

The shingle-sided Congregation Derech Emunoh synagogue is representative of what the prominent architectural historian, Vincent Scully, has termed the "shingle style." Popular in resort towns such as Newport and Nantucket during the late 19th century, the shingle style characterized many seaside residences and was typical of the Colonial Revival architecture of the period. The synagogue combines the use of shingles with a variety of elegant neo-Georgian details, creating a distinctive and handsome building which is reminiscent of American colonial architecture.

The Congregation Derech Emunoh synagogue is a large rectangular building set above a high rusticated stone basement. It is enriched by the contrast between the brown of the shingled walls with the white of the details -- the columns, pediments, cornice, door and window trim -- which gives the building a rather delicate character, counterbalancing its size.

At the narrow Beach 67th Street facade, a long flight of steps leads up to an impressive entrance portico composed of four Scamozzi Ionic columns supporting a deep entablature with a handsome modillioned cornice which extends around the entire building. A large triangular pediment, with modillions along the rake and central oculus enframed by a wreath, crowns the portico. Behind the portico, Scamozzi Ionic pilasters, which recur at the other sides of the building, flank either side of the central section, where a wide triple-arched entranceway creates a graceful rhythm across this facade. Above the central arch of the entranceway is a large semi-circular stained-glass window with radiating mullions above a smaller arch. This motif also occurs in the transoms of the large stained-glass windows at the other sides of the building. At either side of the entrance facade, which is articulated at the corners by Scamozzi Ionic pilasters, a narrow double-height stained-glass window unit is enframed by slender wood pilasters. A wood spandrel panel separates the two square-headed windows of this unit, which is surmounted above the transom bar by a round-arched transom. Variations on this double-height type of fenestration also occur at the sides of the synagogue.

At the long Larkin Street side of the building, four Scamozzi Ionic pilasters which carry an entablature below the deep modillioned cornice, divide the facade into three sections. Above the two end sections are large triangular pediments, similar to that on the main entrance facade. At the far right, the double side doors have an arched transom with interlacing muntins and are flanked by paired Scamozzi pilasters with a long vertical panel set between each pair. The low gabled porch of this entrance is carried on paired columns and has an arch over the doorway. Directly above is a small, double square-headed window unit with blind round-arched transoms. At the center section of this long facade, two large stained-glass triple windows with wood mullions supporting transom bars have elegant round-arched transoms. At the left, paired double-height windows, a variation on those at the main entrance, add further diversity to this side of the building. At the other long side of the synagogue, the fenestration is somewhat similar to that of the Larkin Street side. Paired double-height window units with round-arched transoms flank the central section which also has two large stained-glass windows with round-arched transoms.

At the narrow rear facade, Scamozzi Ionic pilasters divide it into three sections of unequal width. At the wider central section, the single large stained-glass window unit has three square-headed windows separated by three paneled spandrels from the round-arched transom above. At either end of this facade, the square-headed windows of the lower level contrast with the small round-arched ones above.

The hipped roof of the synagogue displays a variety of profiles, reflecting the three large pediments. Rising from the center of the roof is an elegant cupola with small Ionic columns set between louvered grilles and handsomely crowned by a dome with a finial topped by a Star of David.

The Congregation Derech Emunoh synagogue is one of the few surviving buildings of the fashionable Jewish summer colony which once thrived in Arverne. An impressive symbol of the elegant character of the area in the early 20th century, the synagogue still has an active congregation today and continues to play a vital role in the community.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Congregation Derech Emunoh Synagogue has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Congregation Derech Emunoh Synagogue is a handsome shingle-sided building elegantly designed in the neo-Georgian style and crowned by a cupola, that it was erected to meet the needs of the growing Jewish population of the summer community of Arverne-by-the-Sea, that it is an impressive reminder of the stylish Jewish summer colony which thrived in the area during the early 20th century, and that the synagogue still has an active congregation today and continues to play a vital role in the community.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of The City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of The City of New York the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Congregation Derech Emunoh Synagogue, 199 Beach 67th Street, Arverne, Borough of Queens, and designates as its related Landmark Site that part of Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 15939, Lot 1 which contains the land on which the described building is situated.