



**Staff Report  
CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS**

**For the Planning  
Commission Meeting of  
July 8, 2010**

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** David Reyes, Principal Planner

**SUBJECT:** A project preview for a new private school, **Nessah Hebrew Academy**, proposed to be contiguous to the existing Nessah Synagogue located on the 100 block of South Rexford Drive, between Charleville Drive and Wilshire Boulevard Drive. The school is proposed to be a 3 and partial 4-story building over three levels of subterranean parking containing 200 parking spaces. The school is proposed to have 16 classrooms that could accommodate 20 students each.

Attached is information submitted by the applicant regarding the construction of a new private school along with a proposed first floor plan. The applicant will present the project, including proposed renderings of the project, at the meeting.

## NESSAH HEBREW ACADEMY

### 1. Location of Site

Nessah Hebrew Academy will be located on the current parking lot north of and contiguous to Nessah Synagogue on the 100 block of South Rexford Drive. The parking lot, since the construction of the original church in the 1930's, has been utilized as dedicated parking, first for the church and then for the synagogue, and at all times under common ownership. It is approximately 16,500 square feet and currently zoned R4.

### 2. History of the Site

The existing religious structure was constructed in the 30's and comprises 38,400 square feet. From its opening until approximately 1998, it operated continuously as a church and religious school. The church sold the property to Richard Weintraub in approximately 1998, who sought to construct a congregant care/senior housing project on the empty parking lot to be connected to the original church building. Weintraub was unsuccessful in his efforts and sold this property to Nessah Synagogue in approximately 2000. The church re-acquired from Weintraub the small R-4 lot across the street and built its new sanctuary in approximately 2005 at that location.

### 3. Current Uses at the Nessah Synagogue

Nessah Synagogue operates as a full service religious institution and cultural center with a main sanctuary having occupancy of over 1,000 seats. It conducts a religious school two days a week from 4 – 6 p.m. in the basement area (where the prior church had operated a religious school) and a day school for 3 to 5 year olds in the northerly portion of the structure. In addition to religious services and school activities, catered celebrations for "lifetime events" such as weddings, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and other similar celebrations are held in what is referred to as "Simha" Hall located on the opposite side of the courtyard from the sanctuary. This facility can comfortably seat between 300 and 500 people. Food is not prepared on site; rather, it is trucked in by catering companies for these events. For major religious holidays, separate services are conducted in Simha Hall in addition to those in the main sanctuary.

### 4. Existing Parking Arrangement.

The current parking lot has approximately 45 separately marked parking spaces. However, when additional parking is anticipated, attendants are able to park approximately 100 vehicles on site. In addition, Nessah Synagogue has a written agreement with its northerly neighbor, directly across the alley at 9250 Wilshire Boulevard to allow for off-site parking primarily on the week-ends and a similar arrangement with the office building on the southwest corner of Rexford and Wilshire, as well as with the owners of 9200 Wilshire, currently an empty lot and attendees are directed by signage to turn on to the alley from Rexford (the alley is one way west to east) to Maple and then to the empty lot.

The parking lot has ingress and egress on Rexford immediately adjacent to the Synagogue and an additional egress to the east/west alley that lets out on Maple. The 9250 Wilshire Blvd. office building similarly has ingress/egress on Rexford and the east/west alley. It is currently estimated that the Nessah surface lot requires attendant parking with attendants, (meaning approximately 100 vehicles are parked there) at least 10 to 15 times per month on average.

#### 5. Proposed Project

Nessah Synagogue desires to construct a three story structure on its surface lot with three levels of subterranean parking to accommodate approximately 200 vehicles. There would be a fourth floor comprising only approximately 1/3 of the roof area.

The first floor would provide for ingress of vehicles only on Rexford that would lead down to the subterranean parking for religious services and special events but also provide for 4 lanes for loading and unloading of children for school activities. The loading and unloading area would be able to hold (much like a hotel courtyard) approximately 20 vehicles at a time (at the loading area on the first floor would be an enclosed area for the students to take an elevator up to the second or third floors or to wait to be picked up by parents). The egress for the loading and unloading as well as for the subterranean parking will primarily be off onto the east/west alley which currently exits as the alley on Maple Drive. When school is not in session and there are special events, it will be possible for attendants to direct a portion of the vehicles leaving the subterranean parking to exit on Rexford as well to assist in dispersing traffic.

In addition, approximately 3500 square feet of the northerly most portion of the existing structure, as well as approximately 2000 square feet of mezzanine space, would be eliminated. A portion of the first floor space between the parking entry point and the existing temple structure would include an 800 square foot kitchen and a 2500 square foot pre-function social area. This will eliminate the need for off site food preparation and delivery trucks. These additions will not increase seating capacity for events.

The second and third floors would house approximately 16 classrooms, play and outdoor area, library and school administrative offices. There will be an enclosed gymnasium on the fourth level located on that portion of the site that allows for a 55 ft. height limit.

#### 6. School Operations

The plan is for the school to be phased in over time. Initially it is believed that the school would only accept first graders, mostly from their existing day school program which currently accommodates approximately 37 students. In each ensuing year, an additional class would be added through the eighth grade. The 16 classrooms are designed to accommodate up to 20

Nessah Hebrew Academy

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students each, but it is believed that by the seventh or eighth year, the maximum student body would not exceed 200 students, with approximately 20 faculty members and 4 to 5 administrative/secretarial personnel. While the curriculum will include mandatory non-religious classes, it is expected that 17 hours of religious study per week will be included in the curriculum. The current part time afternoon religious school and kindergarten through nursery school activities (ages 3 through 5) would be moved from their current locations in the sanctuary to the new facility.



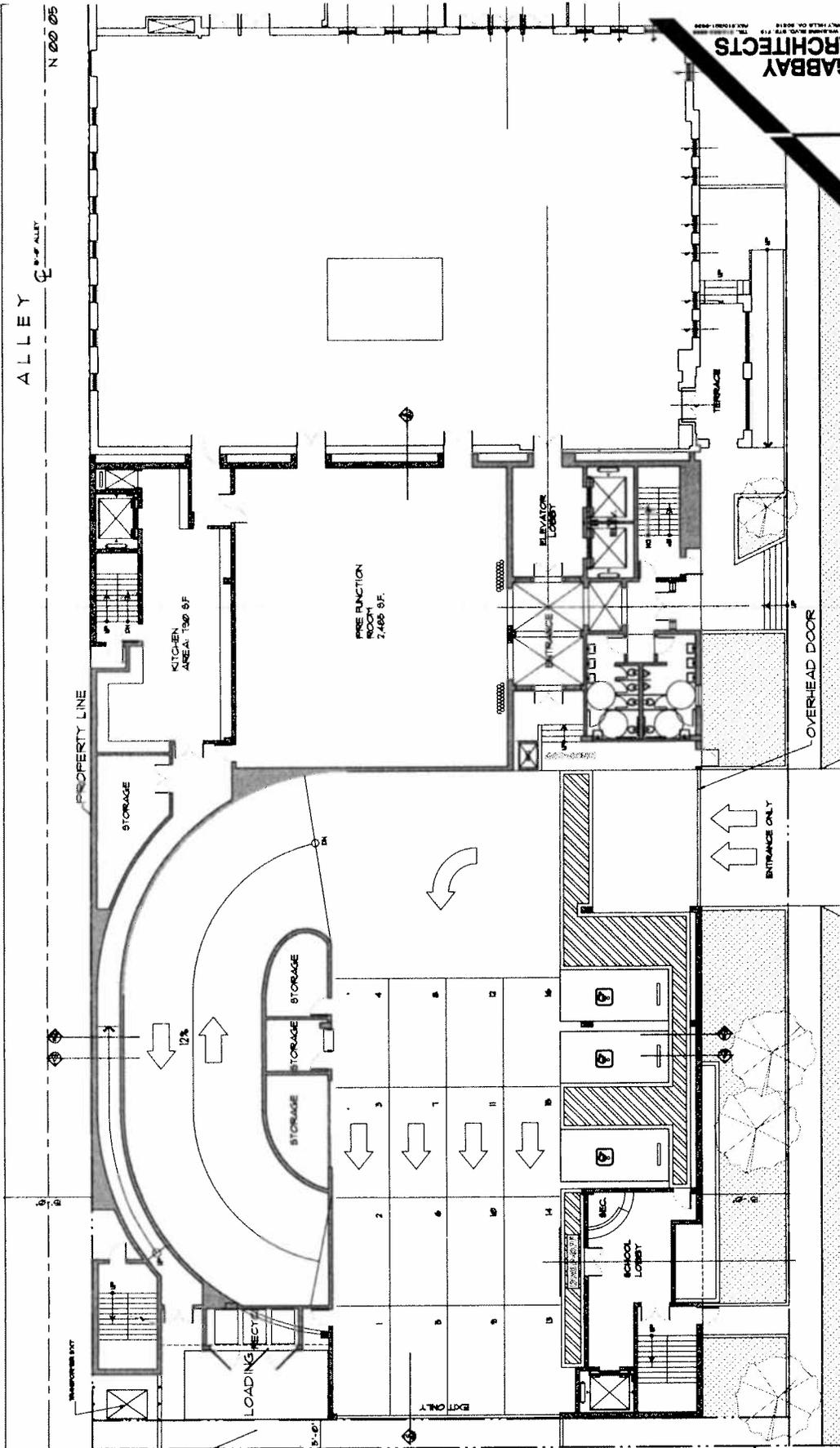
PROPOSED 5' SET BACK

WILSHIRE BOULEVARD

MAPLE DRIVE

ALLEY

N 00 05



N. REXFORD DRIVE

H/C: 3  
LOADING: 1

FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"

GABBY ARCHITECTS

PROJECT NO.	18-1-01
DATE	07-20-18
PROJECT TITLE	NESSAH HERSELI ACADEMY 143 S. REXFORD DRIVE BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90705
SCALE	A2.1

