

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received FEB 27 1984

date entered

**1. Name**

historic **Temple on the Heights**

and/or common **The Civic**

**2. Location**

street & number **3130 Mayfield Road** not for publication

city, town **Cleveland Heights** vicinity of congressional district **21st (Stokes)**

state **Ohio** code **039** county **Cuyahoga** state code **035**

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> park
site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<b>N/A</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name **Temple Associates, Ltd.** Joseph M. Shafran, General Partner

William Risman and Robert Soltz

street & number **13212 Shaker Square**

city, town **Cleveland** vicinity of

state **Ohio 44120**

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. **Cuyahoga County Recorder**

street & number **1219 Ontario Street**

city, town **Cleveland**

state **Ohio**

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title **Ohio Historic Inventory** has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date **1977**

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records **Ohio Preservation Office**

**1-71 and 17th Ave. Columbus**

city, town

state **Ohio 43211**

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Temple on the Heights is an eclectic, polychromatic brick, stone and pre-cast concrete structure featuring Byzantine, Romanesque, even Mission-style themes. Topped by a multi-faceted roof of red terra cotta tile, the main block of the original structure features a square sanctuary surmounted by a polygonal twelve-sided dome horizontally banded with stone or concrete courses. Each segment of the main dome features a pair of arched windows with multiple lights, round or curved mutins and a separating stone column.

Flanking the dome on both east and west facades is a pedimented element with a parapet and an arcaded stone cornice. At the center of the pediment is a round window featuring the Star of David. The pedimented element is flanked by front-facing gabled blocks with small arcaded windows in ribbon courses, and features single-arched windows with polychrome surrounds at the second story level.

The front portico features an arcaded two and a half story entry loggia with five arched polychrome surrounds and four stone columns with enriched capitals featuring harvest themes. Above the arcaded loggia is a pedimented gable with circles and tablet enrichment. A band of Moorish or Byzantine tiling runs beneath the recessed, arched portico windows, above a carved belt course that surmounts the arched moldings of the carved main doors.

The street facade of the original structure (1925-27) is asymmetrical. The east wing repeats many of the themes found on the sanctuary block, including its round-arched windows, circular lights, pediments flanked by arcading, and pedimented secondary entries. A later west wing (1956-9) has some of the same features, modified, including a two-story, twelve-sided dome-like structure with a pyramidal roof and multi-lighted windows. The side and rear facades are unenriched for the most part, and feature simple fenestration and utilitarian features.

Once a synagogue, the structure houses a main sanctuary with a domed rotunda (views 4 and 5), a small chapel (now a theatre), classrooms, offices and two kitchens in its 110,000 square feet of space. It was sold in 1980 by its original owners, the B'nai Jeshurun Congregation, to a limited partnership of 40 investors who have begun to market it as The Civic, a multi-use complex which rents to private commercial and non-profit educational, arts and civic groups. This marketing concept has been encouraged by the City of Cleveland Heights as a way of providing the city with a privately owned and maintained civic center, and of preserving one of its most significant historic resources.

The building is situated on Mayfield Road, historically the main artery of the heights area; it is across the street from a 1930 shopping center, centerpiece of the only residential development planned by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. on the former Rockefeller estate, Forest Hill; and it is three blocks away from the historic center of Cleveland Heights, now the site of its city hall. While intervening intrusive commercial material prevents the area from consideration as an historic district, the building is, nevertheless, at the heart of the heights.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below							
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law		<input type="checkbox"/> science			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature		<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military		<input type="checkbox"/> social/			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy		<input type="checkbox"/> theater			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation			
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1924-27; 1956-59      Builder/Architect Charles R. Greco

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criteria A and C

The Temple on the Heights is historically significant as an emblem of the growth, movement and interrelationships of a contingent of Cleveland's Jewish population, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun. It is also significant as one of only two examples in Cleveland of the religious architecture of Boston architect Charles R. Greco.

The structure is the third synagogue of the Conservative Congregation B'nai Jeshurun--and the second one that it built for itself--each of which was situated in an area occupied consecutively by Cleveland Jews as their neighborhoods moved eastward over a period of 100 years.

The first Jewish section in Cleveland was settled c. 1850 by German and Hungarian Jews in the vicinity of Eagle and E. 9th Streets, where the German "patrician" faction divided itself into two Orthodox congregations, Anshe Chesed and Tefereth Israel. In 1866 the Hungarian faction, different from the German in language and culture, established a small religious colony of 16 to 25 souls who worshiped for several years in the homes of members Sampliner, Lerner and Weil.

The separation of B'nai Jeshurun from the two German-speaking congregations was significant in that the evolution of Cleveland's Jewish congregations took two tacks. The first two congregations represented not only the "first wave" or central European migration, but a radical religious and liturgical movement from Orthodoxy to Reformism by 19th century Cleveland Jews. Since, by 1870, Tefereth Israel had abandoned Orthodoxy completely, and Anshe Chesed was well on its way to Reform, B'nai Jeshurun, a middle-ground, Conservative congregation represented, on the one hand, the only available haven for later Orthodox Eastern European arrivals (resulting in occasional intra-congregational splintering), and, on the other hand, an object of much contempt from the newly Reformed congregations for having continued old ways.

In spite of their liturgical differences, these three major congregations followed one another from neighborhood to neighborhood. In 1887, B'nai Jeshurun bought its first synagogue (the Eagle Street Temple) from Anshe Chesed, who built another in the new Jewish neighborhood of 25th Street and Scoville. By the time B'nai Jeshurun was itself prepared to build a new temple on Scoville (1905), Tefereth Israel also had one in the area, by then known as the 16th ward, a political entity dominated by political boss "Czar" Harry Bernstein and his "gang" of ward healers in a fashion typical of immigrants neighborhoods everywhere.

Cleveland Jews' continued movement eastward and out of the city occurred not because of anti-semitism. Although one 1908 anti-semitic incident is recorded involving high holy day worshipers from B'nai Jeshurun and local toughs, the large immigrant population of Cleveland (in 1900, 42.9% were either foreign born or had one foreign born parent) forestalled nativism in Cleveland. Rather, the Jews moved from 55th and Scoville to three other city areas and, eventually, to the suburbs according to their own rhythms, and because they prospered.

The decision in the mid-'20's by B'nai Jeshurun to build a new temple on the heights, a rocky ridge of land known technically as the Portage escarpment of the Alleghenies, coincided with two developments. By then, Cleveland Heights had a Jewish population of 5000 (out of 15,000), and had become the second largest Jewish section in the area. And by then Tefereth Israel had also decided to build a new temple. The congregations hired the same architect, who used Byzantine themes in both structures, illustrating the virtuosity

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Gartner, Lloyd P., History of the Jews in Cleveland. Cleveland: Western Reserve Hist. Soc., and The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978.  
Johannesen, Eric, Cleveland Architecture, 1876-1976. Cleveland: Western Reserve Hist. Soc., 1979.  
"Spiritual, Cultural, Communal Center of Jewish Life." Centennial pamphlet, B'nai Jeshurun

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name East Cleveland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	1 7	4 5 2 2 4 0	4 5 9 5 9 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			
E			
G			

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			
F			
H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Parcel # 684-32-009; Lot # 684-34-10, City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary L. Reeb, Ph. D. Preservation Consultant

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date October, 1983

street & number 2353 Woodmere Drive telephone (216) 932-9794

city or town Cleveland Heights state Ohio 44106

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature W. Ray

date 3/16/84

title SHPO

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 3/29/84

J. Dolores Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Temple on the Heights, Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga Co., OH  
Continuation sheet

Item number 8

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Page 2

of this form as he adapted it, as well as the continuing interrelationship of their congregations.

The Scoville Avenue synagogue, the first of this congregation, was listed in the National Register in 1982 as the Shiloh Baptist Church/B'nai Jeshurum Temple in a thematic group illustrating institutions important to Cleveland's black community.

The architectural design of the Temple on the Heights in comparison to the Temple of the Tifereth Israel Society physically manifests the difference in religious attitudes of the two major Cleveland Jewish congregations. Although Greco utilized the same religious architectural motifs, namely Byzantine and other Near East influences, for both structures, his two designs manipulate those architectural elements to reflect the religious distinction of the two groups. The Temple of the Tifereth Israel Society (N.R. 8/30/74) is an exceptional example of modern eclectic architecture, a design quite suitable to the reformism at that congregation. Conversely Temple in the Heights conveys a much more conventional application of Neo-Byzantine architecture reflecting the more conservative religious views of its congregation. The Temple on the Heights is architecturally significant in conveying the religious diversity of Cleveland's Jewish population.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Temple on the Heights  
Cuyahoga County  
OHIO

resubmission  
 nomination by person or local government  
 owner objection  
 appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Working No. FEB 27 1984

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/5/85

Date Due: 3/29/84 - 4/2/84

Entered in the Action: National Register

ACCEPT 3/29/84

RETURN

REJECT

Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below  
substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition

excellent  deteriorated  
 good  ruins  
 fair  unexposed

Check one

unaltered  
 altered

Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 alterations/integrity  
 dates  
 boundary selection

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## 8. Significance

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References

Verbal boundary description and justification

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title      date

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## 13. Other

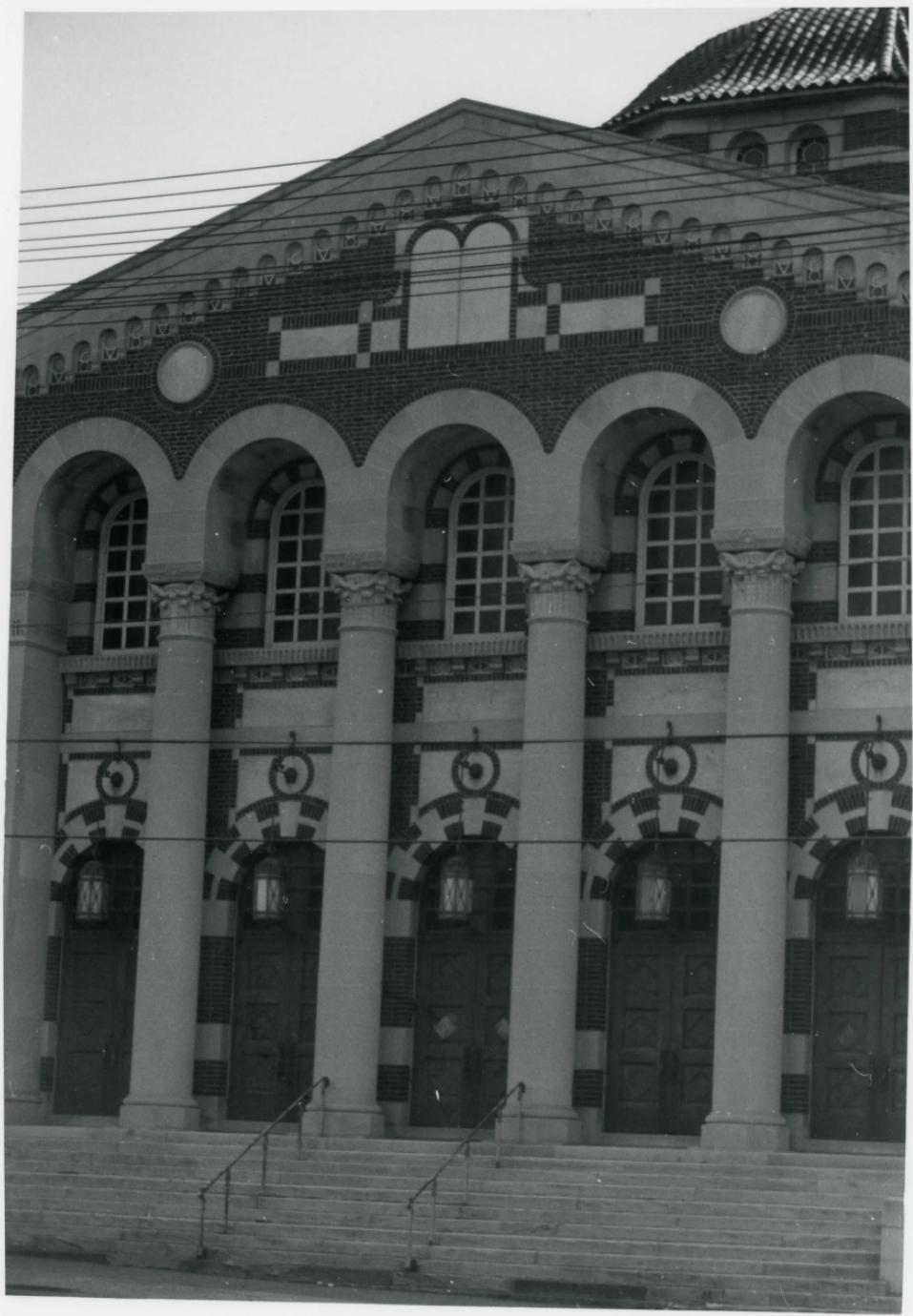
- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Temple on the Heights  
Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga, Oh.  
Northwest facade  
Photo: M.. Reeb  
Date: 1983



Temple on the Heights  
Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga, OH  
Main entfy portico  
Photo: M. Reeb  
Date: 1983



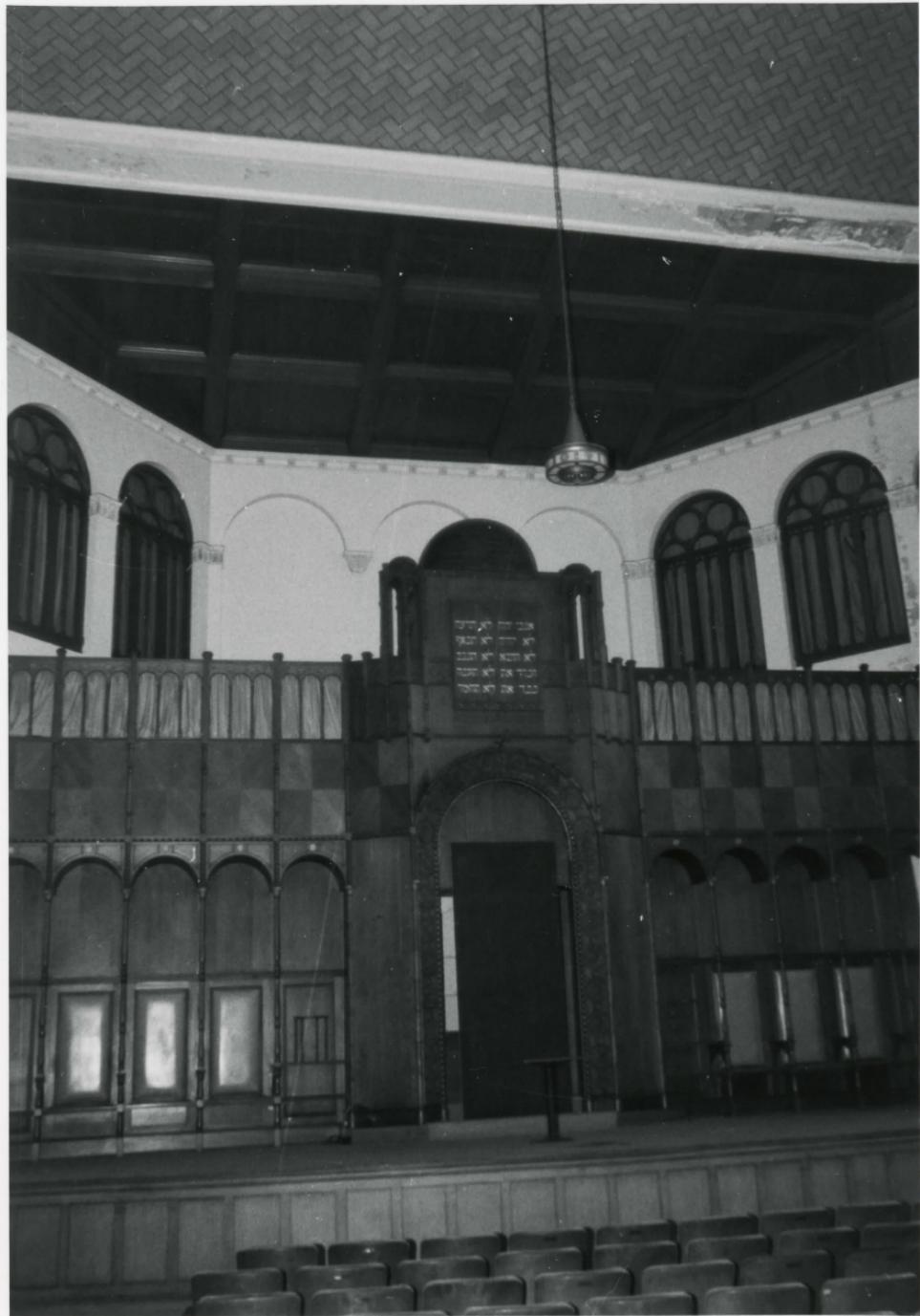
Temple on the Heights  
Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga, OH  
Northeast facade  
Photo: M. Reeb  
Date: 1983



Temple on the Heights  
Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga, OH  
East wing  
Photo: M. Reeb  
Date: 1983



View 4 - Sanctuary  
Temple on the Heights  
Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga, OH



View 5 - Sanctuary  
Temple on the Heights  
Cleveland Heights, Cuyahoga, OH  
Photo: M. Reeb  
Date: 1983

