



Office of the City Clerk

ALEX GEOURNTAS  
City Clerk

October 17, 2022

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Submitted herewith for your consideration, please find the designation of Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue Campus, 9 – 13 Otisfield Street, 5 Otisfield Street and 17 – 19 Otisfield Street, Roxbury, MA, as a Landmark.

The foregoing designation was approved by the Boston Landmarks Commission on September 27, 2022 and having been presented to the Mayor was returned signed on October 13, 2022.

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended, if not acted upon within thirty days (November 13, 2022), the designation shall be deemed as if approved.

Alex Geourntas  
City Clerk

cc Rosanne Foley, Executive Director  
Boston Landmarks Commission

**VOTE OF DESIGNATION BY THE  
BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**PROPERTY:** Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue Campus,  
9-13 Otisfield Street, 15 Otisfield Street, and 17-19 Otisfield Street,  
Roxbury (Boston), MA

**STANDARDS AND CRITERIA TO BE APPLIED:**

As described in the section entitled: "8.0 Standards and Criteria," included in  
the study report for the subject property.

**APPROVED BY THE BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION:**

Date approved: 9/27/2022

Attest:

Rosanne A. Foley  
(Secretary to the Commission)

**PRESENTED TO THE MAYOR:**

OCT - 5 2022  
(Date)

**APPROVED BY THE MAYOR:**

Date approved: 10/18/22

Signature:

[Signature]  
(Mayor)

**PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL:**

Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City Clerk)

**VOTE OF DESIGNATION BY THE  
BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**PROPERTY:** Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue  
Campus, 9-13 Otisfield Street, 15 Otisfield Street, and 17-19 Otisfield  
Street, Roxbury (Boston), MA

**VOTED:** That on September 27, 2022, the Boston Landmarks Commission  
designates the Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo  
Synagogue Campus at 9-13 Otisfield Street, 15 Otisfield Street, and 17-  
19 Otisfield Street as a Boston Landmark under Chapter 772 of the  
Acts of 1975, as amended.

**VOTING IN FAVOR:**

John Freeman  
Susan Goganian  
Christopher Hart

Richard Henderson  
Felicia Jacques  
Justine Orlando

Anne Renehan  
Bradford Walker

**VOTING IN OPPOSITION:**

David Berarducci

**GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE:**

Bordered by Otisfield Street and Blue Hill Avenue, the Mt. Cavalry / Shara Tfilo Campus includes two large rectangular buildings facing Otisfield Street – the Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue (1915-1916) and the Roxbury Hebrew School (1921-1923) – and an open parcel at the corner of Otisfield Street and Blue Hill Avenue. The original synagogue building and Hebrew school are largely intact and are prominently located at the interface of a residential district with the commercial and institutional spine of Blue Hill Avenue. The Campus is significant on the local, state, regional, and national levels for its extraordinary role in the history of immigration, the development of working-class communities and institutions, and the succession of ethnic groups throughout time and space. The two occupants of this property-- Congregation Shara Tfilo and Mt. Calvary Holy Church--exemplify the vibrant Jewish and Black communities that developed successively in Roxbury in the 20th and 21st centuries. The structures built here in the early 20th century, although modest in their architectural design, evoke a powerful sense of the cultural priorities of the Jewish and Black communities for nearly 125 years. The purpose of this designation is to honor and preserve the history of spiritual, educational, and social services at the properties, as home to an Eastern European immigrant community for 50 years and to the Black community for the last half-century.

**GENERAL BOUNDARIES OF THE SITE:**

The boundaries of the designated property are limited to the following addresses and parcel numbers: 9-13 Otisfield Street, parcel number 1202727000; 15 Otisfield Street, parcel number 1202728000; 17-19 Otisfield Street, parcel number 1202729000.



City of Boston  
Historic Preservation



City of Boston  
Mayor Michelle Wu

The Honorable Michelle Wu  
Mayor of the City of Boston  
Boston City Hall  
Boston, MA 02201

October 4, 2022

**RE: Petition #274.21 – The Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue Campus, Roxbury**

Dear Mayor Wu:

On September 27, 2022, the Boston Landmarks Commission unanimously voted to designate the Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue Campus in Roxbury as a Landmark under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.

The Mt. Calvary Holy Church / Congregation Shara Tfilo Synagogue Campus at 9 – 19 Otisfield Street is significant on the local, state, regional, and national levels for its extraordinary role in the history of immigration, the development of working-class communities and institutions, and the succession of ethnic groups throughout time and space. The two occupants of this property-- Congregation Shara Tfilo and Mt. Calvary Holy Church--exemplify the vibrant Jewish and Black communities that developed successively in Roxbury in the 20th and 21st centuries. The structures built here in the early 20th century, although modest in their architectural design, evoke a powerful sense of the cultural priorities of the Jewish and Black communities for nearly 125 years.

Mt. Calvary Holy Church in Boston was strongly identified with Bishop Nellie Yarborough for 50 years. Bishop Yarborough was the second woman to be ordained as a bishop in the national Mt. Calvary Holy Church, and was its only female bishop at the time of her death. She earned local, regional, and national accolades for her leadership in social services for the homeless, hungry, and mentally ill.

Unoccupied since 2013, the Mt. Calvary / Shara Tfilo property is threatened by deferred maintenance and potential redevelopment. The purpose of this designation is to honor and preserve the history of spiritual, educational, and social services at the properties, as home to an Eastern European immigrant community for many decades and to the Black community for the last half-century.

The Boston Landmarks Commission asks that you give full consideration to the designation of the Mt. Calvary / Shara Tfilo Campus in Roxbury as a Boston Landmark.

Please don't hesitate to call me at (617) 635-2510 if you have any questions.

Best Regards,



Rosanne Foley  
Executive Director  
Boston Landmarks Commission

**CITY of BOSTON**

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