Congregation B'nai Israel. After a decade, he was appointed to the post for life and led the congregation for over 40 years.³⁹ Nationally renowned for his work for the Jewish and greater community, Cohen was integral to the "Galveston Movement," which redirected Jewish immigration from the northeastern United States through Galveston during the early 1900s. He also advocated for the inclusion of Jewish naval chaplains in WWI and was a member of the first Texas Prison Board. In addition to advocating for the Jewish community, Cohen was a prolific historian and writer, recording the lives of Texas Jews in publications such as *Settlement of the Jews in Texas* (1894), *Henry Castro, Pioneer and Colonist* (1896), and *One Hundred Years of Jewry in Texas* (1936).⁴⁰

By the early twentieth century, Jewish communities in Texas had grown. In 1906, there were 17,500 Jews in Texas, which had a population of approximately 3,000,000. Over 50 communities across the state had between two and ten Jewish families in residence. In coastal Texas, synagogues had been constructed in Houston, Galveston, and Victoria. Also on the coast were smaller Jewish communities in Corpus Christi and Brownsville with established cemeteries and town services held for the High Holidays.⁴¹

³⁵ Rabbi James L. Kessler, "Jews," *Handbook of Texas Online* (1976, rev. 2022); Texas Historical Commission, "Temple Beth Israel," University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History (2008), Official Texas Historical Marker Application. Kessler, "Jews"; Texas Historical Commission, "Temple Beth Israel."

³⁶ Kessler, "Jews."

³⁷ Joseph Jacobs and Percival S. Menken, "Young Men's Hebrew Association," In *Jewish Encyclopedia*, The Kopelman Foundation, 1906.

³⁸ Alder and Cohen, "Galveston."

³⁹ Cohen, "Settlement of the Jews in Texas." *Galveston Tribune*, "Jewish Organizations Active in Galveston Since Early Days," November 26, 1929, 13B, (Newspaper Archive).

⁴⁰ J. C. Martin, "Henry Cohen," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2022. Martin, "Henry Cohen."

⁴¹ Alder and Cohen, "Galveston."

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Galveston Movement: 1907-1914

By the early nineteenth century, Jewish communities on the Atlantic coast had become overcrowded from immigration, especially with those fleeing anti-Semitic violence in Russia and eastern Europe. In 1908, 800,000 of the 1.5 million Jews in America were living in New York City.⁴² Fears that increased Jewish immigration would spur heightened anti-Semitism and result in immigration restrictions led Jewish benevolent groups to explore a new, southern point of entry into the United States. Charleston, South Carolina; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Galveston, Texas, were all considered. In the end, Galveston was selected, and the endeavor, known as the "Galveston Movement" or "Galveston Plan" would facilitate Jewish settlement throughout Texas.⁴³

Efforts to redirect Jewish immigration had been discussed in 1901 by the Industrial Removal Office but gained little traction due to lack of financial support. However, in 1907, Jacob Schiff, a New York-based Jewish American philanthropist, donated \$500,000 to support the new immigration plan. By that time, Rabbi Henry Cohen had achieved national recognition, even praised as the "foremost citizen of Texas" by President Wilson, and Schiff engaged him to act as a spiritual leader for new immigrants. In addition to Cohen's presence, Galveston was already on a route for Lloyds Shipping Company, which brought Eastern European Jews from the port city of Bremen, Germany, and it was thought that Galveston's small size would encourage immigrants to continue moving west, rather than settling locally.⁴⁴ Schiff ultimately selected Galveston for its large size, the support of Cohen, and its port infrastructure.⁴⁵

In 1907, Henry Cohen, Isaac H. Kempner, I. Lovenberg, R. I. Cohen, Joseph Seinsheimer, and M. D. Waldman established the Jewish Immigration Information Bureau (JIIB), an organization that managed the redirection of Jewish immigrants from the northeast to the south and center of the United States.⁴⁶ In addition to the Galveston-based JIIB, a "Galveston Committee" in New York City, managed by Jacob Schiff; the London-based Jewish Territorial Organization; and the Jewish Emigration Society of Kiev supported the goal of bringing 20,000 Jewish immigrants through Galveston and creating a new settlement pattern into the United States.⁴⁷ The JIIB received requests for immigrants from over 150 towns across the west.⁴⁸ Rabbi Henry Cohen met most of the new immigrants at the port of entry and helped redirect them to settlements through the western United States, as far north as North Dakota. Discount train fares to Tyler, Texarkana, Marshall, and Palestine helped settlement across Texas. Texas received 2,134 new immigrants, followed by 1,225 in Iowa, and 1,099 in Missouri. Jewish immigrants moved to 12 other states as well.⁴⁹

Despite organizing efforts, Jewish immigrants faced various challenges to entering communities, and the number of immigrants was lower than anticipated. Hebrew teachers were considered unskilled labor. Local merchants feared competition, and communities disliked the refusal of Polish Jews to work on Saturdays. By 1913, several communities had ceased to accept more immigrants. Additionally, Jews from Europe did not find America to be an ideal place for their religious values nor a land of opportunity. Nearly 10,000 immigrants entered the United States through Galveston's port between 1907 and 1914 when the JIIB closed due to a mix of circumstances including strict

⁴² Ronald A. Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914," *East Texas Historical Journal* 15, No. 1 (1977).

⁴³ Jane Manaster, "Galveston Movement," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2016.

⁴⁴ Manaster, "Galveston Movement." Manaster, "Galveston Movement."

⁴⁵ Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914."

⁴⁶ James L. Kessler, "Temple B'nai Israel, Galveston," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2018. Kessler, "Temple B'nai Israel, Galveston."

⁴⁷ Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914."; Manaster, "Galveston Movement." Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914," 34; Manaster, "Galveston Movement."

⁴⁸ Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914."

⁴⁹ Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914."

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immigration laws and federal regulations.⁵⁰ This constituted about one-third of the Jewish immigration to the United States during this period.⁵¹

Jewish Texans of Galveston

Jewish immigrants were drawn to prospects in the port town of Galveston during the early nineteenth century and began establishing residence and businesses by the 1830s. Few Jewish institutions were organized in Galveston until the 1850s when a cemetery was founded; local organizations and congregations followed.⁵² Congregation B'nai Israel, the Young Men's Hebrew Association, and the Hebrew Benevolent Association, the two latter of which joined to create Congregation Beth Jacob, supported the local Jewish community, which grew alongside Galveston through the mid-twentieth century.

Galveston, Texas

Galveston, Texas, is located behind a string of sand barrier islands two miles offshore on the Gulf of Mexico in Galveston County, and it has been continuously inhabited and explored by different groups. The natural, deep-water harbor has provided an ideal port for hundreds of years.⁵³ The island was first occupied by the Karankawa Indians who engaged in fishing and hunting seasonally. During the sixteenth century, the Spanish began exploration of the area.⁵⁴ Jose de Evia mapped the island in 1785 and named it for the viceroy of Mexico, Bernardo de Galvez. In 1816, a naval base was established at Galveston Bay to support unsuccessful campaigns against Spain from Mexico. Concurrently, Jean Lafitte, a French-born pirate, had established a settlement on the island, known as Campeachy. By 1830, Galveston had been designated a port of entry by Mexico and a customhouse was established. The port was utilized by the Texas Navy during the Texas Revolution of 1835 to 1836, and upon Texas' independence from Mexico, a group of investors, led by Michel B. Menard, acquired 4,605 acres of the harbor to plat for a town. Lots were available for purchase in 1838, and the City of Galveston was incorporated the following year.⁵⁵

From its incorporation until the Civil War, Galveston's port prospered, shipping out cotton and other goods, and receiving immigrants. The Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad constructed a bridge connecting the city to Houston in the 1860s. The Civil War halted progress, but the city easily recovered as demand for goods increased. In 1867, yellow fever infected three-quarters of the population. Despite the Civil War and illness, Galveston grew to be the largest city in Texas in 1870 with a population of 13,818. Construction of institutions followed, including the completion of Congregation B'nai Israel's 1870 Norman Gothic synagogue on 22nd Street and the 1894 Grand Opera House.⁵⁶

On September 8, 1900, a devastating hurricane hit Galveston, killing an estimated 6,000 and changing the course of its history.⁵⁷ Nearly two-thirds of the buildings on the island, approximately 4,000, were destroyed by the natural disaster, which extended nearly 11 blocks inland.⁵⁸ In 1902, Galveston began construction of a seawall that stretched over 10 miles; the grade of the city was also raised to prevent future damage. A 1915 hurricane tested the new measures

⁵⁰ Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907–1914."; Manaster, "Galveston Movement."

⁵¹ Manaster, "Galveston Movement."

⁵² Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas," In *Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities*, 2023.

⁵³ Davis G. McComb, "Galveston, Texas," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2019. McComb, "Galveston, Texas."

⁵⁴ Lesley Sommer, "Denver Court Historic District, Galveston, Galveston County" Texas Historical Commission, 2001), National Register of Historic Places Designation. Sommer, "Denver Court Historic District, Galveston, Galveston County."

⁵⁵ McComb, "Galveston, Texas."

⁵⁶ McComb, "Galveston, Texas."

⁵⁷ McComb, "Galveston, Texas."

⁵⁸ Sommer, "Denver Court Historic District, Galveston, Galveston County."

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successfully. With funds and energy spent on future hurricane prevention, Galveston missed the opportunity for early engagement in the Texas oil industry.⁵⁹ Little residential and commercial construction occurred during the early twentieth century although the City retained its prominence as a port city through the first world war (WWI). At the outset of WWI, Galveston's port was the world's leader in cotton exports and ranked third in wheat exports.⁶⁰ However, the 1914 opening of Houston's ship channel began the decline of Galveston and the rise of Houston's prominence on the Gulf Coast.

As Houston overtook Galveston's place as the leading port on the coast, Galveston's economic focus shifted towards tourism, especially vices including drinking, gambling, and prostitution. These activities persisted through WWII when illegal activities were temporarily shut down. In 1957, Attorney General Will Wilson and the Texas Rangers targeted perceived vice throughout the city, destroying slot machines and shutting down bars and houses of prostitution. From the 1950s through the 1970s, Galveston once again began to reinvent itself with a focus shifting towards new construction, historic preservation, tourism, and supporting education. By the late 1960s, Galveston had three major educational institutions, Texas A&M University at Galveston, Galveston College, and the University of Texas Medical Branch. Storefronts modernized and amenities like parking lots were developed for automobile-focused tourism.⁶¹

Galveston has continued to experience damage from hurricanes through the mid-twentieth century to present. Hurricane Carla, in 1961, destroyed several buildings and caused seven deaths. A tornado caused by the storm also moved from 23rd Street two blocks south on Avenue N. Two major hurricanes, Ike in 2008 and Harvey in 2017, made landfall in Galveston and caused substantial damage.

Early Jewish Community of Galveston

Jewish Texans were amongst the first and most prominent settlers to the City of Galveston after its organization in 1838. There were three major waves of Jewish immigration to Galveston. The first group of immigrants were from Germany and practiced Reform Judaism. During the late nineteenth century, Russian Jews fled to the United States, and shortly after Jewish immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian empire arrived. The latter two groups practiced Orthodox Judaism. The Reform and Orthodox Jews of Galveston were integral to the development of the city, started benevolent and fraternal organization to support their members, and ultimately built two synagogues: the Reform Temple B'nai Israel and the Orthodox (now Conservative) Congregation Beth Jacob.⁶²

Early Jewish settlers to Galveston were active in commerce, local government, and organizing institutions to support the Jewish community. Both arriving in 1838, Joseph Osterman, a doctor from Baltimore, started one of the first local stores and became successful in the cotton trade, and Michael Seeligson, an early town alderman, was elected mayor of the City in 1853. Osterman's wife, Rosanna Dyer Osterman, was instrumental as a nurse during several yellow fever plagues and with providing funding to start several local Jewish institutions upon her passing. Her brother, Isadore Dyer, was an alderman in Galveston during the late nineteenth century, and he helped establish the first Jewish cemetery in the community. Joseph Osterman opened one of the first shops in Galveston. Its success allowed him to retire within four years and he sold the store to his brother-in-law, Isadore Dyer.⁶³ The Ostermans built the first two-story house in Galveston, at the corner of Broadway and 24th Streets, and amassed of wealth of over \$190,000 by

⁵⁹ Sommer, "Denver Court Historic District, Galveston, Galveston County."

⁶⁰ Cox and McLain Environmental Consulting and McDoux Preservation, "Historic Resources Survey: Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Galveston."

⁶¹ "Historic Resources Survey: Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Galveston."

⁶² June Angerstein, "Immigrants Came When Texas Was Republic," *The Galveston Daily News*, (Newspaper Archive), February 22, 1970.

⁶³ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

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1860.⁶⁴ In 1852, Galveston alderman Isadore Dyer donated a plot of land to the newly organized Jewish Cemetery Association for a cemetery upon the passing of one of his children.⁶⁵ Rosanna Dyer Osterman worked to bring Rabbi M. N. Nathan of New Orleans to dedicate the cemetery.⁶⁶ This was the beginning of institutions and groups affiliated with the Jewish community in Galveston.⁶⁷ At the time, there were not enough Jews in the city to form a congregation; however, within four years, the first Jewish services in town were held in Dyer's home on Avenue I between 24th and 25th Streets.⁶⁸ In 1859, Galveston Jews began meeting for the High Holidays.⁶⁹

Many Jewish Texans fled Galveston for Houston or Mexico during the Civil War, and the Jewish community that remained in Galveston was ravaged by yellow fever outbreaks. A widow by the Civil War, Rosanna Osterman stayed in Galveston to serve as a nurse.⁷⁰ She also set up temporary hospitals to care for victims of the yellow fever during outbreaks in 1853, 1854, and 1866.⁷¹ Forty members of the Jewish community succumbed to the 1867 yellow fever, sparking the need for another new cemetery.⁷² Rosanna died in a steamboat explosion in 1866 and left money to Jewish organizations, schools, and cemeteries in Houston and Galveston, including \$2,500 for a synagogue in Houston which helped fund the Franklin Avenue Temple of Congregation Beth Israel and \$5,000 for the construction of Temple B'nai Israel in Galveston.⁷³

Rosanna Osterman's donations were instrumental in rebuilding the Jewish community and reigniting its growth in Galveston after the Civil War. In 1866, the Hebrew Benevolent Society of Galveston, primarily composed of young immigrants from Alsace and Germany, was organized and chartered with members J. W. Frank, J. Rosenfield, I. C. Levy, I. Fedder, Isadore Dyer, Leon Blum, J. Lieberman, and L. Block.⁷⁴ The purpose of the group was to manage the Jewish cemetery and provide charity to the community.⁷⁵ In 1870, the accompanying Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Society was organized.⁷⁶

Osterman's funds also helped to construct Galveston's first synagogue for Congregation B'nai Israel. Approximately 125 Jews lived in Galveston in 1868 when the local community began organizing construction of the house of worship which would become the oldest Reform synagogue in Texas. B'nai Israel received a state charter in 1870.⁷⁷ The 1870 Galveston City Directory lists two Jewish congregations: the Hebrew Benevolent Society and Congregation B'nai Israel. The directory goes on to commend the local Jewish community and state that they "are proud to chronicle that our Hebrew friends in this city are actively engaged in establishing and organizing Societies, Schools, etc." It describes the future site of Temple B'nai Israel as a building that "whenever [...] completed... will be an ornament to the city,

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Hayes Turner, "Rosanna Dyer Osterman," In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2019; Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁶⁵ Congregation B'nai Israel, "The History of Congregation B'nai Israel," 2023.; Cyprus Alder and Henry Cohen, "Galveston," In *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906. Encyclopedia Judaica, "Texas, United States."

⁶⁶ Kessler, "Jews."

⁶⁷ Clarence Ousley, *Galveston in Nineteen Hundred*, series ed. (Internet Archive, 1900).

⁶⁸ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas"; *Galveston Tribune*, "Jewish Organizations Active in Galveston Since Early Days."

⁶⁹ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁷⁰ Turner, "Rosanna Dyer Osterman"; Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁷¹ Turner, "Rosanna Dyer Osterman."

⁷² Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁷³ Turner, "Rosanna Dyer Osterman."

⁷⁴ Alder and Cohen, "Galveston." Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁷⁵ Ousley, *Galveston in Nineteen Hundred*.

⁷⁶ Alder and Cohen, "Galveston."

⁷⁷ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

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that all may be proud of.”⁷⁸ A Norman Gothic synagogue, designed by Frederick Stewart, was constructed at 22nd Street and Avenue I was completed that year.⁷⁹

Galveston’s Jewish community continued to grow in the late nineteenth century. By 1888, the Jewish population had grown to approximately 1,000, and Rabbi Henry Cohen arrived to become the fourth rabbi of B’nai Israel. Over his tenure, he made a significant impact on the Jewish community locally and state-wide.⁸⁰ By 1898, at least eight Hebrew organizations representing both Reform and Orthodox Jews were active in Galveston, including B’nai Israel Sabbath School, chartered in 1887; Congregation B’nai Israel with 150 members; the Galveston Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Society, organized in 1897 with 30 members; the Hebrew Benevolent Society of Galveston, organized in 1866; the Hebrew Ladies Auxiliary Society, organized in 1882 with a membership of 70; the Hebrew Ladies’ Benevolent Society, organized in 1870 with a membership of 70; the Jewish Chautauqua Society, organized in 1896 with a membership of 25; the Young Men’s Hebrew Association of Galveston, organized in 1894 with a membership of 45; and the Zacharias Frankel Lodge No. 242, I. O. B. B., organized in 1875 with a membership of 102.⁸¹ In addition to the 1870 Temple B’Nai Israel at 22nd and Avenue I, an Orthodox synagogue was constructed in the 1890s, Congregation Ahavas Israel (affiliated with the Young Men’s Hebrew Association) at the southwest corner of 29th Street.⁸²

Twentieth Century Jewish Community of Galveston

The early twentieth century was a time for recovery after the devastating 1900 hurricane and for rebuilding. According to an entry in the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia written by Cyprus Adler and Galveston’s Rabbi Henry Cohen, when the hurricane hit Galveston in 1900, there were 28 buildings associated with the Jewish community and only five remained standing after the storm’s devastation. In addition, forty-one members of the Jewish community died in the storm. Jewish organizations and benefactors contributed \$26,427.22 for recovery relief.⁸³ Although the Galveston Movement brought many Jewish immigrants through Galveston, many settled in other cities or states, and the Jewish community in Galveston grew slowly to peak in the 1930s.

An influx of Jewish immigrants through the Galveston Movement during the early twentieth century led to growth of the community. In 1919, there were 13 Jewish organizations; one school, the Galveston Hebrew School; the Hebrew Benevolent Cemetery; and three synagogues including Congregation Ahavas Israel, Congregation B’nai Israel, and the Hebrew Benevolent Association on Avenue H in Galveston.⁸⁴ Other local Jewish organizations included the Temple Literary Society, which lasted from 1866 until World War II, and functioned as a discussion forum, and the Henry Cohen Community Center which was completed in 1928 at 22nd Street and Avenue I.⁸⁵

⁷⁸ John H. Heller, *Galveston City Directory, 1870*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1870).

⁷⁹ It was expanded by Nicholas Clayton 16 years later with north and south stair towers and a modification of the entrance. In 1952, the congregation outgrew the existing building and moved to 30th Street and Avenue O. Source: Jimmy Kessler, *A Tour of Jewish Galveston* (n.d.), Congregation Beth Jacob, Coloring Book.

⁸⁰ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas"; Helen R. Jenkins, *Let's Not Forget* (2012), Congregation Beth Jacob, Compiled research.

⁸¹ Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1898*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1898), 281.

⁸² The reference for the 29th Street Congregation Ahavas Israel synagogue in the city directory does not have additional cross streets or address information. Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas"; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1898*.

⁸³ Alder and Cohen, "Galveston."

⁸⁴ Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1919*, series ed. (Ancestry, 1919); Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1919*.

⁸⁵ Kessler, *A Tour of Jewish Galveston*.

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The Great Depression of the 1930s impacted Galveston's Orthodox congregations and became the impetus for merging. In order to unite and sustain an Orthodox congregation, local leaders organized an effort to combine the two Orthodox groups, Congregation Ahavas Israel, affiliated with the Young Men's Hebrew Association, and the Hebrew Benevolent Association, into Congregation Beth Jacob during the 1930s. The Galveston Jewish community grew from 1,000 in 1907 to approximately 1,200 in 1937. Towards the end of the twentieth century, many Jewish-owned businesses had closed, and the community began declining.⁸⁶

Congregation Beth Jacob

Congregation Beth Jacob formed in 1931 as the consolidation of Galveston's two Orthodox congregations, the Young Men's Hebrew Association and the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Association, that organized in the late nineteenth century. A synagogue to house the new congregation was designed by local architect Raymond R. Rapp, Sr. and completed in 1932. It has since served as a center for the Jewish community in Galveston.

Galveston's Orthodox Jewish Community

There are three main movements in Judaism, all of which have been represented in congregations across the state of Texas. Reform Judaism adapts Jewish tradition to modern life in the diaspora and emphasizes Jewish ethical tradition and social justice-oriented values.⁸⁷ Conservative Judaism, a practice that dates from the late nineteenth century, adheres to the Torah and Talmud with some modifications to fit modern times and changing circumstances.⁸⁸ Lastly, Orthodox Judaism which encompasses a number of groups and styles of practice, is generally unified by more traditional adherence to Jewish law including strict observance of the Sabbath (Shabbat) and dietary laws. A fourth, less common Jewish movement, is Reconstructionism, which was started in 1922 and views Judaism as an evolving civilization. The synagogue that Congregation Beth Jacob would construct following the merger of the Young Men's Hebrew Association's Congregation Ahavas Israel and the Hebrew Benevolent Association would function as an important community space for the Orthodox Jewish community of Galveston.

While many movements fall under the umbrella of Orthodox Judaism, Orthodox Jews tend to adhere to Jewish law and jurisprudence (*halacha*) described in Written Law (the Torah) and Oral Law (the Mishna) and interpreted in the Talmud. Observance includes daily worship, adherence to dietary laws known as *kashrut*, traditional ceremonies and life cycle events and intensive study of the Torah. Women and men sit separately in the synagogue, instrumental music is not permitted during services, and Orthodox Jews practice strict observance of the Sabbath (Shabbat) and a yearly calendar of holidays. Unlike Reform and Conservative Judaism, some Orthodox movements have resisted adapting observance to the modern era or environment.⁸⁹

Orthodox Jews began immigrating to Galveston, first from Russia and then from the Austro-Hungarian empire, at the end of the nineteenth century.⁹⁰ The local Jewish Orthodox community began in 1888 when a group of Russian Jews borrowed a Torah from B'nai Israel for prayer led by laymen in private homes. In 1894, they organized a local chapter of the Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA), intended to create a space for lower income Orthodox Jewish immigrants to gather.⁹¹ Rabbi Jacob Geller, a Talmudic scholar from Eastern Europe, came to Galveston with his wife

⁸⁶ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁸⁷ Central Conference of American Rabbis, "Article Reform Judaism: A Centenary Perspective," 2023.

⁸⁸ Samuel D. Gruber, "Synagogues of the South: Architecture and Jewish Identity, An Exhibition of Postcards from the William A. Rosenthal Judaica Collection," 2022; The Rabbinical Assembly, "About Us: Conservative/Masorti Movement," 2023.

⁸⁹ Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Orthodox Judaism," 2023.

⁹⁰ Angerstein, "Immigrants Came When Texas Was Republic."

⁹¹ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

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Sara in 1892, and he worked as a kosher butcher because the congregation could not afford to pay him a salary.⁹² In 1895, Galveston's Orthodox Jews formed a congregation known as Ahavas Israel.⁹³ Services were first held on the second story of a commercial building at 26th and Market Streets.⁹⁴ In 1900, there were approximately 70 Orthodox families, and benevolent and fraternal organizations, separate from those started by Reform Jews associated with Congregation B'nai Israel, were organized.⁹⁵ A new Orthodox synagogue, called YMHA, was constructed in 1904 at 2614 Avenue I between 26th and 27th Streets and within two years, Ahavas Israel had 60 members, daily services, and a Hebrew School.⁹⁶

The Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Association, organized by Rabbi Geller, was founded in 1897 for charitable purposes. By 1898, it had 150 members and met at Union Hall on 2308 Mechanic Street the first and third Sunday of each month. The congregation began meeting in the Young Men's Hebrew Association Hall at 2614 Avenue I the following year. Between 1898 and 1900, the membership fell from 150 to 37.⁹⁷ From 1903 to 1910, membership fluctuated between 20 and 60 members.⁹⁸ It stabilized at 50 members in 1914 through 1929, and the congregation began meeting at 2818 Avenue H by 1919.⁹⁹

In 1900, the Young Men's Hebrew Association No. 2 was formed; it had 30 members in 1902.¹⁰⁰ The 1908-1909 city directory listed a new Young Men's Hebrew Association, started in 1904 with 60 members and the membership number remained unchanged through the end of the decade. In 1916, a Young Men's Hebrew Association (Jr.) was established. It had 100 members by 1919. City directories from 1900 through 1919 listed Congregation B'nai Israel's membership at around 175.¹⁰¹ In 1929, the Young Men's Hebrew Association Congregation, part of the group established in 1902, began fundraising for the construction of a new synagogue. A. Oshman was president, Max Baum was vice president, and the congregation was led by Rabbi H. J. Horowitz.¹⁰²

⁹² Arthur Evenchik, "A Detective of the Past: Jay Geller, The First Samuel Rosenthal Professor of Judaic Studies, Reconstructs Modern Jewish History," 2011.

⁹³ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

⁹⁴ *Galveston Tribune*, "New Synagogue of Beth Jacob To Be Dedicated Here Sunday," April 8, 1932, Congregation Beth Jacob.

⁹⁵ Ousley, *Galveston in Nineteen Hundred*.

⁹⁶ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas"; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1903-1904*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1904).

⁹⁷ Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1898*.

⁹⁸ Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1901-1902*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1902); Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1903-1904*; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1906-1907*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1907); Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1908-1909*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1909); Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1908-1909*; Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1919*.

⁹⁹ Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1919*; Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1923*, series ed. (Ancestry, 1923); Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1928*, series ed. (Ancestry, 1928); Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston City Directory, 1932*, series ed. (Ancestry, 1932).

¹⁰⁰ Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1901-1902*.

¹⁰¹ Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1919*; Morrison & Fourmy, *Galveston, Texas, City Directory, 1923*; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1901-1902*; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1903-1904*; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1905*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1905); Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1908-1909*; Morrison & Fourmy, *General Directory of the City of Galveston, 1909-1910*, series ed. (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, 1910).

¹⁰² *Galveston Tribune*, "Jewish Organizations Active in Galveston Since Early Days."

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The Formation of Congregation Beth Jacob

Each Orthodox congregation—the Young Men’s Hebrew Association, comprised mainly of Russian Jews, and the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Society, made up of immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire—had separate spiritual leaders, sometimes members of the congregation of each respective group, through the early twentieth century. Several previous attempts had been unsuccessful in uniting the two Orthodox congregations which was marked by “years of open antagonism due largely to differing geographic origins, dialects, liturgy, and religious habits.”¹⁰³ The exact reason for division is unclear, but it is possible that differences in kosher food certification or religious ritual may have played a part.¹⁰⁴ Regardless, both congregations rallied together when the community needed support and appeared to have good relationships with B’nai Israel; many students from both congregations attended the B’nai Israel Sunday School.¹⁰⁵ In 1919, a Hebrew School for Orthodox Jews finally opened.¹⁰⁶ As the Great Depression spread across the United States, concern grew that without consolidation, the two congregations may not survive due to low membership. There was also a desire to create a unified, harmonious Orthodox community.

Max Baum, president of the Young Men’s Hebrew Association, and Sol Reichstein, president of the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Society, began discussions for merging. Supported by members of each respective congregation, the community brought Rabbi Louis Feigon, a Ukrainian-born Yeshiva graduate, from North Carolina to Galveston to begin joining the groups. Rabbi Feigon arrived in December 1930.¹⁰⁷ Unification of the two congregations became official when the Torah scrolls from the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Society, which had been donated by a family in 1926, were transferred to the YMHA facilities in February 1931.¹⁰⁸ By March 1931, after three months of negotiations, Beth Jacob held a state charter and began plans for a \$40,000, two-story brick synagogue at the southwest intersection of 24th and Avenue K.¹⁰⁹ The new building was dedicated on April 10, 1932. The dedication ceremony included many key figures from the Congregation and Galveston’s Jewish community. Rabbi Louis Feigon led the opening prayer and dedication sermon. Max Baum presented the welcome address. Rabbi Henry Cohen gave the first address followed by addresses from Galveston Mayor Jack E. Pearce; Reverend Edmund H. Gibson, Rector of the Trinity Episcopal Church; and Rabbi A. I. Schechter of Congregation Adath Yeshurun in Houston, Texas.¹¹⁰ The previous two-story, wood-frame Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Association building at 24th and Avenue I was relocated to face 24th Street and used as the Talmud Torah and Sunday school.¹¹¹

Max Baum was elected the first president of Congregation Beth Jacob, and the congregation grew through the midcentury.¹¹² In 1938, the congregation consisted of 225 families.¹¹³ The congregation was able to pay off its

¹⁰³ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas"; *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete," March 28, 1982, 10A, (Newspaper Archive).

¹⁰⁴ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

¹⁰⁵ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete."; Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

¹⁰⁶ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

¹⁰⁷ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

¹⁰⁸ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Silverman to accept Israel-bound Torah scroll," October 28, 1979, 20, (Newspapers.com); *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete." *The Galveston Daily News*, "Silverman to accept Israel-bound Torah scroll."; *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete."

¹⁰⁹ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

¹¹⁰ Congregation Beth Jacob, Souvenir Journal: Dedication Ceremonies, Beth Jacob Congregation (University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, April 10, 1932), Pamphlet.

¹¹¹ *Galveston Tribune*, "New Synagogue of Beth Jacob To Be Dedicated Here Sunday."

¹¹² J. Fradkin, Letter to Hebrew Teachers Union regarding Congregation Beth Jacob Education Director, November 6, 1946, Congregation Beth Jacob, url.

¹¹³ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

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mortgage by 1942.¹¹⁴ In 1946, Beth Jacob had a membership of 250 and 40 students in the local Hebrew School.¹¹⁵ During the 1950s, English was introduced to services and mixed seating was permitted.¹¹⁶ Rabbi Feigon stayed with the congregation through 1959 when he was succeeded by Rabbi Irving P. Glickman. During Glickman's time, plans, with initial funds contributed by the late Benjamin Clark, began to construct new religious, educational, and social facilities for Congregation Beth Jacob. The new Sanctuary was designed by local architects Beerman & Kotin adjacent to the existing synagogue. It was consecrated on September 14, 1963.¹¹⁷

After completion of the new addition, congregants began to plan for the future, and a growing interest emerged in moving away from modern Orthodoxy, a stricter practice of Judaism, towards the Conservative movement, which focuses on maintaining a commitment to observance of Jewish law moderated by accommodations for modern life in the diaspora. In 1971, Congregation Beth Jacob voted to align with the Conservative movement. Shortly after the vote, the congregation's fourth rabbi, Jerome Epstein, a new graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary of American in New York, joined. He was succeeded by Rabbi Michael Meyerstein in 1973, who stayed through 1977 when he was replaced by Rabbi Harold Friedman.¹¹⁸ The congregation consisted of 175 families in 1972.¹¹⁹ During the 1970s, the congregation paid off the mortgage for their Mid-century Modern addition and received a new Torah scroll for their Conservative congregation from Israel.¹²⁰

The 1990s and early twenty-first century brought new challenges to the congregation from diminishing membership and hurricane disasters. By the late-twentieth century, members of the congregation began passing away and many members moved out of Galveston to be closer to children and grandchildren. The 10-person quorum, or *minyan*, required for prayer became difficult to achieve, and a rabbi was no longer engaged by the congregation.¹²¹ In 2008 just before the Jewish High Holy Days, Hurricane Ike caused substantial damaged throughout Galveston, including to Congregation Beth Jacob. Three feet of water entered the building, causing significant damage to the shul itself, as well as furnishings, prayer books, and other historical items. The Torah scrolls were unharmed as they were temporarily housed in Austin during the storm.¹²² For the first time in its history, Beth Jacob had to cancel services, and concern grew that Beth Jacob would close permanently. In the end, the community rallied together to restore the synagogue. In 2009, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur were held using temporary chairs and room dividers. The following year, a bar mitzvah and wedding were held at Congregation Beth Jacob, the first in many years.¹²³ Hurricane Harvey, in 2017, caused substantial damage to the roof of Congregation Beth Jacob which led to water damage to the electrical systems and interior walls.

Significant Members of Congregation Beth Jacob

Significant members of the Congregation Beth Jacob include rabbis, presidents of the organization, early leaders and business owners in Galveston, and the affiliated Sisterhood. The congregation's first spiritual leader was Ukrainian-born Rabbi Louis Feigon. He was raised in St. Louis and ordained at the Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University in 1929. Feigon came to Galveston from North Carolina in 1930 and worked to unite the two local

¹¹⁴ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete."

¹¹⁵ Fradkin, Congregation Beth Jacob Education Director.

¹¹⁶ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete."

¹¹⁷ *Galveston Tribune*, "New Synagogue of Beth Jacob To Be Dedicated Here Sunday."

¹¹⁸ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Congregation Is Conservative," March 4, 1978, 6A, (Newspaper Archive).

¹¹⁹ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary. Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

¹²⁰ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete."

¹²¹ Kate Shellnutt, "When the Tide Turned," *Newspaper*, September 8, 2010, Congregation Beth Jacob.

¹²² Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob Homecoming Reunion (2011), Rosenberg Library, Commemorative booklet.; Shellnutt, "When the Tide Turned."

¹²³ Shellnutt, "When the Tide Turned."

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Orthodox congregations. He served as rabbi until 1959 when he became Rabbi Emeritus.¹²⁴ He was succeeded by Illinois-born Rabbi Irving P. Glickman who led while construction of the 1960s addition took place. Glickman left to serve as director of B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation in Canada in 1965 and was replaced by Rabbi Marsh Berg, who stayed for only a year. After Berg's departure, Rabbi Jerome M. Epstein, who had studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York and served as a rabbi in Buenos Aires, helped to transition the congregation from Orthodox to Conservative.¹²⁵ The current spiritual leader is Houston-native Rabbi Todd Doctor. He joined after Hurricane Ike and was instrumental in supporting efforts to repair the flooded building.¹²⁶

Max Baum, one of the founders of the congregation, served as president of the Young Men's Hebrew Association in 1930 and was vital to merging the organizations to create Congregation Beth Jacob.¹²⁷ He was elected for six consecutive terms as president.¹²⁸ Subsequent early presidents included Hyman Clark (1937-1939); Edward Shrieber, who served as Galveston's mayor during the 1960s, (1939-1941, 1947-1948); Sol Rechstein (1941-1942); Louis Halfant (1942-1946, emeritus 1951-1954); Marcus Alder (1946-1954); D. M. Goldhirsh (1949); Joe Schwartz (1949-1951, 1952-1953, 1955-1956); I. Meyer Geller (1951-1952); Adolph Schwartz (1954-1957); David Trachtenberg (1957-1968); Harry Schriebner (1958-1959); Karl Schraub (1959-1962); and Ben Clark (1962).¹²⁹ The current president is Peggy Green, the second woman to hold the position.

Many members of the congregation were leaders and businessowners in the greater Galveston community including Judge A. A. Lerner, businessmen Marcus Adler and Frank Kaplan, and pharmacist Bernard Dunbrow.¹³⁰ Benjamin P. Clark, who provided the first \$50,000 for the 1963 addition to Congregation Beth Jacob in his estate, was a local merchant in the shoe business. Part of Clark Bros. and Zinn, he helped operate Clark's Shoe Store, People's Shoe Store, and New York Shoe Repair Shop.¹³¹ His nephew, also named Ben Clark, served as president of the congregation during the 1960s and was part of the building committee for the addition. He was also a merchant, running Dave's Liquor Store and two Thrifty Stores starting in the 1940s.¹³² Ben Druss, owner of Druss Furniture which operated in Galveston for over 50 years was a member, as well as Senator Babe Schwartz, a Texas state senator during the 1960s and 1970s.¹³³ Schwartz is celebrated for his advocacy of the environment and helped create the 1959 Open Beaches Act. A liberal in a conservative Legislature, Schwartz was part of a group known as the "Killer Bees" that challenged the conservative Lt. Governor William "Bill" Hobby.¹³⁴ Major Harry J. Shreiber was a realtor and the 1982 chair of the United Jewish Campaign in the county. He was the navigator and one of the original crew of a United States combat plane called "The Swoose". Named for its half swan, half goose decoration, it was stationed at Clark Field in the Philippines and was the only plane that remained active from 1941 through the end of World War II.¹³⁵ Local Galveston architect Ben Kotin, who designed the 1960s addition in partnership with Tibor Beerman, was also member of the congregation.

¹²⁴ Angerstein, "Immigrants Came When Texas Was Republic."

¹²⁵ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

¹²⁶ *Galveston Tribune*, "New Synagogue of Beth Jacob To Be Dedicated Here Sunday."

¹²⁷ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob Homecoming Reunion.

¹²⁸ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Dinner Set By Beth Jacob for 50th-Year Fete."

¹²⁹ Congregation Beth Jacob, From These Beginnings (n.d.), Congregation Beth Jacob Records.

¹³⁰ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob Homecoming Reunion.

¹³¹ *The Galveston Daily News*, "\$50,000 Bequest Starting Point for Campaign," July 24, 1960, 19, (Newspaper Archive).

¹³² *The Galveston Daily News*, "Ben Clark is a Businessman with Ideas," March 1, 1962, 17, (Newspapers.com). *The Galveston Daily News*, "Ben Clark is a Businessman with Ideas."

¹³³ Nick Powell, "Former state Sen. 'Babe' Schwartz, a champion of Texas beaches and environment causes, dies at 92," *The Chronicle*, August 11, 2018, 2018.

¹³⁴ Powell, "Former state Sen. 'Babe' Schwartz, a champion of Texas beaches and environment causes, dies at 92."

¹³⁵ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Last Flight of 'The Swoose'," February 28, 1982, 184, (Newspaper Archive).

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Members of the Beth Jacob Sisterhood, formerly called the Ladies Auxiliary Group, supported the Congregation's president and Board through social, cultural, fundraising, and youth events. An annual donor dinners, teas, and plays were organized annually.¹³⁶ Frances Klein was Sisterhood president in the 1980s and went on to become the first female president of the congregation.¹³⁷

Galveston's Jewish Congregations

Since the mid-nineteenth century, groups of Reform and Orthodox Jews have congregated in Galveston. By the early twentieth century, two formal synagogues organized, Temple B'nai Israel and Congregation Beth Jacob, and remain active parts of the local Jewish community. Temple B'nai Israel was founded as and continues to be a Reform congregation. Congregation Beth Jacob, which was formed from the Orthodox Ahavas Israel congregation of the Young Men's Hebrew Association and the Hebrew Orthodox Benevolent Association, began as an Orthodox congregation but affiliated with the Conservative movement in the 1970s. During the twenty-first century, Galveston's Jewish community has grown smaller. B'nai Israel has a membership of approximately 130 households. Congregation Beth Jacob has about 60 households and holds weekly services.¹³⁸ Recent hurricanes, such as the 2008 Hurricane Ike, caused damage to both synagogues.¹³⁹

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

Architectural Significance

Centrally located in Galveston at the southwest corner of 24th Street and Avenue K, Congregation Beth Jacob was constructed in two phases with two distinct styles. In 1932, the newly formed congregation worked with local architect Raymond R. Rapp, Sr. to construct a two-story synagogue. This building exemplifies the symmetrical and ornamental application of the style, which is rare in Galveston but commonly applied to synagogues in Texas from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. During the early 1960s, local architects Beerman & Kotin designed an addition adjacent and to the west of the 1932 building in the Mid-Century Modern style. The materiality and form of this style express the technological advances that typify post-WWII Modern Movement architecture. Both sections of the building retain a high degree of integrity and are excellent local examples of each respective architectural style. It is nominated under Criterion C for architecture, significant at the local level, as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of each of these styles.

Synagogue Architecture

Historically and in the present, synagogues have served and serve as community and religious centers for Jewish communities across the United States. Derived from the Greek *synagein* meaning "to bring together," the buildings have three functions as a house of workshop, assembly, and study. Although the functions of all synagogues are similar, their design has varied greatly, often influenced by the popularity of architectural styles and trends of their time.¹⁴⁰ Jews immigrating to America during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries arrived during a period of revivalist architectural styles, drawing inspiration from new symbolic elements uncovered as part of archeological

¹³⁶ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Beth Jacob Sisterhood Meeting Set," November 20, 1981, 7, (Newspapers.com); *The Galveston Daily News*, "Sisterhood Works to Strengthen Bonds," January 31, 1973, 23, (Newspapers.com).

¹³⁷ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Beth Jacob Sisterhood Meeting Set."; Kathleen Sukiennik, "Interview for Congregation Beth Jacob National Register of Historic Places Nomination" interviewed by Adrienne Vaughan Campbell, 2023.

¹³⁸ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas."

¹³⁹ Goldfring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "Galveston, Texas." Sukiennik, "Interview for Congregation Beth Jacob National Register of Historic Places Nomination."

¹⁴⁰ Henry Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*, series ed. (The Images Publishing Group, 2004).

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investigations. The Romanesque and Moorish Revival styles, which were thought to reference Judaism's roots in the Middle East, were popular for synagogues during this early period of synagogue construction.¹⁴¹ After World War II, synagogues followed the prevailing trend in architecture, that of the Modern Movement.

There are no specific parameters dictating synagogue architecture; however, some principles have typically been applied to Jewish buildings of worship. Traditionally, synagogue interiors in the diaspora are oriented so that congregants face Jerusalem during prayer. Two liturgical elements, the Ark and the *bimah*, have been used since medieval times. The Ark holds the Torah, the most sacred object in the synagogue, and is typically raised and located along the east wall. Ashkenazi congregations refer to the Ark as the *aron* and Sephardi congregations refer to the Ark as the *hechal*. Behind the Ark doors, there is a curtain called a *paroket* which references the Holy of Holies chamber from the original Temple in Jerusalem. The *bimah*, an Ashkenazi term, or *tehab*, for Sephardi congregations, is the platform from which the Torah is read.¹⁴²

Historically, synagogues were devoid of iconography as it was considered idolatry, a marked difference from houses of worship associated with other religions. A collection of symbols, including the menorah, ram's horn, tablets of law, Star of David, and *lulav* branch, have evolved for limited use. Hebrew writing on the building exterior has also become common on American synagogues.¹⁴³

The arrangement of the Ark, *bimah*, and seating varied, and Jewish immigrants to America often brought configurations of the European countries from which they came. Three main organizations are common in American synagogues: the central *bimah*, with seating facing towards a central aisle at the front and the rest of the seating facing towards the front Ark; the open central aisle, where seating faces an interior aisle; and the theater-style with all seats facing towards the Ark at the front of the space. Over time, adaptable spaces became more desirable to allow for varied functions. Differences between Reform and Orthodox synagogues are generally not visible from the exterior. Orthodox congregations historically followed some guidelines from Europe, including keeping men and women separate during services, often reserving second-story galleries for women. Many congregations have moved towards mixed seating during the twentieth century.¹⁴⁴

Early Twentieth Century Architecture in Galveston, Texas

Although early twentieth century investment and work effort in Galveston focused on recovery from the crippling hurricane of 1900 and preparedness for future storms, Galveston continued to grow along with other Texas cities experiencing boom periods in population and economic growth. In 1920, the population was 44,255, in 1930 it was 52,938, and in 1940, it had grown again, to reach 60,862.¹⁴⁵ The resulting new residential and commercial construction across the City followed national trends. Eclectic styles popularized by the 1893 Columbia Exposition in Chicago, and developed by architects from Europe, applied historical interpretations to modern buildings.¹⁴⁶ Examples of popularized Eclectic styles including Tudor, Colonial Revival, and Neoclassical are seen across neighborhoods in Galveston around the turn of the century, followed by the American residential Prairie and Craftsman houses.

¹⁴¹ Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁴² Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁴³ Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁴⁴ Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁴⁵ McComb, "Galveston, Texas."

¹⁴⁶ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture (Revised)*, series ed. (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015).

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Architects Raymond R. Rapp, Sr., Cameron Douglas Fairchild, and Alfred Winn worked on Eclectic Revival and Prairie styles through the 1930s across Galveston.¹⁴⁷

Moorish Revival Architecture in Texas

Moorish Revival architecture in the United States persisted from 1895 through 1940 and is categorized amongst the exotic revival styles that became popular around the turn of the century.¹⁴⁸ In reference to the style, “Moor” refers to the North African Muslims who occupied Spain from the eighth century through 1492. This style is visible in North Africa and previously occupied areas of Spain, especially applied to large mosques and palaces.¹⁴⁹ The medieval-era Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain, represents the expression of Moorish architecture at its height. Architectural characteristics include symmetrical elevations with ornamentation such as carved stone, stained glass, recessed porches, mosaic tile, an ornamented vault called a muqarna, and rounded arches, especially ogee arches.¹⁵⁰

The style was revived on large-scale civic projects in Europe during the early nineteenth century, and it was popularized in the United States by the Crystal Palace at the 1853 New York industrial exhibition, which featured a centered dome, minarets, and parapets.¹⁵¹ Architect Henry Fernbach first applied Moorish Revival elements to Temple Emanuel in New York in 1868.¹⁵² Demolished in 1927, Temple Emanuel featured a symmetrical primary façade flanked by two prominent projecting domed towers. Arched, stone entryways and windows punctuated the primary elevation, and a stained-glass star was centered on the building face.¹⁵³ Synagogues across the United States began to apply elements of the Moorish Revival style through the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁴

The Moorish Revival style was applied to a number of nineteenth century synagogues in Texas and was the dominant architectural style for synagogues in the United States through the 1920s.¹⁵⁵ Synagogues designed in this style included buildings in Palestine, Marshall, and Corsicana. Also in Galveston, the 1928 Henry Cohen Community Center was designed in the style and constructed adjacent to the 1886 Nicholas Clayton-designed Congregation B’nai Israel, at Kempner (22nd) Street and Avenue I in 1928.

Despite the popularity of the style in design of synagogues in Texas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there are few extant examples of Moorish Revival architecture in Galveston or Texas. The 1987 NRHP nomination for Temple Beth-El in Navarro County cites the building as “one of the only surviving examples” of the style applied to a synagogue in the state, noting that the Moorish Revival synagogues in Palestine and Marshall had been demolished.¹⁵⁶ The 1928 former Henry Cohen Community Center is also extant.¹⁵⁷ Initially sold to the Masonic Temple in 1953 and

¹⁴⁷ Elizabeth Neff and Lesley Sommer, “Cedar Lawn Historic District, Galveston, Galveston County” Texas Historical Commission, 2001), National Register of Historic Places Designation; Francis D. K. Ching, *A Visual Dictionary of Architecture*, series ed. (John Wiley & Sons, 2012).

¹⁴⁸ GPA Consulting, “Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Architecture and Engineering, Exotic Revival, 1900–1980,” City of Los Angeles, Department of Planning, Office of Historic Resources (2015).

¹⁴⁹ Ching, *A Visual Dictionary of Architecture*.

¹⁵⁰ GPA Consulting, “Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Architecture and Engineering, Exotic Revival, 1900–1980.”

¹⁵¹ Linda Fahey et al., “Temple Beth-El, Corsicana, Navarro County” Texas Historical Commission, 1987), National Register of Historic Places Designation.

¹⁵² Gruber, “Synagogues of the South: Architecture and Jewish Identity, An Exhibition of Postcards from the William A. Rosenthal Judaica Collection.”

¹⁵³ Fahey et al., “Temple Beth-El, Corsicana, Navarro County.”

¹⁵⁴ Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁵⁵ Fahey et al., “Temple Beth-El, Corsicana, Navarro County.”; Willard B. Robinson, “Architecture,” In *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, 2017; Marc Lee Raphael, *The Synagogue in America: A Short History*, series ed. (New York University Press, 2011).

¹⁵⁶ Fahey et al., “Temple Beth-El, Corsicana, Navarro County.”

¹⁵⁷ Kessler, *A Tour of Jewish Galveston*.

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adapted for their use, it has most recently been adapted as a commercial space.¹⁵⁸ Integrity of association and design have been diminished by alterations including a decorative painting scheme applied to the masonry and the additional of exterior symbolic elements relating to the Masonic Lodge.

1932 Congregation Beth Jacob Building

The 1932 Congregation Beth Jacob building exemplifies a modernistic interpretation of the Moorish Revival style, popular as applied to synagogues across the United States, with its form, materiality, and ornamental application. Centered on the prominent and symmetrical primary elevation of the two-story buff brick building is an inset ogee arch framing a circular stained-glass Star of David window set over a blind arcade. The recessed main entry is flanked by simplified limestone pilasters. Four arched stained-glass windows extend to the second floor, and at the third floor, there are trios of square windows with muntins emanating from a central point. Subtle applications of brick add ornament to the exterior, highlighting window openings and recessed volumes. Moorish Revival elements are applied to the secondary, east elevation at 24th Street, as well. Like the primary elevation, the ordered and symmetrical secondary elevation has windows arched within recessed volumes and subtle detailing with ornamental brick surrounding openings. Although modest, the symmetry, use of brick detailing, stained glass windows, prominent ogee arch, arched window openings, recessed entry, and stained-glass windows at Congregation Beth Jacob make it an excellent and rare local example of Moorish-inspired architecture in Galveston.

Raymond Rapp, Sr.

Raymond R. Rapp, Sr. was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1896.¹⁵⁹ He was educated at the University of Kentucky and moved from Louisville to Galveston in 1917 to serve as a soldier in the Army Engineers at Fort Crockett.¹⁶⁰ In 1921 after the war ended, Rapp started R. R. Rapp Architect in Galveston, Texas and completed local projects including the Hutchings-Sealy National Bank in 1934, the Psychopathic Hospital in 1936, the Pleasure Pier in 1942, St. Mary's Orphanage in 1948, and the National Maritime Union Building in 1954.¹⁶¹ One of Rapp's four sons, Raymond Rapp, Jr., joined the firm as a draftsman shortly after college graduation. Rapp passed away in 1958, and after obtaining a license through correspondence courses, Rapp, Jr., took over the firm. The firm was instrumental in shaping the architectural character of Galveston and had an impressive job list of over 1,400 projects, most of which were local. In 1973, the firm partnered to become Rapp, Tackett, Fash.¹⁶²

Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Galveston, Texas

Although typically noted for its intact collection of nineteenth-century buildings representing the wealth and prosperity of the Port of Galveston, the City of Galveston, Texas, also has an impressive array of Modern Movement buildings constructed between 1940 and 1975. Designed primarily by local architects like Raymond R. Rapp, Jr., Thomas Price, Charles Zwiener, Benjamin J. Kotin, Tibor Beerman, James F. Cooley, and Louis L. Oliver, these mid-century modern designs represent the third phase of Galveston's reinvention, as it moved past a period of vices and into a focus on tourism and growth. Galveston's population peaked at 67,175 in 1960, and the thousands of mid-century buildings represent the growing city's focus on education, healthcare, government, tourism, and new housing.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ Galveston County Clerk, Deed Record 1005:347, Galveston, June 30, 1953.

¹⁵⁹ American Institute of Architects, ed. *American Architects Directory*, series ed., George S. Koyl (R. R. Bowker Company for the American Institute of Architects, 1956).

¹⁶⁰ Bill Cherry, "Grand Opening Ceremony Had Many Dignitaries, Plus a Surprise Visitor," *Galveston Daily News*, (Newspaper Archive), August 6, 2004.

¹⁶¹ American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory*.

¹⁶² Cherry, "Grand Opening Ceremony Had Many Dignitaries, Plus a Surprise Visitor."

¹⁶³ McComb, "Galveston, Texas."

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After WWI, European architects began shifting focus away from buildings with references to historicism and towards buildings that focused on functionality. The International Style and later the Contemporary Style dominated the mainstream architectural landscape. The International Style developed in the 1920s in Europe as part of the Early Modern movement, whose leaders rejected ornamentation and embraced basic functional forms and mass-produced materials. The style was popular in the United States from the 1930s to the 1950s. It has three defining principles: architecture as volume, regularity, and avoiding the application of ornament. In contrast with the structural design of earlier buildings, International buildings have a lightweight structural skeleton (often metal) that allowed for asymmetrical facades and flexibility in the placement and size of openings. The style was commonly applied to commercial and institutional buildings. Contemporary style architecture is seen in the United States from about 1945 through 1990, with a noticeable trend between 1945 and 1965 during the Mid-Century Modern era of architecture. It rejects decorative ornamentation on the building exterior and instead focuses on interior plans, integration of indoor and outdoor spaces, and view from the interior.¹⁶⁴ Characteristics of the post-WWII Modern Movement architecture include irregular forms, exposed reinforced concrete structures, no ornamentation, glass window walls, cantilevered canopies, and exterior wall applications of concrete, stucco, Roman brick, glass, or tile.

After the conclusion of WWII, cities across the United States resumed residential and institutional construction. Religious construction boomed as families moved out into the suburbs.¹⁶⁵ The 1940s and 1950s marked a peak in synagogue construction, with 1,800 new synagogues under construction across America by 1949.¹⁶⁶ Congregations moved away from historicism and towards modernity in the postwar synagogue architecture. The Reform movement's national organization recommended designing synagogues "of our time."¹⁶⁷ Architect Percival Goodman of New York designed 54 synagogues across the country and is credited with helping to shape synagogue architecture. In particular, he popularized multi-functional interior spaces and expandable or moveable walls between sanctuaries and social spaces to allow for greater capacity during the High Holidays. By the mid-twentieth century, synagogues in America had evolved into community centers, providing the social and charity functions of benevolent and fraternal societies as well as having schools, banquet halls, and other elements of daily Jewish life.¹⁶⁸

1963 Congregation Beth Jacob Addition

By 1962, Congregation Beth Jacob had growth to a membership of over 200 families.¹⁶⁹ The estate of Benjamin Clark left \$50,000 for a new addition to Congregation Beth Jacob and a campaign to fundraise the additional \$150,000 for the building costs began. In 1963, Congregation Beth Jacob began construction of a new addition, adjacent to the west side of the existing 1932 synagogue. The facility was planned to include a Sanctuary, Great Hall/community center, and classrooms. The Sanctuary was designed to include seating for 242 separated from a social hall, the Bessie and Ben Clark Hall, with seating for 300. A partition wall connected the two spaces and could be removed for a capacity of 542. In addition, the new building included a main lobby, centered between the existing and new building; a stage dressing room; a mechanical room; and a *sukkah*. The 1932 building was also completely remodeled in 1963 when the new addition was completed. New facilities included a chapel-library, double kitchen, Rabbi's study, Cantor's study, synagogue office, *Mikvah*, stage dressing room, coatroom, a teen lounge, two sets of women's and men's lounges, and nine classrooms.

¹⁶⁴ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture (Revised)*.

¹⁶⁵ SurveyLA, "Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Jewish History," City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources (2016).

¹⁶⁶ Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁶⁷ SurveyLA, "Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Jewish History."

¹⁶⁸ Stolzman et al., *Synagogue Architecture in America: Faith, Spirit & Identity*.

¹⁶⁹ Congregation Beth Jacob, Membership List (May 1, 1962), Congregation Beth Jacob.

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Congregation Beth Jacob's 1960s construction campaign was completed by Galveston-based firms. Architects Ben Kotin, a member of Congregation Beth Jacob, and Tibor Beerman designed the 1963 addition and remodel to the 1932 building. The general contractor was Erickson Construction Co. and Moore-Climatic installed the air-conditioning. In the January 20, 1963, edition of *The Galveston Daily News*, the building was described as "a blend of the past and future."¹⁷⁰ Nearly 400 invitations were sent out for the opening ceremony in January 1963.¹⁷¹

The 1963 Congregation Beth Jacob addition is an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern architecture and exhibits the post-WWII design sensibilities through its materials, canopy form, openings, and expression of structural systems. The primary elevation of the building features projecting scalloped concrete canopies at the entrance and main building. The structural system is outwardly expressed in the clad vertical beams at the main volume and sides. The addition is devoid of ornamentation and features expanses of brick and glazing. The interior includes a movable wall, a hallmark of modern age American synagogues.

Kotin & Beerman Architects

Benjamin J. Kotin and his family immigrated to Galveston from Warsaw, Poland, in 1921 when he was 9 years old. In 1936, he graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Texas at Austin.¹⁷² During World War II, he served in the South Pacific as a member of the U.S. Air Force. After three years in the post, Kotin returned to Galveston, and in 1946, he opened an architecture practice at 4928 Broadway. During the 1950s and 1960s, he entered a partnership with Tibor Beerman. His twin brother, Sol Kotin, joined the practice during the 1960s.¹⁷³ Benjamin Kotin became a prominent local architect and contributed to the design of Galveston Community College, the Galveston County Courthouse, and others.¹⁷⁴ Kotin practiced architecture until 1992, and he passed away in 1993.¹⁷⁵

Born in Berehovo, Czechoslovakia, in 1925, Tibor Eliahu Beerman and his parents survived the Holocaust prior to immigrating to the United States in 1947. He studied architecture at the University of Texas at Austin, and he arrived in Galveston in 1952 to design Temple B'nai Israel. Beerman worked with partner Benjamin Kotin through the 1950s and 1960s, after which, he partnered with Louis, David, and Audrey Oliver and completed designs for various buildings at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. After Hurricane Ike, Beerman and his family moved to Georgetown, Texas. He died in 2015.¹⁷⁶

In addition to Congregation Beth Jacob's expansion, Kotin & Beerman designed several notable Modern Movement buildings in Galveston including the Rankin & Becker Insurance Agency Building at 622 22nd Street in 1963; the Baxter House at 1309 Harbor View Drive in 1964; a residence at 36 Adler Circle in 1966; and the Treasure Isle Motel at 1002 Seawall Boulevard in 1963.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁰ *The Galveston Daily News*, "For Congregation Beth Jacob: Start on New Synagogue Slated Soon."

¹⁷¹ Congregation Beth Jacob, Invitation Mailed under Permit #38 (January 22, 1963), Congregation Beth Jacob.

¹⁷² *The Galveston Daily News*, "Benjamin J. Kotin," June 15, 1993, 4, (Newspaper Archive).

¹⁷³ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Announcement: Ben J. Kotin," June 11, 1946, 2, (Newspaper Archive); *The Galveston Daily News*, "Benjamin J. Kotin."

¹⁷⁴ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Benjamin J. Kotin."

¹⁷⁵ *The Galveston Daily News*, "Announcement: Ben J. Kotin."; *The Galveston Daily News*, "Benjamin J. Kotin."

¹⁷⁶ *The Galveston Daily News Online*, "Tibor Eliahu Beerman," April 9, 2015, Obituary.

¹⁷⁷ Cox and McLain Environmental Consulting and McDoux Preservation, "Historic Resources Survey: Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Galveston."

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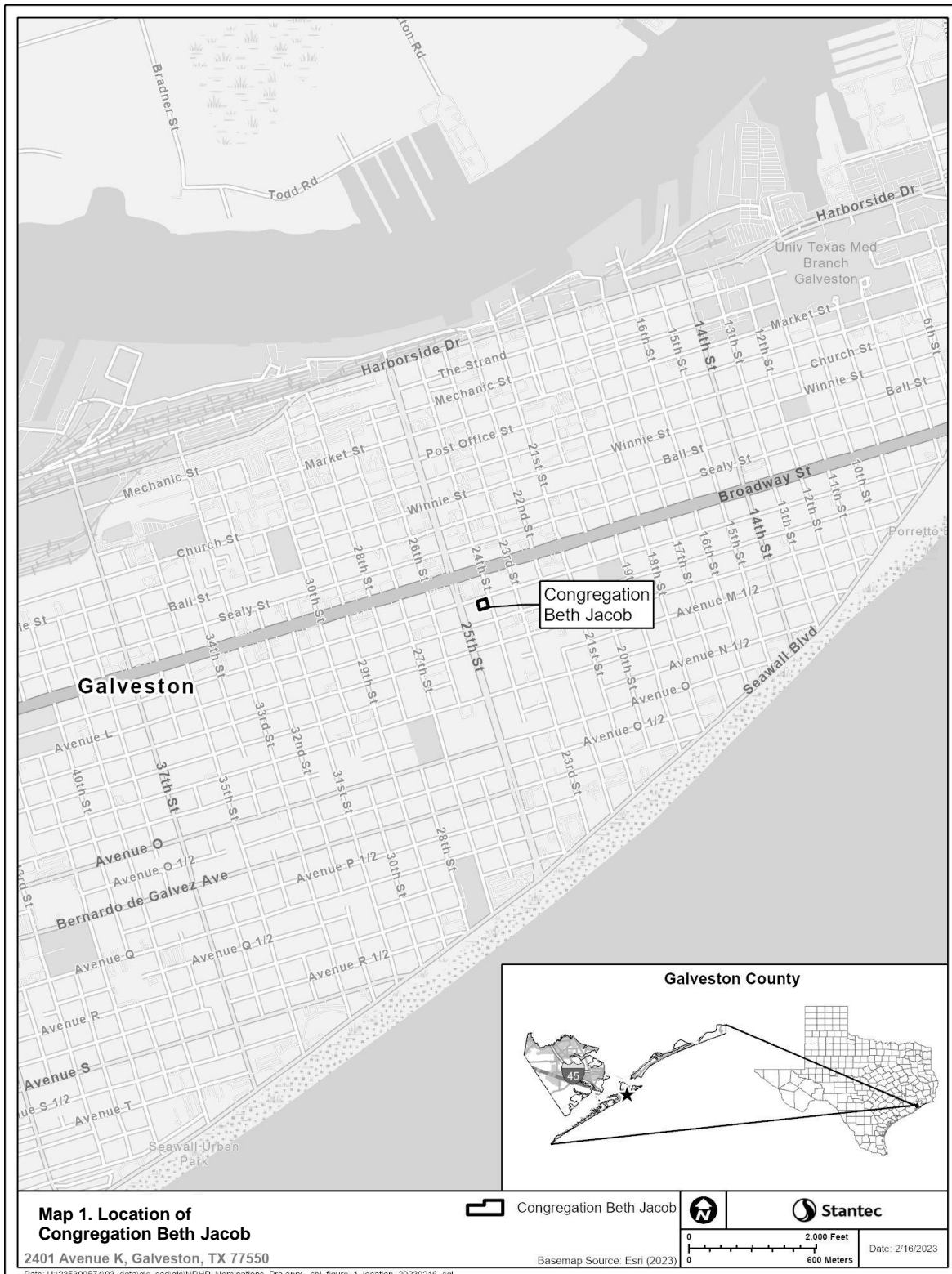
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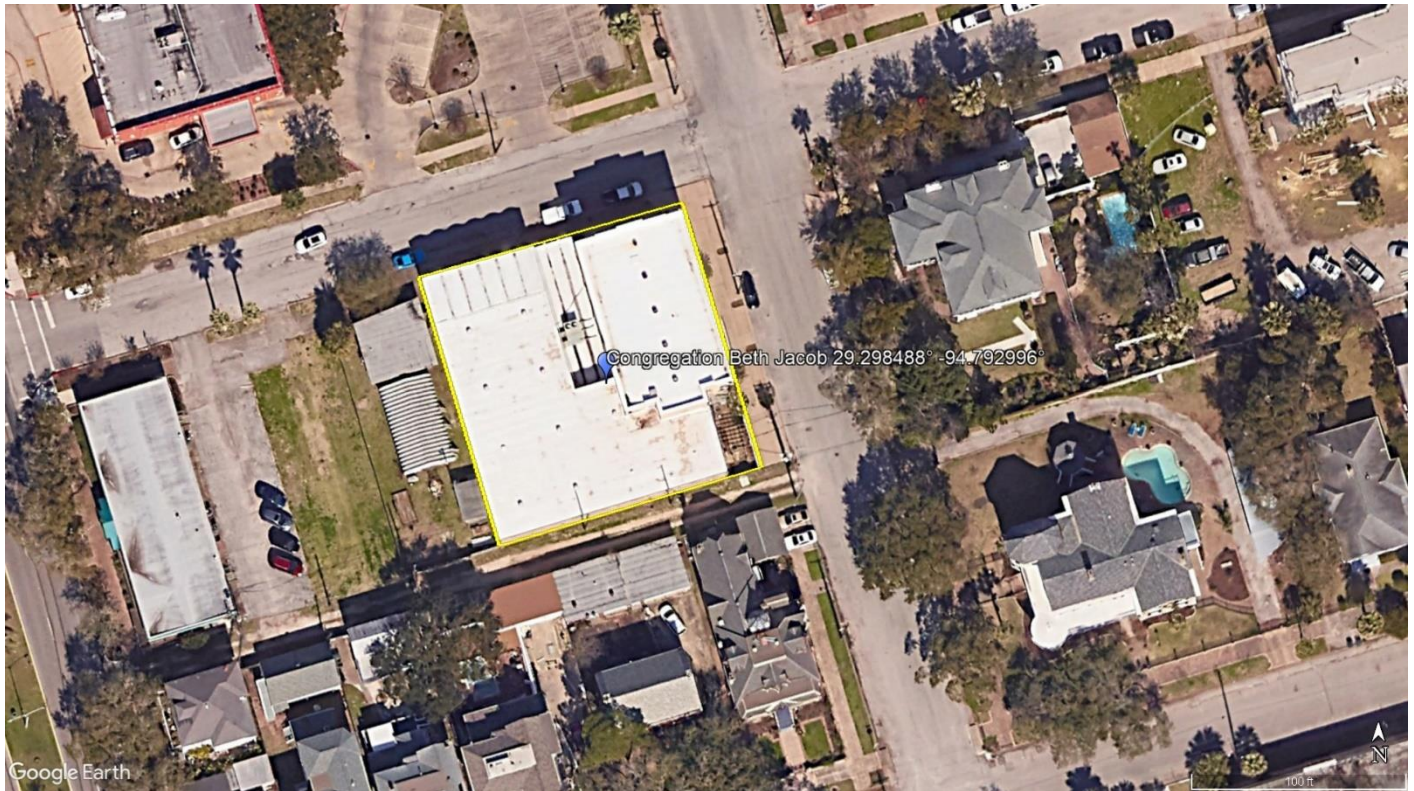
Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Map 1. Congregation Beth Jacob National Register of Historic Places Location Map



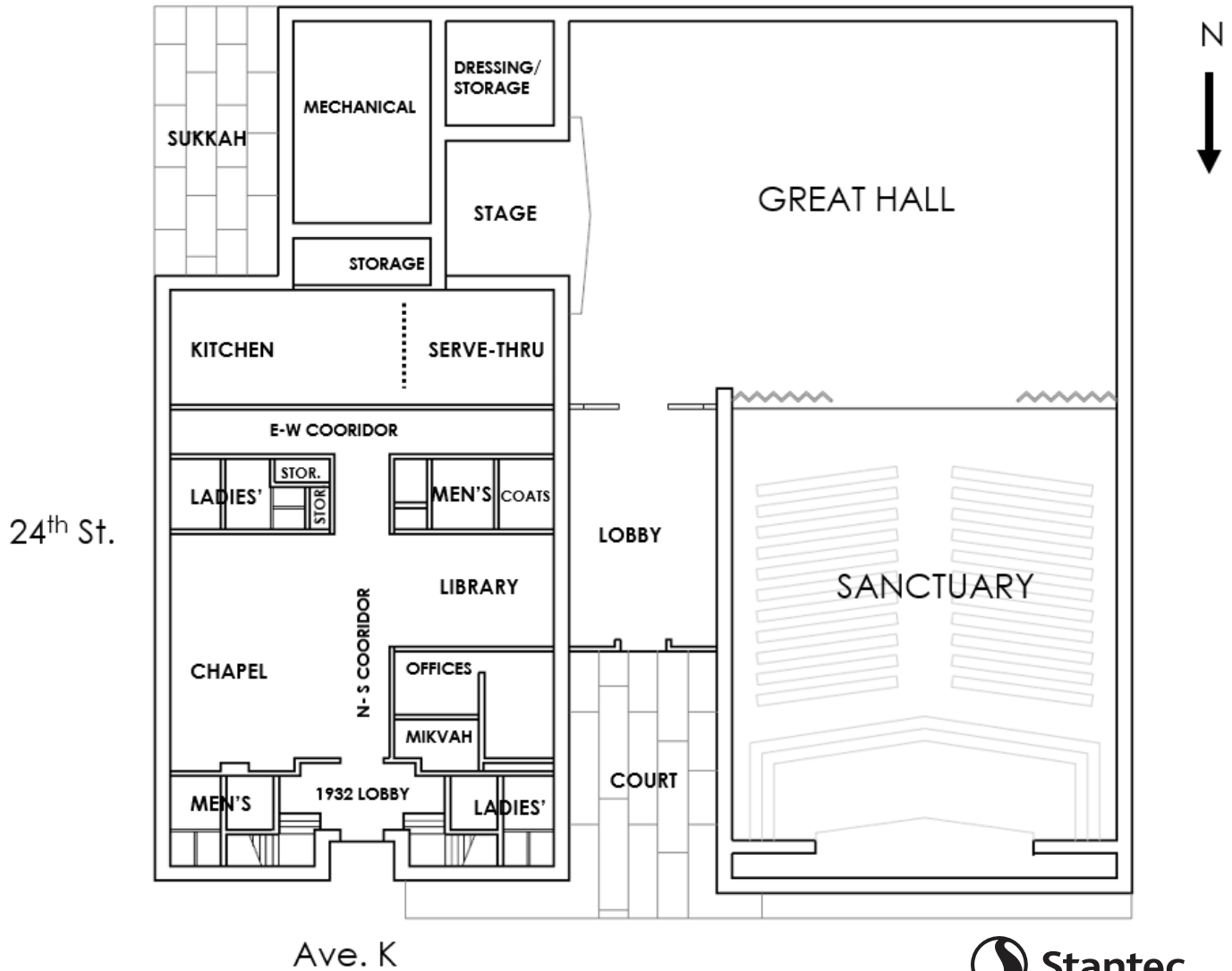
Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Map 2. Congregation Beth Jacob National Register Boundary Map and Site Map



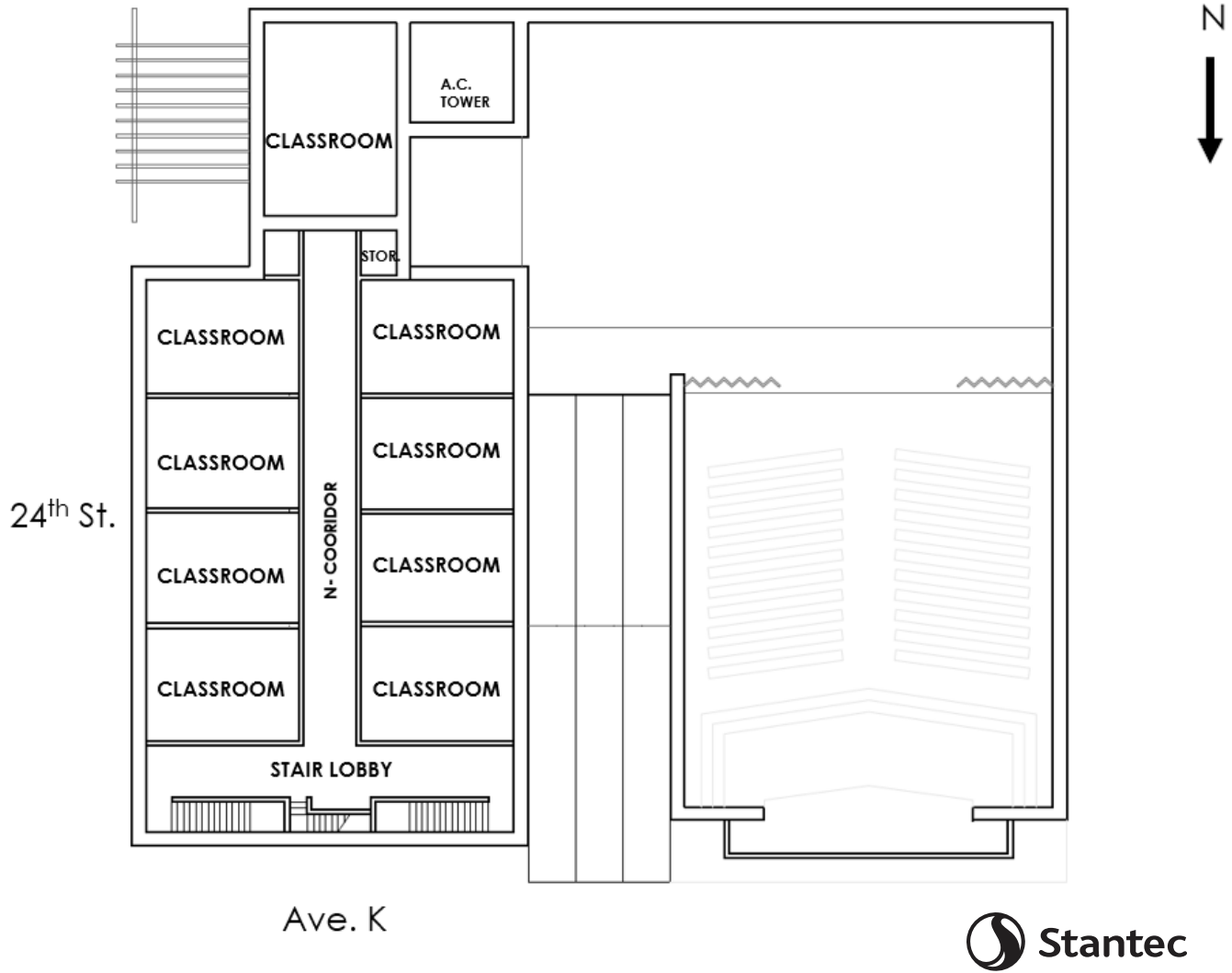
Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Map 3. Congregation Beth Jacob, Current First Floor Plan



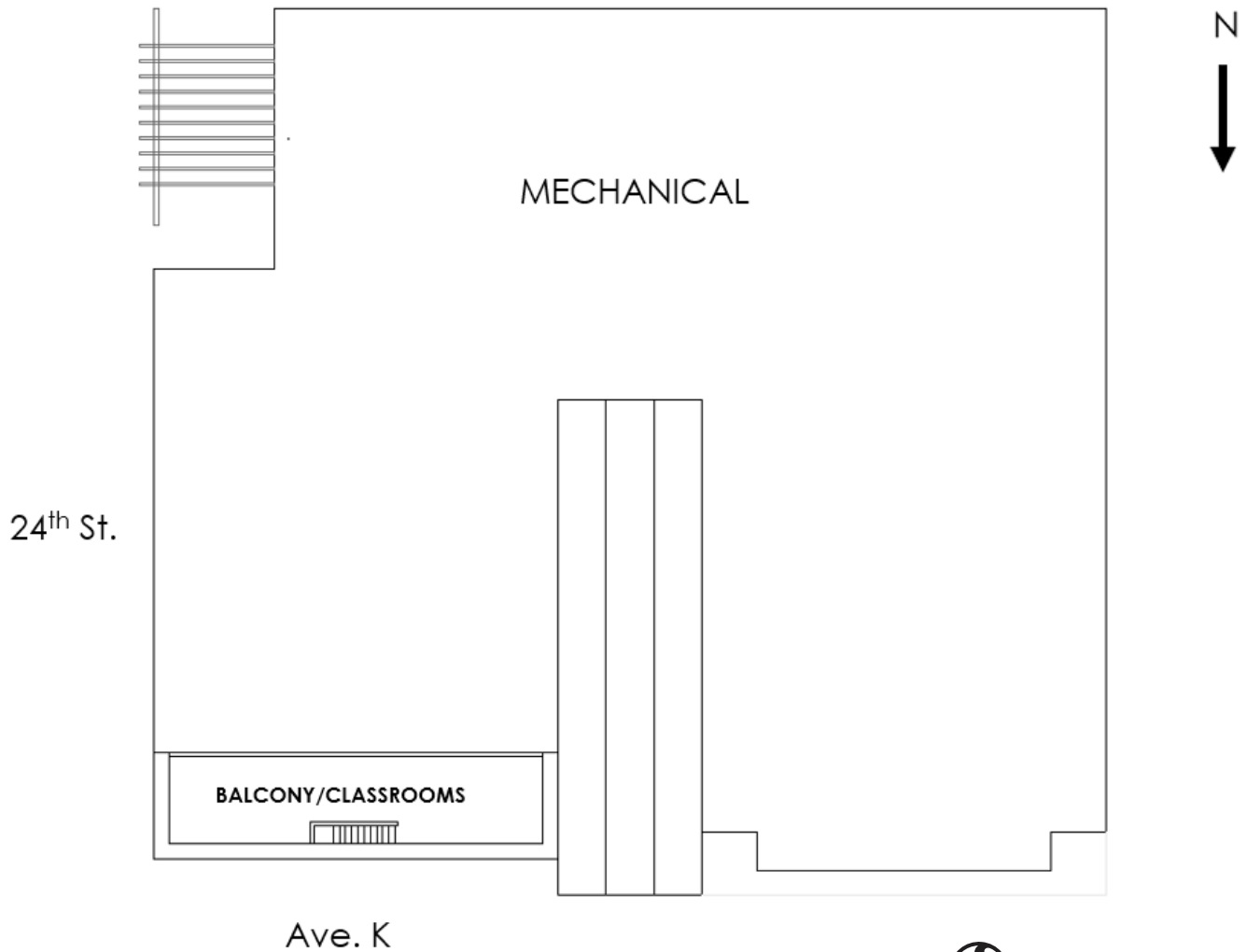
Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Map 4. Congregation Beth Jacob, Current Second Floor Plan



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Map 5. Congregation Beth Jacob, Balcony/Attic Level Plan



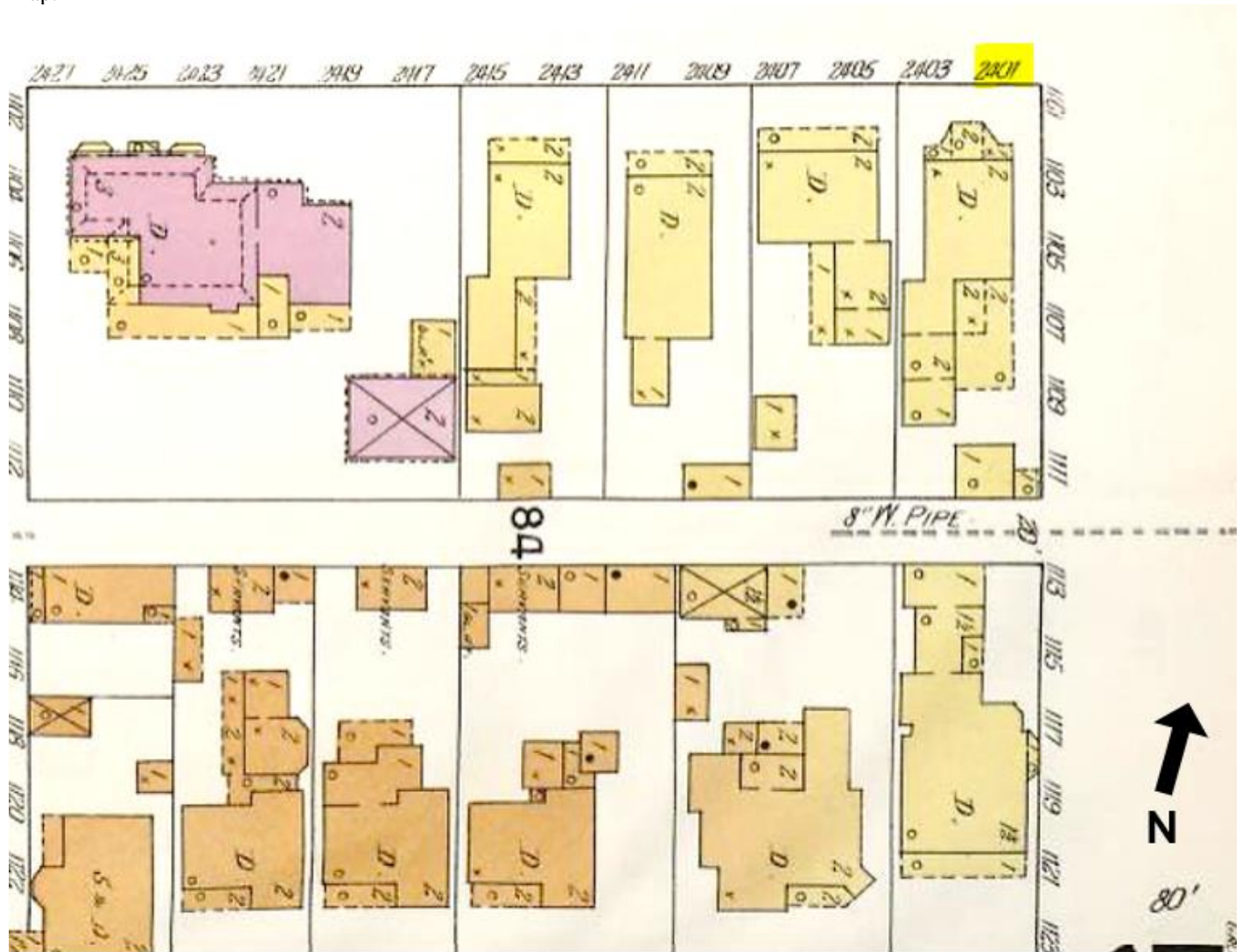
Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Figure 1. Photograph of Congregation Beth Jacob featured in their April 10, 1932, dedication ceremonies souvenir journal.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Figure 2. The future Congregation Beth Jacob site, 2401 Avenue K, is highlighted in yellow on this 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Figure 4. This 1959 Confirmation photograph is a view facing south inside the original Sanctuary. When Congregation Beth Jacob added their new larger Sanctuary in 1963, they remodeled this space to accommodate multiple second floor classrooms. Drop ceilings above the classrooms created a third level housing air handling equipment.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Figure 5. Members of Congregation Beth Jacob break ground for their new synagogue on February 3, 1963. The west façade of the 1932 synagogue and the north side of its frame annex are visible in the background.



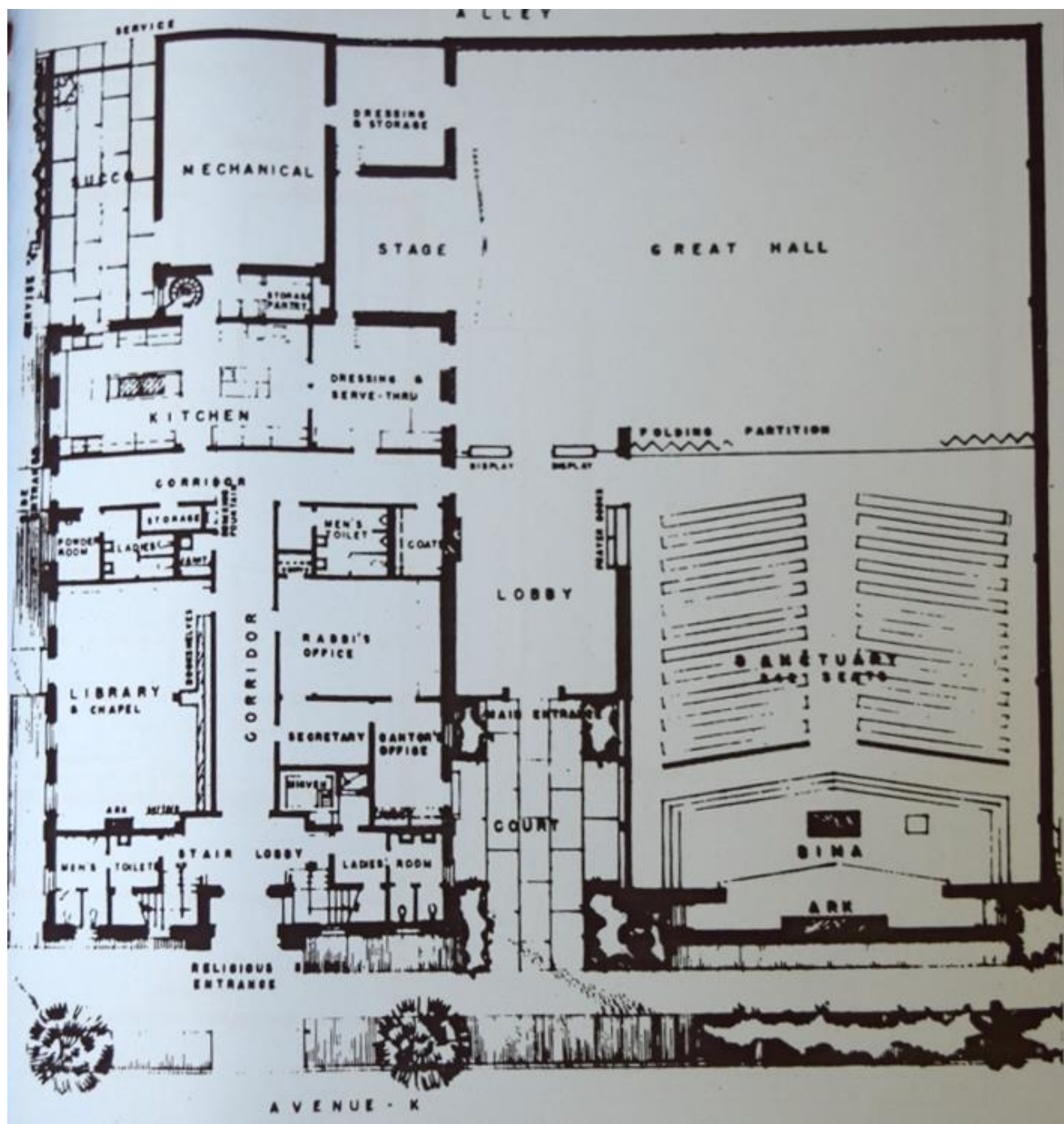
Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Figure 6. Circa 1963 drawing of the planned synagogue addition.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

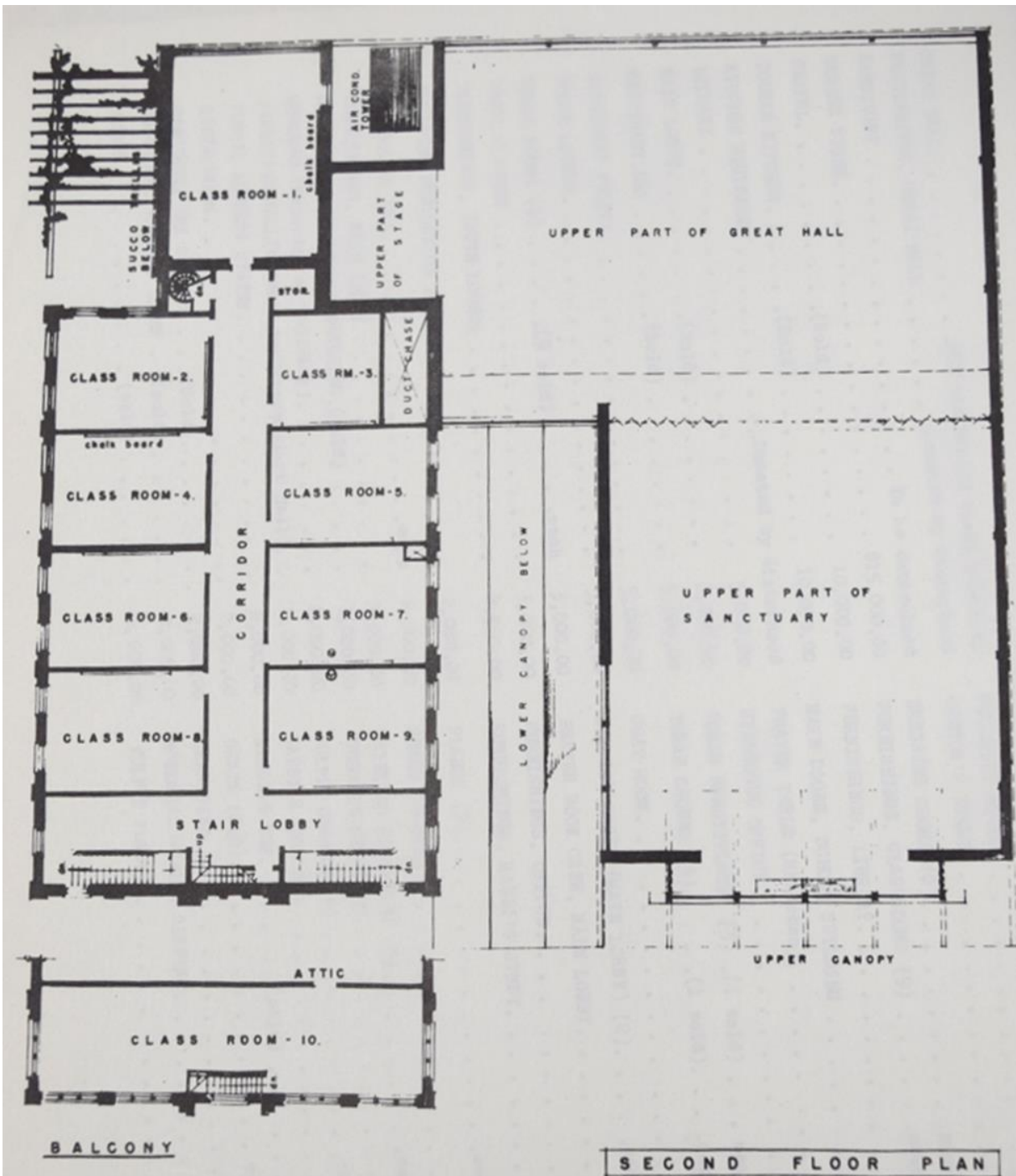
Figure 7. Congregation Beth Jacob 1963 proposed first floor plan.¹⁷⁸



¹⁷⁸ Levy Associates Architects, "Facility Condition Assessment: Congregation Beth Jacob," (2009).

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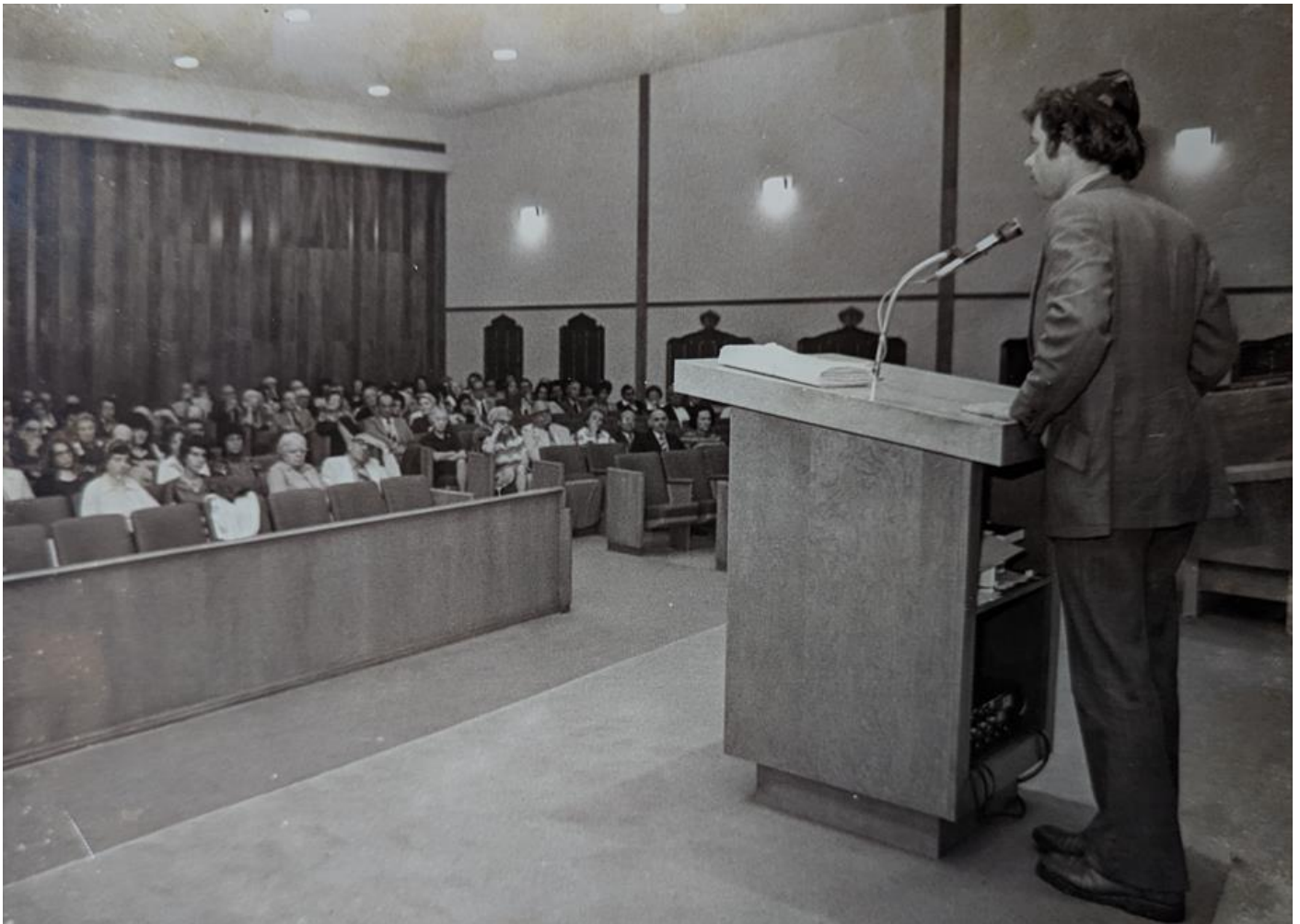
Figure 8. Congregation Beth Jacob 1963 second floor plan.¹⁷⁹



¹⁷⁹ Levy Associates Architects, "Facility Condition Assessment: Congregation Beth Jacob."

Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

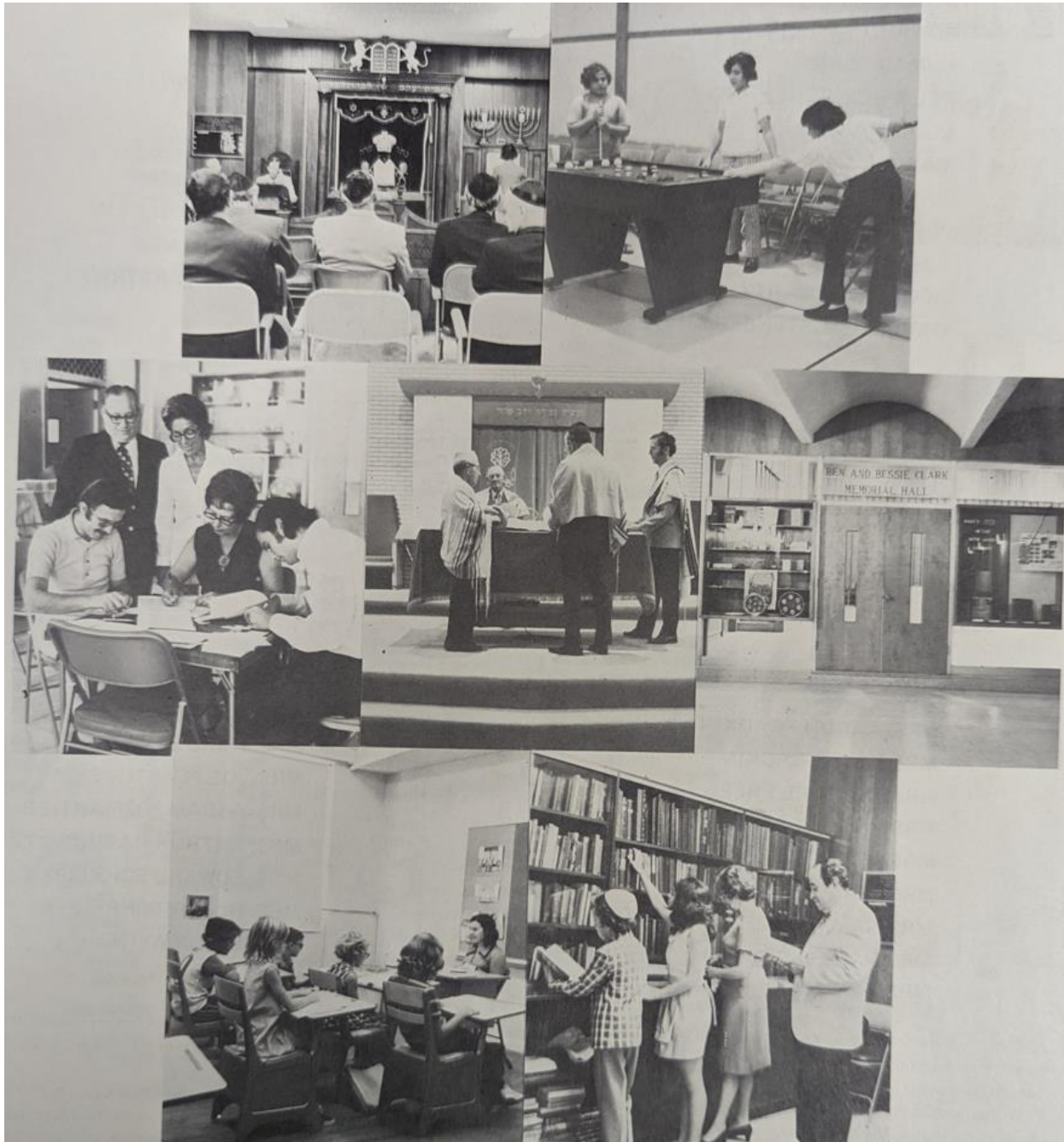
Figure 9. Undated photograph inside the 1963 sanctuary, view facing southwest.¹⁸⁰



¹⁸⁰ Congregation Beth Jacob, Historical Photographs, n.d.

Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Figure 10. Photographs of Congregation Beth Jacob's interior spaces featured in the 1972 40th Anniversary booklet. From top to bottom, left to right, camera direction in parentheses, if known: The chapel/library (facing north), Great Hall, main lobby (facing southeast), sanctuary (facing north), main lobby (facing south), standard classroom, chapel/library (facing northwest).¹⁸¹



¹⁸¹ Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Texas, 40th Anniversary.

Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Current Photos (October 2023, except as noted)

Photo 9. Northeast oblique.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 10. North elevation, 1932 building.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 11. East Elevation.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 12. Southwest oblique.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 13. Southwest oblique.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 14. Northwest oblique.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 15. Gated entrance, at north end looking south towards main entrance.



2023.

Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 8. Entrance court, at north end looking south towards main entrance.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 9. Main lobby (1963 building), at northeast corner looking southwest towards great hall.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 10. Sanctuary (1963 building), at north end, looking northeast.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 11. Sanctuary, at north end, looking northeast.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 12. Sanctuary, at southeast corner, looking northwest.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 13. Sanctuary, at east end looking southwest.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 14. Great hall (Clark Memorial Hall), at west end, looking northeast towards stage.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 16. *Mikvah*, from doorway in ladies' room, looking southeast. Photo taken in January 2023.



Congregation Beth Jacob, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas

Photo 16. Entrance lobby (first floor, 1932 building), looking west.



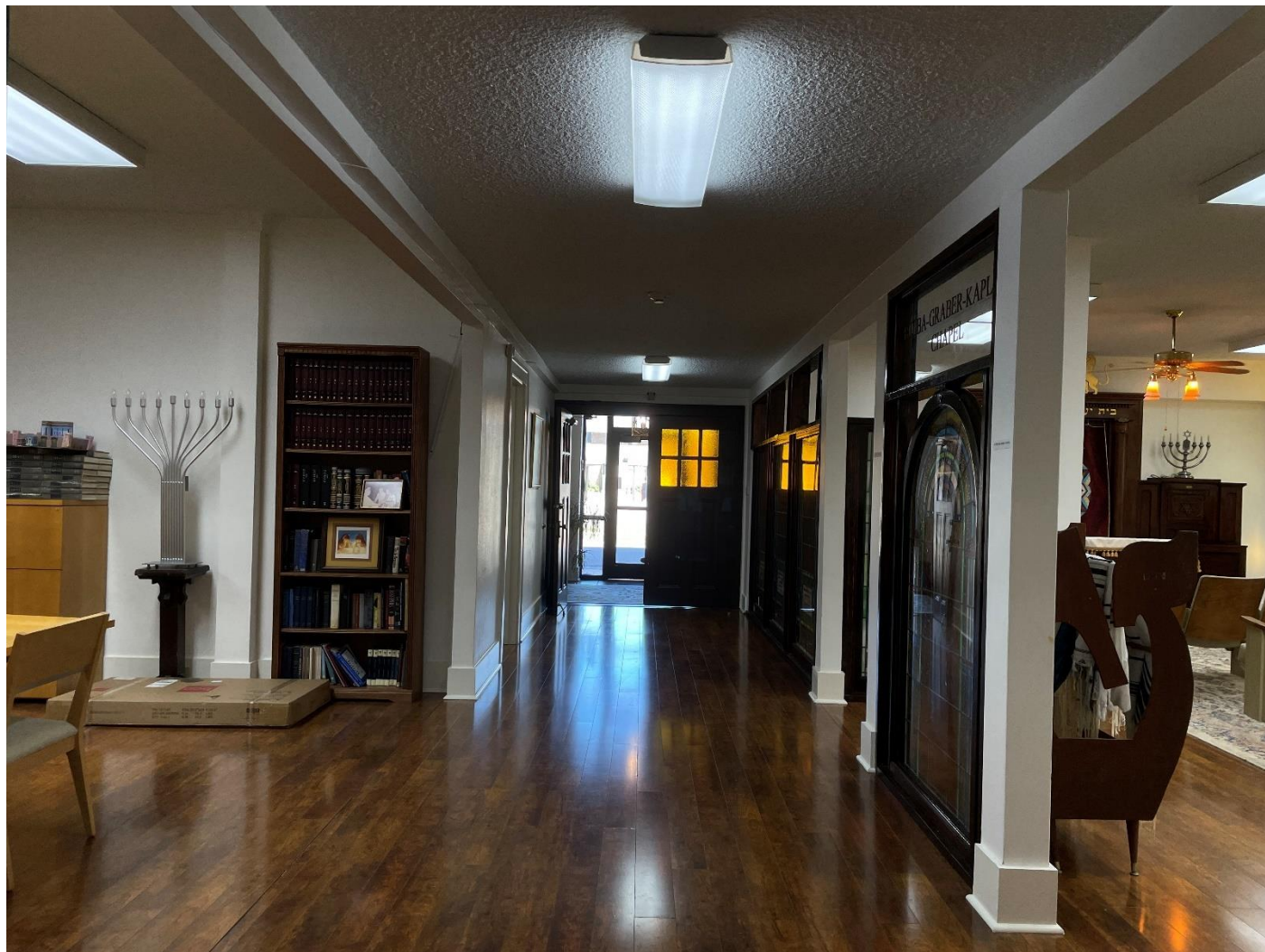
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Photo 17. Chapel (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking northeast.



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Photo 18. North-south hall (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking north.



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Photo 19. North-south hall (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking northeast towards chapel.



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Photo 20. North-south hall (first floor, 1932 building), at south end, looking northeast towards chapel.



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Photo 21. First floor library, 1932 building, looking west.



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Photo 22. Kitchen, at west-center, looking southeast.



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Photo 23. Stair hall (second floor, 1932 building), at center, looking northeast.



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Photo 24. Stair hall (second floor, 1932 building), at center, looking northwest.



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Photo 25. Typical classroom from 1963 remodel of former Sanctuary (second floor, 1932 building).



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Photo 26. Classroom/youth lounge, looking southwest.



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Photo 27. Former women's balcony/classroom space, looking northeast.



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Photo 28. Star of David stained glass window detail, third floor stairwell (1932 building), looking northeast.



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Photo 29. Round window, former location of stained glass Star of David at front of former sanctuary (floor added at balcony level in 1963), looking southeast.



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Photo 30. HVAC/mechanical (added at balcony level of former Sanctuary in 1963), looking southeast.



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