

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11-170	Salem		BEV.1114
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: Beverly

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Downtown

Photograph



West and south (façade) elevations

Address: 39 Bow Street

Historic Name: Sons of Abraham Synagogue

Uses: Present: fraternal organization (Elks 1309)

Original: synagogue and community center

Date of Construction: 1946

Source: building permit

Style/Form: Classical Revival

Architect/Builder: C. F. Springall, architect;
Arthur R. Gadbois, contractor

Exterior Material:

Foundation: not visible

Wall/Trim: aluminum siding, brick, wood trim

Roof: tar and gravel

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Brick façade (1963) - New vinyl siding (replaced in kind;
1996) - Replacement windows (2008)

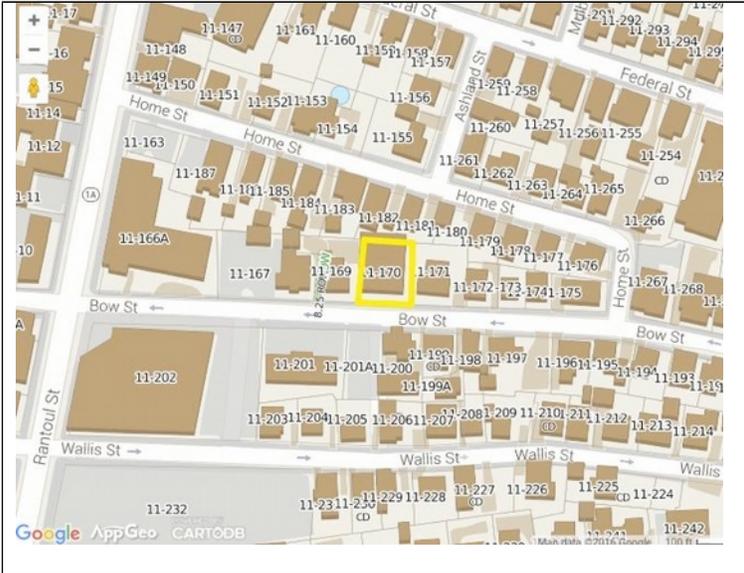
Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.14 acre

Setting: Located in a densely built residential neighborhood, on a cross street between commercial center on Cabot Street and commercial/industrial zone along Rantoul Street.

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Wendy Frontiero and Pamela Hartford

Organization: Beverly Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): September 2016

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

BEVERLY

39 BOW STREET

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Sons of Abraham Synagogue occupies nearly all of a small rectangular lot on the north side of Bow Street, near its intersection with the main thoroughfare of Rantoul Street. The building is set directly on the sidewalk edge, with minimal side setbacks. The east setback is paved with concrete. The lot slopes very gently down from east to west, corresponding to the somewhat more pronounced slope of the street from Cabot to Rantoul streets.

Measuring 63 feet wide by 80 feet deep, the synagogue rises two stories to a flat roof with a low parapet at the street edge. Walls are clad with vinyl siding, trimmed with brick veneer at the base of the Bow Street façade and a wood frontispiece above. Windows are typically multi-panel double hung sash on the façade; fixed vertical panes with a casement sash below predominate on the side elevations. There is no window trim except on the Bow Street frontispiece.

The façade (south) elevation is distinguished by a slightly projecting, two-story frontispiece with a center entrance flanked by a 6/6 window on each side; three bays above are framed by classical pilasters and a high entablature with a wood dentil course and molded wood cornice still extant. The two-story high, second story windows contain paired 9/9 sash surmounted by a wood frieze board and semicircular fan light, all within a wood frame with a wood keystone trim. The center entrance features a modern, wood and metal door, sidelight, and transom and is capped by a small hip roof hood. Brick veneer clads the first floor of the frontispiece and extends into low planter walls in front of its outer bays and a low base on the east and west bays of the façade.

The east and west elevations are utilitarian and asymmetrically composed. The east elevation has a doorway in the outer bays on the ground floor, three bays of blocked-in windows (probably paired openings) on the ground floor; three bays of paired windows and one single window on the second floor; and three small windows on the third floor with louvered infill on the third floor level. The west elevation contains five blocked-in openings on the first floor; second and third story fenestration echoes the east elevation.

The Sons of Abraham Synagogue has experienced significant alterations to its siding and window sash and trim, but is distinctive as an example of early 20th century, wood frame religious architecture in Beverly. The design is notable for its intact scale and form and its imposing Classical Revival frontispiece.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Bow Street was an early connection between Cabot and Rantoul streets, laid out around 1851 and heavily developed with wood frame houses in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Sons of Abraham Synagogue was incorporated in 1908 with approximately 35 founding members under the leadership of Rabbi Sakes. After first gathering in private homes, the congregation began meeting in the Wood Block on Rantoul Street in 1908. In 1912 it merged with Beverly's Sons of Israel Synagogue to become the Sons of Abraham and Isaac Synagogue, acquired the property on Bow Street (which was occupied by a late 19th century house), and built a new synagogue on the site. It was the first purpose-built structure by Jews in Beverly. In 1930, an annex was built to serve as a Hebrew Community Center. The synagogue portion of the structure was destroyed by fire in 1945 and rebuilt in 1946-47 according to plans of C. F. Springall, architect, of Malden; the estimated cost was \$50,000. More research is needed to clarify whether the community center structure actually survived the fire; it appears to have been replaced as part of the new synagogue.

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In addition to religious services, the Bow Street synagogue housed a religious school, gymnasium, social groups, an investment and credit union, and a Zionists organization. Sons of Abraham and Isaac occupied 39 Bow Street until 1962, when the congregation moved to a new and much larger building at 200 East Lothrop Street. In 1965, the building was occupied by St. Alphonse French-Roman Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus. The Beverly Elks Club owned the building by 1975.

Early religious leaders of the Bow Street synagogue included Rabbi Sakes (1908), Rabbi Morris Ordman (1921), and Rabbi Irvin K. Botwinick (1960); no rabbi was listed in the directories for 1930, 1940, or 1950.

The Sons of Abraham and Isaac Synagogue was designed by Cyrus F. Springall (1889-1975), who is associated with 17 properties in MACRIS, all but one built between 1914 and 1930. They include a stadium, church additions and renovations, a synagogue, automobile showroom, factory, commercial building, apartment buildings, hotel addition, and armory, in a variety of architectural styles. Everett, Lynnfield, Medford, Melrose, Wellesley, and Weymouth each have one of his projects; 11 of the properties in MACRIS are in Malden. Springall's obituary highlighted his work designing schools, Air National Guard hangars at Logan Airport, churches, synagogues, and apartment buildings. A native of Malden, Springall was graduated from MIT in 1912 and worked for Parker, Thomas & Rice in Boston before opening his own practice in Malden.

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The Eastern Gazette, 27 Feb 1975, p. 5. Obituary for Cyrus F. Springall. www.abbott-library.com/ Accessed 11 My 2016.

SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



South (façade) and east elevations