

# City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

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### FINAL REPORT

#### Proposed

#### **Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit / Scott Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church Historic District**

**Charge:** By resolution dated October 5, 2010 the Detroit City Council charged the Historic Designation Advisory Board, a study committee, with the official study of the proposed Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit Historic District in accordance with Chapter 25 of the 1984 Detroit City Code and the Michigan Local Historic Districts Acts.



*Detroit/Urban Conservation Project, 1976*

The proposed Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit Historic District is composed of the single institutional building located at the northeast corner of East Kirby Avenue and St. Antoine Street between St. Antoine and the Chrysler Freeway (I-75). It is in the Art Center/Midtown section of Detroit approximately three miles from Campus Martius in downtown Detroit. Its significance lies in its Jewish ethnic heritage as headquarters of the United Hebrew Schools of Detroit, and its African American ethnic heritage as the home of the Scott Memorial Methodist Episcopal (later United Methodist) Church, Detroit's first African American church of the mainline Methodist Episcopal denomination. The building is an important work of Detroit architect Isadore M. Lewis, one of several Jewish architects in the city who seems to have specialized in work for Jewish clients.

**Boundaries:** The boundaries of the proposed Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit are the same as the National Register listing and are outlined in heavy black lines on the attached map. The boundary description is as follows:

On the north, the centerline of the alley running east-west between East Ferry and East Kirby Avenues; and

On the east, a line two feet east of and parallel to the west line of Lot 7, Block 38, Ferry and Lyster's Subdivision, as recorded in Liber 12 Page 42 of Plats, Wayne County Records; and

On the south, the centerline of East Kirby Avenue; and

On the west, the centerline of St. Antoine Street.

Legal description: Lots 7 and 8 and the West 2 feet of Lot 6, Block 38, Ferry and Lyster's Subdivision, as recorded in Liber 12 Page 42 of Plats, Wayne County Records. Commonly known as 609 E. Kirby, Tax Parcel: Ward 03 Item 001531.

**Boundary Justification:**

The property is the entire parcel historically associated with the school.

*Kristine M. Kidorf, Historic Preservation Consultant, prepared the national register nomination on which this report was completely based.*

**History:**

Jews first arrived in Detroit in 1850 and shortly thereafter established the first synagogue, Temple Beth El. A second congregation, Shaarey Zedek, was founded in 1862 by the Orthodox members of Temple Beth El. As Detroit's population grew in the late 1800s and early 1900s, so did the number of Jewish residents who were primarily immigrants from Germany before 1880 and from Eastern European countries in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Drawn by jobs in Detroit's many industries the Jewish population grew from 30,000 people in 1910 to 80,000 people in 1916. By 1923 there were close to 100,000 Jews in Detroit and ten religious congregations.<sup>1</sup>

Detroit's population explosion was not limited to Jewish immigrants. The growing auto industry and need for workers drew many newcomers to Detroit from numerous countries and the United States. Detroit experienced unprecedented growth and expansion in the 1920s. After the population rose 113 percent from 1910 to 1920, it increased another sixty-three percent between 1920 and 1930 according to the United States census figures. Detroit also increased dramatically in its land area, the physical size of the city more than tripling between 1910 and 1930.

As the Jewish population increased, the center of Jewish settlement gradually moved outward from the older downtown neighborhoods. Before 1910 Jews typically lived south of Forest

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<sup>1</sup> *Jewish Community Blue Book of 1923*. Detroit: The Jewish Chronical Publishing Co. Inc.

Avenue; however after 1910 the incoming Eastern European Jewish immigrants created their own neighborhoods north of Forest, particularly centered on Hastings Street. The area around Kirby and Beaubien quickly became home to many Jewish families that were constructing houses or renting flats often constructed by Jewish developers. Several synagogues were constructed in the area, accommodating the Orthodox tradition of walking to and from services on the Sabbath and holy days.

The 1920s were the heyday of the Jewish community in the Kirby/Ferry neighborhood. As Detroit's population exploded in the 1920s a housing shortage made existing neighborhoods denser, and those who could afford single-family houses moved farther from the city center. As immigrants gained wealth the Jewish community typically moved north and west to less developed areas of the city. By the 1930s the center of the Jewish community had already moved farther north. Nearby African American neighborhoods began expanding into the East Ferry and East Kirby area as Jewish landlords were willing to rent to African American families.

Education is a central tenet to Jewish beliefs, and Temple Beth El had a school to provide secular and religious education to Jewish children. As the public school system improved in the late 1800s the need for private secular education was eliminated, allowing synagogues to focus on religious education, but generally on a limited basis. Beginning about 1910 Eastern European Jews followed the national trend and adopted the Talmud Torah model for religious education, a community-based school that drew leadership from the neighborhood and wider community. A number of Talmud Torah schools, some affiliated with synagogues, were located in Jewish neighborhoods. These schools generally had a weekday Hebrew Free School which provided instruction at the conclusion of the public school day with the religious school department meeting on Sundays.<sup>2</sup>

In 1919 the largest Talmud Torah school in Detroit to date was constructed on Wilkins Street near Hastings (demolished). It had Detroit's first Hebrew kindergarten. The maximum enrollment of 700 children was quickly reached. In 1920 the Talmud Torah school on Division Street became a branch of the Wilkins Street school and the two associated schools became known as the United Hebrew Schools. In 1921 two additional schools affiliated, one at 524 Farnsworth Street near Hastings (demolished) and the other at 3526 29<sup>th</sup> Street near Michigan Avenue in southwest Detroit that was tied to the El Moshe congregation (occupying the former Greater Mt. Huron Baptist Church). The Farnsworth School, located in the Hastings neighborhood with a large Jewish population, was soon outgrown. In 1922 the Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit was constructed farther north at East Kirby and St. Antoine as the headquarters of the United Hebrew Schools to replace the Farnsworth school. Tushiyah is Hebrew for wisdom or insight. Also called Talmud Torah or the Kirby Center, the building contained enough classrooms to teach 1,500 children and the auditorium could accommodate 2,000. The building also housed adult education classes and served as a meeting place and general Jewish center for the surrounding community. For example, the Philomathic Debating Club met in the building from 1922 until 1924.

In 1923 another United Hebrew School opened at 9243 Delmar (now the St. John the Great Baptist Church), across the street from the Ahavas Achim Synagogue and about two miles north of the school at Kirby and St. Antoine. It operated at least through 1931. Ahavas Achim was the

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<sup>2</sup> Garvett, Morris, "The Development of Jewish Education in Detroit," *Michigan Jewish History*. Detroit: Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, May 1965, Vol. 5, No. 2.

largest congregation in the Oakland neighborhood. In 1924 a fourth school at 1245 West Philadelphia (demolished) near Byron opened in the growing Twelfth Street neighborhood. By 1927 the Wilkins school closed. In 1928 a school opened at 15705 Parkside in the Dexter/Livernois neighborhood in northwest Detroit. The building remains, greatly altered, as the Northwest Church of God. In 1929 another school opened at the southwest corner of Tuxedo and Holmur in the northwest Dexter/Davison neighborhood (demolished).

Although the national trend of Talmud Torah schools peaked in the 1920s and then declined, Detroit's United Hebrew School system remained strong through at least 1968. The major factor contributing to its success was the Jewish Welfare Federation taking on the United Hebrew Schools in 1926. This provided funding for the schools during the Depression and allowed the schools to move as the Jewish population shifted to the north and west in Detroit and then continued migrating outward to the suburban communities. Numerous congregations provided the physical space with instruction provided by United Hebrew School teachers. Two other types of Jewish schools were found in Detroit. Yeshivah Beth Yehudah was founded in 1916 and provided all-day education. Yiddish Schools began in 1912 and evolved through association with a variety of Jewish socialist groups such as the Workman's Circle.<sup>3</sup>

By 1929, when the Tushiyah United Hebrew School closed, there were four other United Hebrew schools educating 1700 children. By that time Jewish families had mostly moved from the neighborhood and newly arrived African Americans were the predominant residents.

### **Scott Memorial Methodist Church**

In 1929 the Kirby Center school was sold to the Scott Memorial Methodist Episcopal ("M.E.") Church. The church was founded in 1909 by Harvey and Annabelle Henson, two African Americans who arrived in Detroit in 1905. They were devout M.E. members but found no African American Methodist Episcopal congregations in Detroit. There were a number of African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) or African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E. Zion) churches in Detroit, but these were different organizations from the mainline Methodist Episcopal Church which had thirty-five white churches in Detroit by 1920.

As there were no other African American M.E. congregations in Michigan in 1909, the pastor assigned to the fledgling congregation was shared with a church in Toledo, Ohio. Services were held in the Hensons' home and the congregation was named after Bishop Isaiah B. Scott, one of the first African American bishops in the M. E. Church. At that time African American M.E. congregations in Ohio were part of the Columbus District of the Lexington Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. White M.E. churches were in a separate Michigan Conference. The Lexington Conference was founded in Kentucky in 1869 when fourteen African American preachers requested a separate conference for their churches within the M.E. Church. The first meeting of the conference was held in Louisville in 1870. The conference eventually grew to include African American M.E. congregations in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Initially the annual meetings were primarily held in Kentucky; however, after the Great Migration of African Americans from the southern United States to the northern

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

industrial cities between 1910 and 1930, the annual meetings shifted farther north, with the 1930, 1942 and 1952 annual conferences being held at Scott Memorial.<sup>4</sup>

After its founding in 1909 Scott Memorial continued to grow and the congregation moved between members' houses, a storefront, a house converted to a church, and eventually its own church building, constructed in 1914 on Beaubien Street north of Mack (demolished).

By 1918 the church was "one of the leading Negro churches in the city."<sup>5</sup> During the late teens and early 1920s Detroit's general and African American population exploded and Scott's membership grew along with it, necessitating a larger space. A building at the corner of St. Antoine and Erskine was purchased during World War I, but by 1923 the over one-thousand members were again outgrowing the newly acquired space.

Sometime after 1915 the Methodist Union of Greater Detroit was founded to aid in church expansion and support. The goals of the organization included: "1) establishing and supporting mission among foreign, colored and underprivileged people in Greater Detroit; 2) locate new churches, secure sites and aid in the organization of new societies; 3) raise money to support a missionary program, pay for church sites, aid in building new churches, and to give assistance in settlement of church indebtedness; and 4) bring together from time to time representatives of all Methodist churches of greater Detroit."<sup>6</sup> In particular the Methodist Union fulfilled their goals by spending "much time, effort and money in helping establish churches of the Lexington Conference in Detroit."<sup>7</sup>

In 1920-21 there were two African American congregations in Detroit that the Methodist Union was assisting, Scott Memorial and the Warren Avenue Mission on West Warren. In 1924 the Union was authorized to assist Scott in purchasing property for expansion. In 1928 Scott asked to be placed first on the list for the 1929 church extension and building program, and agreed to raise \$150,000 themselves to help purchase property and construct a new building. However, in 1929 the plans to build were abandoned, and the Methodist Union purchased the former Tushiyah United Hebrew School for the Scott congregation. Presumably plans to build a new church were dropped because the Hebrew School could be obtained for much less a cost – \$92,500 – than the expected cost of a new site and building.

In April 1930, the Lexington Annual Conference was held at Scott Memorial. The Forward Movement of Greater Detroit, who had been helpful in finding a permanent home for the congregation, declared that "Scott Church is one of the two best-housed colored congregations in Methodism."<sup>8</sup> At the time there were at least four other African American M.E. churches in Detroit, two of which were organized by Dr. G. R. Bryant, the Scott Memorial pastor from 1923 through 1925.

Beginning in 1933 the Methodist Union began a campaign to retire the Scott building mortgage; however, it was not until 1943 with a \$10,000 gift from the Kresge Foundation that it was finally paid off. The congregation worked hard to keep the church solvent during the Depression years,

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<sup>4</sup> *Notable Kentucky African Americans Database*. University of Kentucky Libraries, accessed online at: [http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/NKAA/record.php?note\\_id=1688](http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/NKAA/record.php?note_id=1688), February 23, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> *Scott Memorial United Methodist Church Pictorial Directory*.

<sup>6</sup> Burton, Alvin and Mamie Garvin. *Negro United Methodists in Michigan*. Bryn Mawr, PA: Dorrance & Co. Pub., 1985. p. 30

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 32

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33

with eight Ladies Aid circles and other auxiliaries raising funds. In 1942 Scott hosted the First Annual Youth Institute as well as the Lexington Annual Conference. The youth event was due in large part to Mabel Windrow, a Scott member and the president of the Youth Section of the Lexington Conference. She was the only African American officer also elected to the Youth Section of the Detroit Annual Conference.<sup>9</sup>

Once the mortgage was retired in 1943 the congregation undertook a remodeling plan, putting on a new roof and installing new pews and carpeting. Alterations continued in 1948 when part of the first floor was made into a youth center and new light fixtures and pulpit furniture were installed in the sanctuary.

The eventual unification of the Lexington Conference churches with the white conferences took two decades. In 1944 the Detroit Annual Conference took a first step of extending an invitation to the Lexington Conference churches within the Detroit area boundaries to join. Some of the credit for this initiative was given to the work by the Methodist Union that had continued to bring area churches together. However, the initiative was ultimately not approved by the larger Methodist church or by the Lexington Conference, and the churches stayed separated. In subsequent years the invitation to combine the Lexington and Detroit conferences was extended periodically. In 1957 an inter-racial leadership conference was held jointly by Scott Memorial and the white Metropolitan Methodist Church and featured an address by Thurgood Marshall, then the attorney for the NAACP. The gathering led to the Lexington Conference approving the transfer of Second Grace in Detroit and John Wesley in River Rouge to the Detroit Conference in 1958. Scott and Metropolitan hosted a Detroit Youth Inter-Racial Conference in 1958 that included young people from all over Michigan.

In addition to their role in uniting the segregated Methodist Church, Scott members were active in the civil rights movement. In 1963 the pastor and members took part in Detroit's June 23, 1963, "Walk for Freedom." Scott members had the largest delegation at Michigan Methodist conferences on race in 1962 and 1963.<sup>10</sup> In 1964 the Lexington Annual Conference voted to merge with the Annual Conferences of the North Central jurisdiction. In 1965 all of the Lexington Conference churches in Detroit were transferred to the Detroit Conference.

In 1968 the congregation began looking for a larger building. In 1970, when the predominantly white Grace United Methodist Church merged with another congregation, Grace offered their church, education building and parsonage to Scott Memorial for one dollar. The former Grace Church was located on West Chicago Boulevard on Detroit's west side, and Scott's move to the new location was marked by a motorcade there from the Kirby building.

In 1984 Scott Memorial United Methodist Church sold the Kirby building to the non-profit Wild Life Field and Stream Club. In 1997 the building was sold to the current owner, Most Worshipful Unity Grand Lodge of Michigan, Ancient and Accepted Masons, and Morningstar Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, who use portions of the building for meeting rooms. The group plans to sell the building to a developer who will completely rehabilitate the building and convert it to apartments.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 41

<sup>10</sup> Scott Memorial United Methodist Church Pictorial Directory.

## Architect

The Tushiyah United Hebrew School building was designed by Isadore M. Lewis, a Jewish architect working in Detroit from 1916 until at least 1960. By the early twentieth century Detroit acquired a substantial number of “ethnic” architects who practiced more often than not outside of the architectural mainstream designing primarily for clients within their own ethnic groups. A few examples include Richard Raseman, who had primarily German clients, and Joseph Gwizdowski, who typically designed for fellow Poles. Two other Polish architects, Walter Garsztecki and Julius Jablonski, had offices on Chene and Medbury, respectively, in the heart of the Polish immigrant community. The most noted of a number of Jewish architects in Detroit at the time was Albert Kahn. Due to his success and prominence he worked within the mainstream Detroit community, including for Henry Ford, a known anti-Semite. Lewis was among a number of Jewish and other “ethnic” architects – others include Maurice H. Finkel, Henry Kohner and others even less known today – who carried on substantial practices designing a broad range of typically background commercial, apartment, industrial, and institutional buildings in Detroit that received little attention from the architectural press in their day and rarely appear in the architectural guidebooks of today.

Isadore M. Lewis was born in Appleton, Wisconsin, in 1888 to Russian immigrant parents. After graduating from Appleton High School in 1906 and attending Lawrence University in Appleton for two years, he went to the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture in 1911 and moved to Chicago to work for five years. In Chicago he worked for Otis and Clark; Shattuck and Hussey; and Carby S. Zimmerman.

In 1916 he moved to Detroit and opened his own firm, I. M. Lewis Architects. He received his Michigan license in 1917. His clients appear to be primarily fellow Jewish businessmen. His work included numerous stores, apartment buildings, residences and at least one theater.

Some of Lewis’ otherwise anonymous work is listed in the weekly “Detroit Architects’ Reports” in the *Michigan Contractor and Builder*. References for projects during a sampling of years include a great number of buildings for predominantly Jewish clients; many have since been demolished. In 1919 he designed a two-story residence with a basement to serve as a model for the Detroit Home Building Company. The house design was twenty-six by twenty-six and had an asbestos shingle roof and furnace heat. Some of his other work that year included: a house at Dexter and Vicksburg for A. Goldman; remodeling a store with an addition for F. Levinson; a warehouse at 397 Harper for Robinson and Cohen; an addition to a hide and fur house building for E. A. Atlas; a two-story restaurant, dance hall and store building at W. Grand Boulevard and Woodward Avenue for the Chinese American Realty Company and a forty-three unit apartment building at 156 Peterboro for Benjamin Fine. He also did two projects for Jacob Shevitz, a two-story factory building and a two-story market and office building near Frederick and Hastings streets.

In 1920 he designed a theater at Livingston and Hastings for A. Baron, a one-story public garage on Oakland near Woodland for Carl Singer; and a nineteen unit apartment building at 14<sup>th</sup> and Virginia Park of which Lewis is listed as the owner. That same year he designed a house in Niagara Falls, New York for Harris Lumberg, the proprietor of the Lumberg Theater. An

intensive level survey of the neighborhood calls the house “one of the best examples of the Spanish Colonial/Mediterranean Style in the city.”<sup>11</sup>

In 1922 Lewis designed the Tushiyah United Hebrew School in a style that seems a mix of the Prairie and Commercial styles. The building is straightforward in design with double-loaded classrooms on the first floor and an auditorium on the second floor. Decoration consists of subtle cast stone and brick horizontal banding and with cast stone panels and trim on the two street-facing elevations.

*Michigan Contractor and Builder* references to his work in Detroit in 1925 include a six-store and six-flat building in the Commercial Style for Harry Slatkin on the southwest corner of Mack and Lakewood); a thirteen unit apartment building for Max Fertel on Clements between Linwood and LaSalle; a house and garage for Benjamin Rush on Boston between Wilson and Byron; a two-story factory building for the Detroit Bedding Company; a forty-five room hotel for the Woodrow Building Company; a four-story, seventeen-unit apartment building in Palmer Park on Covington for J. W. Allen; a sixty-six unit apartment building on Dumbarton Road for Max Fertel; and a Renaissance Style, four-story, 170 family apartment building, the Carver Hotel, at 87-89 East Canfield for David Rosenblum (in the Sugar Hill Historic District).

In 1926 he designed a forty-two unit apartment building on the northwest corner of McClellan and Agnes for Mishkin and Perchick, now demolished; a nineteen-unit building on the east side of Baldwin between East Jefferson and Waterloo for Morris Pollock; three apartment buildings on the southwest corner of Wallace and Miller for Ginsberg Construction Company, now demolished, a six-story apartment building on the south side of Gladstone between Second and Woodward for Morris Cooper, now demolished; and a two-story building with a 1600 seat theater, stores, flats and offices at West Warren and Junction for William Roth.

Lewis had fewer projects in 1934 but one project was to move three stores back and design repair work on a building at the northeast corner of Woodward and Rowena – this work necessitated by the widening of Woodward Avenue. The contracts were let to Alex Dickman, Max Greenberg, Mark Feldman and the Wayne County Construction Company, again showing ties with the Jewish community. Lewis designed a two-story store building on Grand River between Oakman and the Pere Marquette Railway, and altered a four-story building on Michigan Avenue for the Reliable Furniture Company. In 1935 he designed a music shell and dance floor for Paradise-on-Lake on Lake St. Clair.

Projects during 1940 include a one-story building containing four stores at Gratiot and Van Dyke for K&G Realty Company (contract awarded to Shefman Construction); a two-story store on Gratiot Avenue for J. Karbel; and an office at the plant of the Riverside Scrap Iron and Metal Company. In 1941 he designed an ice cream plant at Oakland and Hague Streets for Mr. Barthwell.

During World War II Mr. Lewis donated his time to design a temporary structure on Campus Martius in downtown Detroit for the Aviation Cadet Recruiting Aides to provide information to men desiring to join the Army Air Force. A 1942 *Detroit Free Press* article states that the carrara glass building was meant to resemble an airport hangar and replaced an earlier temporary structure.

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<sup>11</sup> Clinton Brown Company Architecture, pc. *City of Niagara Falls Intensive Level Historic Resources Survey Phase I*. Survey sheets for 610 Buffalo Avenue.



In 1959 a house in Huntington Woods that Lewis designed for his daughter and three grandchildren was featured in the *Detroit Free Press* Living section. The design was modern in style and featured whimsical cut-out handles and switch plates. Some of the modern features included moveable walls and shelving in front of a glass wall.

Lewis had architecture licenses in New York and Washington DC as well as Michigan. He was a member of the national AIA from 1943 until 1950. He was nominated to the AIA by Talmage Hughes and Ralph Calder who indicated they had known him for twenty-five years in 1943. Mr. Lewis died in 1968 while living in Huntington Woods with his wife Theresa. He is buried in Shaarey Zedek's Clover Hill Park Cemetery in Birmingham.

### **Physical Appearance:**

The Commercial Style, two-story former Tushiyah United Hebrew School was constructed in 1922 and stands on the northeast corner of East Kirby and St. Antoine Streets, about three miles north of downtown Detroit. The tan brick building with cast stone trim faces south on Kirby. The surrounding neighborhood began developing in the 1890s. The adjacent houses on Kirby Street were primarily constructed in the 1910s. The school is set back from Kirby Street with a flat, grassy lawn containing large evergreen trees and overgrown shrubs. The St. Antoine side of the building abuts the sidewalk and there are regularly spaced trees planted along the street in the tree lawn. The building's original L-shaped footprint is one-hundred-and-two feet by one-hundred-and-thirty-four feet. A one-story utilitarian addition was constructed about 1950 across the back of the property creating a seventy foot by forty-four foot grass courtyard that opens to the east. The building features decorative brick work and subtle limestone and cast stone banding, medallions and reliefs, and has groups of wood one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, spaced equally on each elevation. The arched roof over the main section of the building is not visible behind the tall brick parapet walls.

The former Tushiyah United Hebrew School has a concrete foundation, masonry walls and steel framing. The arched roof over the north-south portion of the building has large steel trusses. The roof over the east-west section of the building is flat. The 1950s rear addition is brick and concrete block with a collapsed roof.

The south-facing five-bay wide façade displays an off-center main entrance and a flat-topped parapet wall that rises in steps over each bay toward the center bay, which features a low gabled parapet. The parapet has decorative brick patterns, cast stone panels, and a limestone cap. The façade and west elevation feature subtle limestone banding including a beltcourse below the first-floor windows that extends around to the west elevation; upper and lower bands at the base of the projecting piers at the first-floor level and four bands at their cap level. There are four levels of matching quoin-like blocks flanking the upper ends of the second-story central and outer bays, at the corners of the building, plus additional blocks in the center bay below the parapet. The limestone banding is augmented by soldier courses of brick outlining the openings and running across the entire façade above the second floor windows.

The center bay has four evenly spaced piers which are decorated with the limestone bands and have a cast stone flaming urn relief on each top. The two cast stone medallions in the gable each contain a Star of David. The first and second floors each contain a pair of one-over-one double-hung windows with transoms.

The bay to the left of the center bay contains the entrance, with a pair of aluminum and glass doors with sidelights and a transom. The entrance bay's ground story is flanked by brick piers with stone bands near the top. A pair of one-over-one double-hung windows with transoms rises above the door at the second floor. A badly weathered cast stone panel reading "Tushiyah United Hebrew Schools of Detroit ... [last word unreadable]" is set in the center of a recessed brick area above the second floor windows. The masonry openings are outlined with soldier courses of brick with cast stone squares at the corners. The parapet wall has a brick relief in the center and is capped with limestone.

The bay to right of the center bay is identical to the entrance bay except there is a pair of one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, at the first floor and the cast stone panel above the second floor windows is blank. The bays at each end of the façade have two pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, at the first and second floors. A former cornice line that is covered with cement runs below the parapet and turns the corner of the building. The original elevations show a simple classical cornice constructed of metal. The cornice will be re-created as part of the planned rehabilitation. In the center of the parapet there is a cast stone panel with two lions holding a tablet.

The cornerstone at the southwest corner of the building has a faint "1922" engraved in it. The five-bay wide west elevation faces St. Antoine and continues the limestone and brick banding from the facade. The broad center bay has five pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, spaced evenly across the first and second floors. A soldier course runs across the entire elevation above the second floor windows. The brick piers separating the windows have limestone bands near the top. There is a former cornice line that has been covered with concrete at the base of the parapet. The simple classical cornice shown in the original elevations will be recreated. There are two cast stone panels in the parapet, each with a relief depicting two lions holding a tablet. The bays on either side of the center bay are identical and have three one-over-one double-hung windows with transoms at the first and second floors. At the second floor the piers between the windows have decorative limestone bands and are topped with cast stone flaming urns. There is a low gabled parapet above each of these bays. The gable has decorative brick work and three equally spaced cast stone medallions each contain a Star of David. The pediments are capped with limestone. The end bays have two pairs of double-hung windows, with transoms, at the first and second floor. There is a cast stone panel with the lion and tablet relief in the center of the parapet of each bay.

The east and north elevations, which do not face streets, have common red brick walls with limestone sills. In the front section of the building there are no window openings in the wall due to the proximity of the neighboring house. The section of the east elevation that faces onto the courtyard is five bays wide. The bays are of equal width and are separated by brick piers. The two center bays have two pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows at the first floor; the second floor openings have been closed in with concrete block. The historic window openings will be re-created as part of the rehabilitation. The two bays outside of the center bays have four one-over-one double-hung windows at the first floor; the second floor openings have also been blocked closed. The bay at the north end of the building is where the one-story brick addition is connected to the main building. The second floor of the end bay has a pair of double-hung windows with transoms. The north elevation of the school that faces the courtyard has two sections. The east half has two pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows at the first floor, and two pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, at the second floor. The west

half is slightly recessed. There is a door and a pair of one-over-one double-hung windows at the first floor. The second floor has a pair of one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms. There is also a pair of tall one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, spanning between the first and second floors closest to the east elevation of the school.

The courtyard is a flat, overgrown lawn area. There is no evidence of its historic use or any landscape features. The north wall of the courtyard is created by the one-story red brick addition and a concrete block shed roof lean-to. The addition was constructed about 1950 and appears to have been constructed for storage or other utilitarian purposes. There are two door openings into the addition from the courtyard. The addition is in very poor condition, with the roof totally collapsed and brick missing from portions of the wall. It is proposed to be removed as part of the rehabilitation.

The north elevation of the school that faces the alley is painted brick. It is comprised of the main building, which is four bays wide, and the one-story, three-bay wide addition to the east. The main building is split into two halves by a chimney. Both halves of the elevation have sets of paired one-over-one double-hung windows at the first floor and sets of one-over-one double-hung windows, with transoms, at the second floor. One set of windows spans between the floors at the stair. A double-door entrance is located at the center of the building. The one-story addition has three boarded-up window openings on the north elevation.

The interior of the building is accessed through the main entry which has a white tile floor in the vestibule with green tiles spelling out "Kirby Center." The vestibule walls have a green and yellow tile wainscot. There are wood and glass inner doors. The first floor of the building has a double-loaded corridor that runs north-south and a single-loaded corridor running to the east from the entrance. The hallways have terrazzo floors, plaster walls and acoustic tile ceilings. The doors to the classrooms have transoms.

The east-west corridor has classrooms on the south side and a large wood stair leading to the second floor on the north side. The north-south corridor has classrooms on the west side and a non-original dining hall and kitchen on the east side. Originally the dining hall area was divided into three classrooms. The classrooms have undergone alterations over the years. Some still retain wood floors, wood baseboards and trim, plaster walls and acoustical tile ceilings. A number of the rooms have suffered severe water damage. Newer wood paneling has been applied to many walls throughout the building.

There is a stair hall with plaster walls and ceiling at the north end of the building. It leads to a second-floor hall and smaller rooms behind the auditorium stage. The second floor features a large open auditorium over the north-south section of the building. The room is finished with a wood floor and coffered plaster ceiling. The beams forming the coffers are in line with the roof trusses and are divided into three rectangles across the width of the room. The north end of the auditorium features a plaster soffit creating a proscenium above the upper section of the wood stage. A flat arch with plaster molding runs across the front of the proscenium, which does not extend to the floor. The stage is in two levels and is nearly the width of the room. A simple wood railing fronts both sides of the upper level. The center of the stage is open and is accessed by two carpeted steps. Originally the auditorium had windows on three walls; however, the west and east walls have had the windows blocked-in and covered with newer wood paneling. A bar area, restroom and a coat room are in the east-west section of the second floor of the auditorium.

**Criteria:** The historic district meets the first and third criteria contained in Section 25-2-2(1) Sites, building, structures or archeological sites where cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political or architectural history of the community, city, state or nation is particularly reflected or exemplified; and (3) Buildings or structures which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural specimen, inherently valuable as a representation of a period, style or method of construction.

**Composition of the Historic Designation Advisory Board:** The Historic Designation Advisory Board has nine appointed members and three *ex-officio* members, all residents of Detroit. The appointed members are: Kwaku Atara, Melanie A. Bazil, Robert Cosgrove, Keith A. Dye, Zene' Frances Fogel-Gibson, Edward Francis, Calvin Jackson, Harriet Johnson and Doris Rhea. The *ex-officio* members who may be represented by members of their staff, are Director of the Historical Department, the Director of the City Planning Commission, and the Director of the Planning and Development Department.

**Recommendation:** The Historic Designation Advisory Board recommends that City Council adopt an ordinance of designation for the proposed **Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit / Scott Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church** Historic District. A draft ordinance is attached for City Council's consideration.

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