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From Ark to Art : The 20-year Journey of the Civic, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, from Jewish Temple to Multi-purpose Community Facility

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The Urban Center's
**Sacred
Landmarks
Series**

Prepared by:
John J. Boyle, III

December 2000

**From Ark to
Art:
The 20-Year
Journey of the
Civic, Cleveland
Heights, Ohio,
from Jewish
Temple to
Multi-Purpose
Community
Facility**

UHP

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FROM ARK TO ART:
THE 20-YEAR JOURNEY OF THE CIVIC, CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO,
FROM JEWISH TEMPLE TO
MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY FACILITY

John J. Boyle, III
Sacred Landmarks Initiative

December 2000

Sacred Landmarks Monograph Series
edited by Susan Petrone

The Urban Center
The Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Cleveland State University



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DEDICATION TO MARLENE KLANFER

In January 2000, Marlene Klanfer retired as Executive Director of the Civic Foundation. For all but a few months of the 20-year existence of the Civic, Marlene Klanfer was the guiding light that brought this dream to a reality. The role of Executive Director included everything from wading through flooded basements to begging creditors to "give us one more month." Marlene's dedication to the Civic included working for many years at a salary that didn't even do justice to the concept of "below market," to paying bills out of her own pocket when there was no other way to keep the building open. The building could not have survived without her.

The publishers wish to acknowledge The Cleveland Press Collection of the Cleveland State University Library for providing the historical photos of the Civic used in this monograph. They would also like to acknowledge the graphic design contributions of Regina Talbott.

PREFACE

Temples, synagogues, churches, mosques, and other religious structures are more than just buildings. For their communities, they come to be symbols of a faith, a history, and a people. More than physical places, they embody a heritage and a culture. Unfortunately, many religious structures are at risk. A combination of age and sometimes inadequate or deferred maintenance has caused some to deteriorate. Records may be poorly maintained, lost, or destroyed by those unaware of their significance. Changing demographic patterns may leave an institution with a congregation whose resources are not sufficient to maintain the building and/or its programs. The numerous threats to the existence of these buildings often results in their destruction. While this is a common fate of little-used or disused buildings, other alternatives are sometimes possible.

The continued existence of any building largely depends on its capacity to continue to be useful, either in its originally intended purpose, or in some important new way. In this respect, houses of worship are like any other buildings. Unlike many buildings designed for secular use, however, they present special problems to people wishing to preserve them. For example, the unique configuration of space essential for the successful enactment of liturgy may be an impediment to its conversion to serve other useful functions. In addition, out of a sense of propriety for its "other worldliness," some people are reluctant to see a sacred space used for secular purposes, sometimes even preferring to see it torn down.

One of the least controversial and most successful ways for a redundant sacred building to continue to be used is to be passed on to a congregation of a different faith. Other notable uses that may optimize the spatial configuration of some houses of worship include adaptive reuse as a museum, place of assembly (e.g., use as a theater), and a variety of secular uses completely unrelated to the original purpose of the building (e.g., conversion to restaurants, nightclubs, condominiums, and apartments).

This monograph focuses on the adaptive reuse of a former temple into a multi-purpose facility known as the Civic. The Civic is a large and imposing Byzantine-style building located in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Originally the temple for the Conservative Jewish congregation B'nai Jeshurun, it was known informally as the Temple on the Heights. The temple was dedicated in 1926, 60 years after the congregation was organized and began its existence in quarters

elsewhere in Cleveland. By the 1950s, the congregation had grown to about 2,000 families and was one of the largest Conservative congregations in the country. Nevertheless, continued movement of the Jewish community toward the eastern part of the county led to a decline in Temple membership in the 1960s and 1970s. A gift of 30 acres of land in Pepper Pike, Ohio, a suburb several miles to the east, resulted in the congregation's choosing that site for the building of its new temple, which was dedicated in 1980.

The new building in Pepper Pike left the old one available for some type of adaptive reuse, and the former Temple on the Heights is now one of the few examples in northeastern Ohio of a sacred structure leading a new life in the secular world.

This monograph describes in detail the (thus far) successful efforts to preserve this beautiful and important landmark building. This first-hand account of the challenges and opportunities involved in the efforts to save the building in a creative and useful way is not only an important story in itself, but also provides a useful overview and guideline to others who are considering or are engaged in related projects to preserve landmark buildings.

The former Temple was preserved because community-minded business people were interested finding a new way for it to continue serving the City of Cleveland Heights. While the return on investment is not impressive in strictly financial terms, the Civic's continuing architectural and historical presence, as well as its continuing service to the community, is an important dividend for the investors. A message that is implicit in their dedicated efforts is that a cultured society does not demolish its sacred landmarks and artworks; it sees them as treasures and preserves them.

Michael J. Tevesz, Director
Sacred Landmarks Initiative
The Levin College Urban Center

October 17, 2000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Civic is a former Jewish temple located in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, an inner-ring suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. The building was close to being abandoned and possibly torn down after its former congregation built a new facility farther out in the suburbs. This study describes how a former temple came to serve the community in a new and different way in the secular world. This study will chronicle the Civic as a historical building; describe the efforts to remake it into a multi-purpose building that is a community asset; and serve as a model to other communities interested in adapting houses of worship to secular purposes. While there are differences between states in terms of the details of this kind of preservation work, such as tax codes and other government regulations, the basic tools are the same everywhere. People responsible for the stewardship of older buildings that must be extensively retrofitted, as the Civic was, find it almost impossible to generate enough revenue to both sustain the operations of the building and to provide the capital necessary to perform the retrofit.

There are only two resources that can be accessed to fund a project such as saving the Civic - government and the private giving community. The people who saved the Civic were fortunate to find themselves in a city with people concerned about saving historical buildings and willing to use some of their political and monetary capital to help. They were also fortunate to live in a community with a wealth of private charitable foundations that also shared the city's goals of saving the best of its historical architecture.

CONTEXT & PRECEDENTS

Throughout North America and Europe there are many examples of houses of worship being adapted to another use in order to save the building; these efforts have met with varying degrees of success. For example, in New Orleans, the former St. Alphonsus Catholic Church has been taken over by a nonprofit corporation and made into a cultural center in memory of the former Irish immigrants who founded the parish.¹ In Sandwich, Massachusetts, Corpus Christi Catholic Church has become an upscale bed and breakfast and gourmet restaurant. In Prague, the Czech Republic, the Klausen Synagogue has become the State Jewish Museum and the Pinkas Synagogue has become a memorial to Czech Jews who died in concentration camps during World War II.

Several synagogues in the United States also have been saved by reuse. In San Francisco, the Bush Street Synagogue was taken over by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and sold to private investors to provide a home for the Holocaust Center. The investors attempted to raise six million dollars for the project, but as of mid-2000 have not yet succeeded.² In Los Angeles, the Breed Street Shul closed in 1993. Various groups have attempted to restore it to a Jewish Historical Museum, so far without success.³ In Bloomington, Indiana the former Moses Montifiore Synagogue housed three Christian congregations after the Jewish congregation left. A private citizen has now bought it and uses the basement as his private residence. The former sanctuary space is being converted to a small concert and meeting hall.⁴ In Boston, the Vilna Shul on Beacon Hill was saved in the late 1980s from becoming a site for a parking garage. In 1995, a nonprofit organization took over the building to establish the Vilna Center for Jewish Heritage. With help from Historic Boston, it has now reopened as a cultural center.⁵

In Cleveland, Ohio, there are many examples of new congregations taking over temples and churches when the original congregations relocated. There also are other examples such as the former Christian Science church on Euclid Avenue that became the home, for a time, of the Cleveland Playhouse.

There are few examples of such a project as complex as the Civic. One project with many similarities is the former Monastere du Bon-Pasteur (Good Shepherd Convent) in Montreal,

Quebec. The building was rehabilitated as a joint project of Societe Immobiliere du Patrimoine Architectural de Montreal (SIMPA), a joint Montreal-Province of Quebec enterprise and the Societe d'Habitation du Quebec (SHQ) (the Quebec government-housing agency). The project includes low-income elderly housing (the former vocational school), middle-income cooperative housing, shared spaces such as a public hall (the former chapel), a daycare center (the former rectory), and 22 luxury condominiums in the former stables. The project was almost totally government financed, with the sale of the condominiums providing a large part of the payback. The authors of an article about this project note that "the project demonstrates how the difficult technical, architectural, financial, legal, and social problems of reusing historic buildings can be overcome through innovation and partnership."⁶

The Bon-Pasteur rehabilitation was completed in 1986. The above quote became prophetic as the board of The Civic, unaware of this project and its complexities, began its 20-year journey without the help of millions of dollars of city and provincial funds, and without a breath-taking location overlooking the St. Lawrence River.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Civic, located at 3630 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, is an 111,000-square-foot building built in 1924 (see figures 1 and 2). Its journey from a thriving Jewish temple to a multi-purpose building housing several arts, cultural, and community organizations as well as worshiping congregations, banquets, and community meetings, is the subject of this monograph.

The Heights Temple was built in 1924 to house the Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, which was formed about 1867 and was originally located in the E. 9th Street and Eagle Avenue neighborhood of Cleveland. This area is now the location of Jacobs Field, home of the Cleveland Indians. The original congregation was Hungarian and formed when 25 members broke off from two other more Orthodox congregations, Anshe Chased and Tifereth Israel. One of those congregations, Anshe Chased, sold their temple on Eagle Avenue to B'nai Jeshurun. The congregation continued to grow and in 1905 built their own temple at E. 55th Street and Scovill Avenue. This building still stands and is currently the home of Shiloh Baptist Church.

In 1920, the congregation again decided to move, following the movement of the Jewish community to Cleveland Heights, where almost a third of the Cleveland area Jewish community was then located. At about the same time, the congregation Tifereth Israel also decided to move to a new location in the University Circle area of Cleveland. Both congregations hired noted Boston architect Charles Greco to design their new buildings. Greco designed both buildings in a Moorish/Byzantine style. The Tifereth Israel's building is now known simply as "the Temple" and is a landmark building located at E. 105th Street and Ansel Road.

The Cleveland Heights temple, now known as "the Civic," was built at a cost of about \$800,000. The original building consisted of a 2,000-seat sanctuary (now the Great Hall and the current home of the New Spirit Revival Center); a 1,200 seat auditorium to the east of the sanctuary called Spira Hall (now the Assembly, which is used for weddings, parties, and civic events); a dining hall below Spira Hall (now the Gallery, used for exhibits like the "Dinner Party" by Judy Chicago, and the annual Civic Art Show); and four bowling alleys below the Great Hall (now the Center Hall, which is used for a variety of purposes including Jazzercise classes). There were also 31 classrooms east and south of the Assembly on three floors (now the East Wing and

used for offices).

The Civic was described by the architects who did a planning study of the building as follows:

"The exterior [of the building] is of red brick, Indiana limestone, polychrome terra-cotta, and colored marble. The dome of the Temple is primarily brick banded with stone and topped off with a Byzantine roof of red tile. The Temple is approached by broad stairs off of Mayfield Road and is entered through one of five wood doors, which alternate, between stone columns. The columns, with Byzantine capitals, support small arches, above which are marble slabs bearing the Ten Commandments. The entrance lobby flanking Mayfield Road has retained its original polychromed marble-veneered walls, marble floor and its vaulted ceiling. Decorative bands of Menorah and Lulaf leaves ornament the lobby. Located at each end are octagonal shaped stairs, which conduct one from the entrance hall to the balcony/second floor level. The inside of the Great Hall [sanctuary] is flooded with light from arched windows which ring the dome and pierce the upper side walls and (north) balcony wall." ⁷

In 1956 a wing was added to the east side of the structure. This wing included new classrooms (now the West Wing), a rabbi's study (now the offices of The Civic), and the Gottfried Chapel (now Ensemble Theatre). In 1959 the congregation renovated Spira Hall (the Assembly) at a cost of \$750,000. The new addition and the 1959 remodeling departed from the original architecture and utilized designs common in commercial buildings of that era.

In 1979 the congregation left the Cleveland Heights facility and built a new building several miles to the east in Pepper Pike, Ohio. They put the building up for sale. Realtors aggressively marketed the building to the City of Cleveland Heights, which at that time was looking for alternatives for their own 50-year-old city hall building, which they had outgrown. Ultimately the city concluded that the rehab costs far exceeded the alternative costs of constructing a new building.

TEMPLE ASSOCIATES

In 1981 the building was purchased for \$580,000 by a limited partnership formed by three prominent members of the community, Joseph Shafran, Robert Soltz, and William Risman. These three general partners called the partnership Temple Associates. In addition there were 22 limited partners, later increased to 46. Temple Associates raised a total of \$340,000 from the original limited partners; the three general partners loaned Temple Associates \$250,000. In addition the partnership took out an \$180,000, 10-year mortgage.

In the first year of operation, the building produced \$70,000 in annual rents. By 1990, the annual rental income had risen to \$330,000. However, the expenses of maintaining a building of this size and age plus mortgage payments and capital repairs never permitted the building to even approach a break-even point. In its first year of operation (1981), the partnership lost \$208,000 and by 1993 the total accumulated debt to the partners was almost \$1,715,000 plus a \$597,000 balance on a bank loan with National City Bank, which was secured by the personal guarantees of the three general partners.

During the 13 years that the partnership owned the building, they kept the building afloat as best they could at enormous personal sacrifice to themselves and the limited partners. The vision that they had for the Civic formed the basis for the current uses of the building. In 1984 they applied for and received a listing on the National Register of Historical Places. They also began looking for tenants who would fulfill the goal of turning the building into a local home for arts and civic organizations and civic events. Renting out 110,000 square feet was not easy and Temple Associates tried a variety of approaches. Because of the inexpensive rents, several local nonprofit corporations took up residence at The Civic. The two kosher kitchens were rented to kosher caterers. The Assembly was used for weddings, meetings, and even bingo. The Gottfried Chapel became the home of the Phoenix Theatre Ensemble and later Ensemble Theatre. The largest space, the Great Hall, was almost never used, partly because of its size and partly because of its rather shabby condition. In addition, it was extremely expensive to heat this space, as well as the rest of the building.

As early as 1983, it was beginning to become clear to the owners that the for-profit structure of the partnership was preventing the building from tapping into government and

foundation funds that, for most enterprises like the Civic, formed the backbone of their financial support. In 1983 the partners formed the Kaleidoscope, a 509(a)(2) foundation. The original idea was for the foundation to lease the large spaces from the partnership and then re-lease these spaces to nonprofit performance organizations, thus making the area eligible for tax-exempt grants and donations. While the general idea had merit, the legal complexities of the structure proved to be unworkable and the idea was dropped in 1985.

The next idea pursued was to create a business incubator in the building. These were popular at the time and the State of Ohio was funding several others in the area. The City of Cleveland Heights assisted the Civic in pursuing this idea, but the layout of the Civic proved to be unworkable to accommodate the needs of an incubator, so that idea was also abandoned.

CIVIC PRESERVATION PROJECT

In 1990, the then-Executive Director of the Civic, Marlene Klanfer, produced a document called "Concept Paper - Civic Preservation Project." The purpose of the project was "to secure the capital improvement funds and ownership structure needed to permit the Civic to meet its full potential as a resource for enhancing the quality of community life in Cleveland Heights."⁸

The experience of Temple Associates over their 10 years of ownership proved that the building did fulfill a significant role in the community. The spaces are well suited for the current uses and the building had the added advantage of owning an adjacent 300-car parking lot. The problem was the condition of the building. The owners estimated that income could be increased at least 40 percent to \$550,000 per year if significant improvements could be made to upgrade the structure to current standards. While this income level could not sustain any capital improvement payback, it would support the current operating needs of the building. The Concept Paper identified \$3,000,000 in capital needs that were required to renovate the major areas, repair the leaking roof, and upgrade the antiquated plumbing, heating, and electrical systems.

The paper concluded that Temple Associates, as a for-profit partnership, was not the appropriate vehicle for preserving the building as a community asset. Temple Associates, in this paper, agreed to donate its partnership equity to a new not-for-profit entity debt free. The paper concluded by stating that "preserving the current building, while developing it as a focus for community activities, is the use that will contribute the most. Demolition and conversion to commercial uses, the most likely alternative, would not be a comparable contribution."⁹

In retrospect, it is unfortunate that the Concept Paper was not written 10 years earlier when the building was originally taken over by the partnership. The building had declined even more during the partnership's period of ownership because there was never sufficient revenue to operate the building or make any significant capital improvements. This caused even further deterioration of the building systems. The owners faced the "catch 22" dilemma of not being able to maximize the rental of the building because of its condition, and not being able to improve the building because of the lack of sufficient revenue.

THE CIVIC FOUNDATION, INC.

In late 1990, Temple Associates had their attorney draw up Articles of Incorporation to file with the State of Ohio as a nonprofit corporation. This was approved by the state in early 1991. The new corporation then filed with the Internal Revenue Service for designation as a 501(c)(3) organization. This request was also approved in 1991. These approvals permitted the Civic Foundation to apply for planning grants to three major Cleveland area foundations - The Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, and the Jewish Community Federation.

In December 1991, the Cleveland Foundation approved a \$42,000 grant to be used in support of a cost-benefit analysis of the Civic's role in Cleveland Heights. In March 1992, the Gund Foundation approved an additional \$42,000 to assess the building's renovation needs, to identify potential financing sources, and to develop a program for the building's use. The Jewish Community Federation also acted favorably, granting \$15,000 for the Civic redevelopment project in March 1992. With almost \$100,000 in grants, the Board of the Civic Foundation decided to embark on the following three-pronged approach: (1) commission an analysis of potential users of the building and their facilities needs; (2) fund an architectural study of the costs of carrying out the results of the needs analysis; and (3) hire a fund-raising consultant to figure out how to fund the recommended renovation.

ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL USERS

In the spring of 1992, the Civic Foundation contracted with a local fund-raising consultant, Edie Blum, to begin the analysis project. She in turn added to her group Jane Kirkham, who, as President of the Playhouse Square Foundation, had played a major role in saving and renovating three historic theaters in downtown Cleveland. Jane embarked on a program of interviewing as many potential users of the Civic as she could identify. Ultimately approximately 40 were interviewed. Her conclusions were that "The Civic's natural user

market for the larger spaces consists of smaller, emerging, fledgling or community organizations for whom the sophistication/size of the facility and rental costs of a Playhouse Square Center, downtown hotels, the Cleveland Convention Center, and comparable facilities are both unnecessary and beyond their financial reach. Nowhere in this region do such organizations have a defined center of gravity for their activities."¹⁰

Almost two-thirds of the organizations interviewed expressed an interest in using shared facilities at the Civic. From an architectural standpoint, the report recommended that the large spaces should all be arranged for flexible use. The Assembly could become a 250-400 seat venue for dance and theater with a stage that could also be used "in the round." The Gallery could be used for cabaret-style theater and for exhibit space. The Center Hall would be subdivided into rehearsal spaces, and the Ensemble Theatre space would become a "black box" for up to 150 people for local theater use. The largest space, the Great Hall, would have its raked floor flattened so it could be used either for performances of up to 1,000 people, or for large conferences or banquets. In addition, Jane Kirkham recommended several joint uses such as a common box office to serve all of the potential users.

The report concluded with a section on potential sources of funds, noting that the major portion would have to come out of public funds, but with the real possibility of substantial foundation and corporate support from those that were now funding and supporting the various cultural groups that would take up residence at the Civic. Finally, the report reinforced the necessity of the building ownership being turned over to the nonprofit corporation in order for any of the funding options to become possible.

ARCHITECTURAL STUDY OF COSTS OF RENOVATION

In May 1993, the Civic Foundation contracted with vanDijk, Pace, Westlake & Partners, a major Cleveland architectural firm with an extensive background in renovation and adaptive reuse of historical buildings. The \$28,300 contract, which would be paid out of the grants received from the George Gund Foundation and The Cleveland Foundation, included two components: 1) basic improvements, which were those necessary to bring the property into

compliance with regulatory requirements and to increase operating, maintenance, and efficiency; and 2) improvements to the Great Hall, Ensemble Theatre, and the Assembly to meet a wide range of performance and assembly needs, as identified in the Kirkham study of potential users.¹¹ The study was to begin June 1, 1993 and take approximately two months. Paul Westlake, a partner in the firm, was named by the vanDijk firm to coordinate the project.

On September 8, 1993, vanDijk presented a draft of their report to the Civic Foundation Board of Trustees. The plan called for a nine-step phase-in of the improvements over 24 to 60 months. The stages involved, first, stabilizing the building and stopping further decay, then, second, correcting infrastructure problems and addressing Americans with Disabilities Act violations. The third stage called for improving the building's image and access. Steps four and five involved reconfiguring the Great Hall as a ballroom and banquet facility/music hall and refurbishing its lobby, as well as upgrading the lighting and sound systems; and upgrading of the Assembly, Gallery, and Center halls. Stages six through eight dealt with the tenant spaces, the building office, and site improvements. The final step was improvements to the Ensemble Theatre space.

The total price for all nine steps was \$10.8 million if the improvements were completed in 24 months. The 60-month price was \$12.7million.¹¹ As ambitious a fund raising program as the Foundation might have envisioned, it never contemplated that \$10 million could be raised. The plan, however, laid out in each phase those items critical to the overall stability of the building. By pulling out components from each phase and setting priorities, the staff and the Board of the Civic were able to put together a series of smaller steps that could be bid out as funds became available.

FUND RAISING PLAN

As part of the Future Use Analysis Report, Edie Blum, the fund-raising consultant, added a section on potential sources of income. Her preliminary conclusions were that most of the capital funds for renovation and improvements would have to come from the public sector. The report pointed out that the weak economy in 1992 and the scale of the project

made it unlikely that the majority of the funds could be raised privately. It also suggested that the Civic Foundation hire a planning consultant to look into all of the potential sources of public sector funding. While the report suggested that most of the funding would have to come from the public sector, it did not rule out the fact that considerable funds might be raised in the private sector. There were several categories of potential donors, including local foundations, corporate supporters of current or potential tenants, and individuals who either had a stake in one of the tenant organizations or who had close ties to the former congregation or to the Cleveland Heights community. The report also suggested that a consultant be hired to research available private funds.

OWNERSHIP ASSUMED BY FOUNDATION

In fall 1992, Temple Associates began the process of turning the ownership of the property over to the Foundation. The major hurdle to overcome was the tax ramification to the partners resulting from the donation of the property to the Foundation. The original plan developed by the accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche was to donate the property debt-free to the nonprofit charitable Foundation. To accomplish this, the partners would have to contribute an additional \$772,000 in equity to the partnership in order to pay off debts. If this were done, the property would have an appraised value of \$1,060,000, which would be the total amount of the charitable contribution of the 46 partners. This donation would result in approximately \$328,000 in reduced taxes for the partners at the tax rates then in effect.¹² The net out-of-pocket loss to the partners would have been about \$461,000, or about \$10,000 apiece. If the equity donation was not made and the building was donated with the debts, then the partners would still be faced with a taxable gain of over \$831,000 with a resulting cumulative tax bill of \$258,000. The difference for the 46 partners of donating versus not donating the additional equity was \$5,000 per partner. The partnership agreement required unanimous approval of the partners. Over the next two years the general partners worked to get unanimous approval. Unfortunately, the economy at this time was not very good and most of the investors, who for the most part were developers and property owners, were faced with

losses on their other investments. The potential capital gains did not benefit them nor did the prospect of a tax write-off from the donation.

In July 1994, Deloitte & Touche prepared another document for the partners outlining the new implications of donating the property without paying off the debts, but with the forgiveness of over \$1.6 million of debt to the general partners and the partnership. This plan, which resulted in a total tax liability to the partners of \$356,000, did not require unanimous approval. The transfer was approved by the majority of the partners and the transfer took place on December 31, 1994.

On January 1, 1995, the Civic Foundation, Inc. took over a \$1,060,000 building with a debt of \$1,090,000 that included unpaid real estate taxes of \$142,000 plus interest, a bank loan of \$585,000 that had a balloon payment of \$576,000 due April 1, 1995, and \$364,000 of accounts payable.

BANK LOAN NEGOTIATIONS

National City Bank of Cleveland agreed to change the name on the note it held from the former owners, Temple Associates, to The Civic Foundation, Inc. A more difficult challenge to the Foundation was the balloon payment of almost \$600,000 due on April 1, 1995. Prior to meeting with the bank representatives, the Civic Board requested that its architects estimate the cost of tearing down The Civic. The Board's thinking was that the bank, in the event of a foreclosure, would be interested in demolishing the building and selling the land for redevelopment. The demolition cost was \$550,000, so the bank would be faced with a loss of more than one million dollars in lost income and expenses for a three-acre plot of potentially developable land. At \$333,000 per acre, the land would be extremely overpriced for the neighborhood. (Vacant commercial land in the neighborhood was selling for approximately \$50,000 per acre.)

The first meeting with the bank officials was held in March 1995. The bankers were willing to discuss a 12 to 18 month extension. The Board felt that it wanted a permanent solution to the loan issue rather than have to face the annual balloon payment issue. National

City Bank - due to bank mergers, the third bank to hold the note - was reluctant to continue the loan, believing it to be a non-performing loan that should never have been granted in the first place. Faced with the demolition costs and the backup of the three guarantors, the bank officials eventually relented. Since the cash flow of the Civic didn't allow it to pay a regular monthly principal and interest payment out of its funds, the proposal to the three guarantors was that they would each make a tax deductible donation monthly to The Civic Foundation, depending on the cash needs of that month. Since the bank had full recourse to the guarantors for the loan balance, this arrangement was satisfactory to the investors, who had few alternatives. The bank agreed to a one-year extension to April 1996.

The Civic Foundation was no healthier financially in April 1996 than it had been in the previous year. The guarantors by this time were getting weary of the monthly calls for cash and were looking for a better solution. The bank was looking for its money rather than another loan extension and the Civic was looking for a long-term loan to avoid a crisis every April. The City of Cleveland Heights was also looking for a permanent solution and was unwilling to release any funding to the Civic until the permanent loan solution was in place. Reluctantly, the bank granted another one-year extension in April 1996. Then, unexpectedly, one of the three guarantors stopped making donations to the Civic to pay the monthly mortgage. As a result, the Civic was not able to make its July or August mortgage payments. In August, the president of the Civic Board invited the bank's leadership to sit down with board to work out a solution. The Board hoped that the bank might be willing to reduce the interest rate of the loan by making a charitable donation to the Civic. The bank responded in a formal letter informing the Civic that it was now in default of the loan agreement.

During the fall of 1996, several meetings were held between the Board of the Civic, the guarantors, and the City Manager and Development Director of Cleveland Heights, all looking for a strategy to convince the bank to grant a permanent loan to the Civic. Because the guarantors were no longer willing to make monthly donations to the Foundation, some other solution was necessary. The City expressed a willingness to participate financially in a solution. In early 1997, a meeting was set up in the offices of the George Gund Foundation, one of the early funders of The Civic Foundation's planning phase. The meeting included representatives of the Civic Foundation, the City of Cleveland Heights, the Gund Foundation, the Cleveland

Foundation, and the guarantors. At that meeting, the City of Cleveland Heights and the Gund Foundation representatives agreed to take to their board and city council, respectively, a proposal to work out a linked deposit program with the Civic. The terms of this proposal were that each of the parties would deposit a sum of money in National City Bank. The interest from these deposits would accumulate in the Civic Foundation's account at National City and would be applied each month to the monthly mortgage payment. This would enable the monthly payments to be low enough to fit within the budget of the Civic.

In July 1997, the Civic Foundation and the George Gund Foundation signed an agreement calling for the Gund Foundation to deposit \$250,000 in a Certificate of Deposit that would mature in July 2007, when the Civic's loan would be paid off. The CD would bear interest at 6.06 percent; 5.06 percent would be applied to the Civic's debt service. This linked deposit would produce about a \$1,000 per month contribution to the monthly mortgage payment. On October 31, the City of Cleveland Heights followed suit, signing an agreement to deposit \$100,000 at six percent interest. The City's CD would allocate five percent to the Civic's debt service. This would contribute another \$400 to the monthly mortgage. With these two linked deposits, the Civic's cash flow would now allow it to make its monthly payments without assistance from the guarantors. The agreement with the city also approved the release of the almost \$400,000, as detailed in the following section, in Community Development Block Grant funds that had been allocated but not released to the Civic.

THE QUEST FOR CAPITAL FUNDS

Even before taking title to the building, the Civic Foundation staff began the process of trying to raise the funds necessary to protect the building from any further damage and to upgrade the building systems to acceptable standards.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

The City of Cleveland Heights is an integrated, inner ring suburb of Cleveland with a population of about 55,000. By 1995, approximately 35 percent of the population was non-white, with a significant number falling below the official poverty income line. As a city of more than 50,000, Cleveland Heights was an "Entitlement City" under the 1974 federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Fiscal year 1995 was known, in CDBG parlance, as "Year 21." Cleveland Heights, under the CDBG formula, was receiving more than \$1.5 million annually in federal funds from this program. Under federal guidelines, 70 percent of the funds had to directly benefit low- and moderate-income individuals. Because the Civic was located in one of the poorest census tracts in the city, and its condition would have a significant impact on an already economically troubled area of the city, the Civic Foundation saw that it could potentially benefit from these federal dollars.

In August 1994, The Civic Foundation applied to the City of Cleveland Heights for \$500,000 of CDBG funds for the Year 21 program. After a rigorous process of arguing the case for the Civic's proposal, the Foundation was awarded \$250,000 by the City for the 1995 program. Because in 1994 the ownership of the Civic had not yet been assumed by the nonprofit Civic Foundation, the City made the award of the funds contingent upon the ownership change. As detailed earlier, the ownership change occurred in January 1995. On November 7, 1994, City Council formally awarded the Civic its first capital rehabilitation grant.

The next step was for the staff of the Civic to begin the process of working with the architects, vanDijk, Pace, Westlake & Partners, to put together a priority list of projects and begin the drawing up of bid documents. Because this was a federally funded project, the bid procedures were very cumbersome and time-consuming. By spring of 1996, vanDijk had drafted a \$1 million, three-phase construction priority list. The first phase would utilize the \$250,000 that had been allocated by the City in November 1994. That phase would include roof repairs as well as gutter and downspout replacement. Since the Civic was listed on the National Register of Historical Places, the construction had to conform to historical guidelines as enforced by the Ohio Historical Society. This meant that the gutters and downspouts had to be copper, as they originally were, even though copper was then about three times as expensive as aluminum.

While the process of drawing up the bid specifications for the first \$250,000 grant was going on, the staff began the process of applying for another \$250,000 grant from the next CDBG funding cycle. The Year 22 total funding requests were much greater than the previous year, making competition much stiffer. As a result, the Civic was only awarded \$144,000. However, the total CDBG funds now totaled almost \$400,000. Unexpectedly, spending the money became the problem, because the City was unwilling to authorize the funds until the Civic cleared up its financial problems with National City Bank. As noted above, that finally occurred in the fall of 1997.

OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

In early January 1995, the executive director and the president of the Board of Trustees met with Mary Rose Oakar. Ms. Oakar had been a U.S. Congresswoman representing the west side of Cleveland and several western and southern suburbs. She was defeated in her bid for re-election in 1992 and was working as a consultant. She had very close ties to Congressman Louis Stokes, whose east side of Cleveland and eastern suburban district included Cleveland Heights and who was the senior Democrat on the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee. The Civic hired Oakar's firm to "take all

appropriate steps to conduct a review and analysis of potential federal funding sources to apply toward the adaptive reuse of the Civic."¹³ The hope was that the Foundation could raise between \$1 and \$2 million in federal funds using a combination of development grants and tax credits. The contract described three possibly useful programs: the Historical Tax Credit program, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant program, and Congressional line item appropriations.

The Historical Tax Credit program proved to be inappropriate for the Civic. The program allowed the purchase, sale, and trading of Historical Tax Credits, but there had to be private investment in the building in order to trigger a credit that could be sold. Since there was no private development and unlikely to be any, there would be no credits to sell. The second program looked at was the EDA program. This program was essentially a job creation program for low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. While the Civic qualified in terms of its neighborhood, its job creation possibilities were minimal. While the City did its best to work with the Civic to make this program fit its project, there was little likelihood that this project would be funded by EDA.

The final possibility was a line item grant through Congress. During the time when the Democrats were in the majority in the House, Congressman Louis Stokes, who represented Cleveland Heights, had considerable influence in funding programs. However, January 1995 saw the takeover of the House by the Republicans for the first time in 40 years. Not only were there bitter disagreements between President Clinton and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, there also were 40 years of Republican pet programs that had not previously been funded that would take priority over Democratic proposals. Thus this route to the federal funds was no longer open to the Civic.

STATE OF OHIO FUNDS

While the news on the federal dollar front was not good, better possibilities existed with the State of Ohio. Ohio operates on a two-year budget cycle. In the odd years, the state passes a two-year operating budget; in the even years it passes a two-year capital budget.

As is the case with the federal government, there are smaller line item possibilities in the Ohio capital budget. The area's State Representative, Barbara Boyd, was a veteran Democrat in a Republican majority State House, but she had always had good relations with her Republican colleagues. The Civic, with the support of the City of Cleveland Heights, which had in January passed a resolution of support to the state,¹⁴ applied for \$500,000 for "interior improvements to make the building accessible to disabled persons and for historic restorations."¹⁵ The capital budget that passed in June 1996 included a \$100,000 grant for the Civic. The terms of the grant were extremely broad and gave the Civic the right to use the funds for almost any non-operating purpose. The broad scope became a necessity when the boiler cracked shortly after the grant was made. Over \$34,000 of the funds had to be used to replace the boiler before winter came. The rest was used for elevator repairs, the replacement of several windows that had rotted out and were leaking, some additional roof repairs, and handicapped access ramps.

In the year 2000 capital budget, the Civic was again successful in receiving a state grant, this time for \$50,000. The terms were again extremely broad. The Civic proposed to use the funds to continue the structural repairs necessary to upgrade the portion of the facilities that have the possibility of producing more rental income. These items include bathroom upgrades with the inclusion of a handicapped access bathroom to serve the large rental spaces, better signage, and lighting of the exterior.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT & FUNDING

INVESTMENT

In the summer of 1996, one of the Civics' tenants, the New Spirit Revival Center, which had been renting a section of the building for their Sunday services, approached the Civic with a proposal to sign a long-term lease for the Great Hall. In return for a long-term lease, they would agree to substantially rehabilitate the Great Hall to use as their permanent facility. The original plan for this, the largest and most attractive of the large spaces in the building, had been as a multi-purpose space. The area now had a raked floor, (theater style), with a stage

in the front, plus a large balcony). The Great Hall can accommodate as many as 1,600 people on the main floor and balcony. The architectural plan called for the space to be renovated with a flat floor and movable rather than fixed seating. The balcony was to remain as currently configured, but the space below the balcony on the main floor would become part of an extended lobby, because the current lobby space was not large enough to function effectively for a multi-purpose hall. The new configuration, as envisioned by vanDijk, Pace, Westlake & Partners, would accommodate about 900 on the main floor and balcony for performances, and could seat close to 400 for a banquet.

Before the board of the Civic was willing to consider a long-term lease, they asked the congregation for assurances on a number of items. The first was that the work undertaken by New Spirit would conform to the vanDijk plan, that historical considerations would be taken into consideration, and that the space could be rented out for performances when the congregation was not using the facility. After several months of negotiations, a deal was struck for a seven-year lease. The only change made to the vanDijk plan was that the raked floor would not be changed to a flat floor. This would have greatly increased the cost. The original vanDijk cost estimate for the Great Hall was approximately two million dollars. New Spirit was willing to spend about \$250,000. Their work provided valuable improvements for the hall. The fixed seating and worn carpeting were removed. New carpet was installed and the entire area repainted. A ramp was installed to provide easier access for the disabled to the hall. The area below the balcony on the main floor was turned into the enlarged lobby that vanDijk had planned. For its part, the Civic committed to fixing the leaky roof and to repair or replace the windows that were rotted and leaking.

In the years since the lease was signed, the congregation's membership has increased dramatically from several hundred to well over 1,000. The congregation is presently renting additional space in the Civic several times a month. Because of their expanded use, the plan to rent out the Great Hall for occasional one-day performances has never been implemented. This has become a revenue problem for the Civic because it is estimated that the space could bring in \$1,500 to \$2,000 per day as a performance space.

FOUNDATION FUNDING

In 1998, the Civic made applications to several Cleveland area foundations for grants for various capital projects. Many personal visits and discussions had yielded only a small amount of foundation grants. Finally, in late 1999, the George Gund Foundation indicated a willingness to consider a grant. In 1998, the Civic had sent the Gund Foundation a capital grant proposal for \$150,000. This application remained on the desk of the program director for two years before coming to the top of the pile. Within hours of getting the call, the board president and the executive director of the Civic put together a revised wish list and resubmitted the request to the foundation. The grant was approved in December 1999, and the funds were dispersed to the Civic in January 2000. Because of an end-of-the-year cash flow problem resulting from a rent dispute with a major tenant, the Civic asked for and received permission from the Gund Foundation to temporarily use a portion of the grant for operating purposes with the stipulation that the Civic send to Gund for their approval a formal plan for restoring the operating dollars to the capital account, so that the entire \$150,000 would be spent for capital purposes. The Civic used these capital dollars to improve the rentability of the large assembly spaces. The bathrooms were rehabilitated, several rooms were redecorated, the steps were repaired, the fire alarm system was updated to code, and tables and chairs were replaced for use in the rental halls.

CIVIC'S FUND RAISING CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS

Over the past several years, the Civic has sponsored two fund-raising programs: Ramps to the Future, whose emphasis was on raising the necessary funds to install a ramp to access the theater portion of the building, and Windows to the Future, which was geared to raising the funds to replace several of the Civics' windows. Both of these efforts had modest results, but enabled the Civic board to ask for and receive donations from some of the smaller foundations that did not make large targeted grants like the Gund Foundation and the Cleveland Foundation. The total raised in these two efforts was less than \$50,000.

Each year the Civic holds a juried art show, which has grown in popularity since its inception. Artists exhibit their works, compete for prizes, and give the Civic a portion of their proceeds from sales at the show. This effort has also been a vehicle for receiving smaller

donations from individuals and corporations who direct their gifts towards the art community. In 1998 and 1999, this event raised about \$50,000.

SOLVING THE PROPERTY TAX PROBLEM

When the Civic Foundation took over the building from Temple Associates, \$142,000 in back property taxes was owed to Cuyahoga County. By 1998 this amount had accumulated to over \$300,000 in back taxes and interest. The Civic discovered an interesting quirk of Ohio law when it tried to pay its first semi-annual tax bill after the title transfer in January 1995 - the County cannot accept current taxes if there are back taxes owed. This meant that since the Civic did not have the \$142,000 plus accumulated interest plus the semi-annual current payment of \$14,000, the County would accept nothing. The County, in fact, returned to the Civic its uncashed check for the current payment. Thus the Civic was positioned to perpetually default on its tax payment. Periodically the County Treasurer and the County Auditor would post the Civic on their delinquency list and send letters threatening foreclosure.

Another "catch 22" situation was that the Civic was not able to apply to the State of Ohio for a partial property tax exemption because the taxes were in delinquency. Under Ohio law, according to the Civics' attorneys, since the building was owned by a nonprofit corporation, it would qualify for tax exempt status except for that portion of the building that was occupied by for-profit companies. A large part of the building was occupied by religious congregations, the Ensemble Theatre, and nonprofit civic corporations. There were only a few for-profit permanent tenants. Ohio law permitted the Civic to apply retroactively for three years of exemption that would include all of the years that the building was owned by the Civic Foundation. However, until the tax delinquency was resolved, there could be no application for a tax exemption. Finally, on January 29, 1998, the Civic was served with papers formally filing foreclosure action against the building for non-payment of property taxes. The suit also included National City Bank and the City of Cleveland Heights, both of whom had liens on the property as a result of outstanding loans. In an attempt to turn a bad situation into a good one, the Civic contacted the Cleveland Foundation and asked for a meeting with their program officer to discuss its problem.

Armed with the lawsuit and the full support of the City, the bank, and the loan guarantors, the Civic board and executive director met with the Cleveland Foundation, which agreed to consider a loan to pay the portion of the taxes accumulated prior to the transfer of ownership to the Civic Foundation. With this news in hand, the Civic contacted the Cuyahoga County Treasurer's office. After several internal discussions, the Treasurer's office agreed to a plan that involved paying back in one lump sum the pre-1995 taxes plus interest, and placing the post-1995 taxes on a two-year monthly payment plan. The Cleveland Foundation, once the County was on board, agreed to loan the Civic \$188,000 with a seven-and-a-half year repayment schedule with a three percent annual interest rate. The provisions in the loan document included a requirement that the County agree to drop the foreclosure suit and that the Civic agree to turn over to the Cleveland Foundation any tax refunds that the Civic receives from the state if and when the tax exemption is granted. With the three-year retroactivity and the possibility that a substantial percent of the building could be declared not-for-profit, the refund could be considerable.

Finally in November 1998, the lawsuit was dropped, the loan from the Cleveland Foundation was used to pay the pre-1995 taxes, and the Civic signed a two-year agreement to pay \$4,300 per month to clear up the 1995-98 taxes. In addition, the Civic resumed paying the annual property taxes of about \$29,000 pending resolution of the tax-exempt status.

In August 2000 the State of Ohio finally granted the Civic property tax exemptions for almost 90 percent of the building, retroactive to January 1, 1995. This rebate will allow the Civic to pay back a large portion of the Cleveland Foundation loan and frees up almost \$30,000 per year currently used for tax and loan payments for reallocation to the maintenance of the building.

THE CIVIC TODAY

The history of the Civic over the period 1980-2000 is a demonstration in both success and failure. The major failure was the purchase of the building by a for-profit corporation. The major renovation and retrofitting that were necessary in order to turn the building into a functional multi-purpose building were simply too extensive and too costly to make a for-profit enterprise a success, even under the best of circumstances. Over 20 years, more than \$1.6 million in grants, loans, and private investment were put into the building.¹⁶ Almost none of these funds would have been available under the for-profit structure. The successes are that the major structural items have been addressed and improvements have been made that make the building more rentable. The tenant spaces are virtually 100 percent rented at all times. The Ensemble Theatre continues to do well in its space. The New Spirit Revival Center has thrived in its location and has beautifully restored its Great Hall area. The major rental areas have all been redecorated and the catering area is slated to be rented to a major Cleveland area caterer who intends to sponsor Sunday brunch for the church-goers and provide a linked catering program with the Civic's hall rentals. This will benefit both the caterer and the Civic's income stream. The resolution of the tax-exempt status and the payoff of the county loan will dramatically improve the Civic's cash flow situation.

The major unknown and the one problem that the Civic must succeed in addressing is its ability to rent out the daily rental spaces. If all of the daily rental spaces were rented all of the time at the published rate, the Civic would have annual income of over one million dollars. If the Civic can achieve about 20 percent of its maximum occupancy, it can succeed in sustaining itself and make necessary additional capital investment in the building.

It is clear that the most important ingredient in the success of the Civic was a dedicated group of individuals who were committed to the project and were willing to spend the time and energy needed to make the project work. If a developer were to apply normal profit and loss calculations to this project, the project would have never been started. Temple Associates originally bought the building because the three general partners were dedicated, civic-minded

businessmen whose first priority was to save the building. The amount of donated hours in the Civic project was enormous. If the Executive Director were paid the prevailing wage for a job of its magnitude and if all of the volunteer hours of the original partners and the Foundation board members were charged at a normal rate, the project would never have been possible.

LESSONS LEARNED

An important and perhaps obvious lesson to be drawn from the successful effort to save the former Temple on the Heights is that adapting a sacred landmark for a new life in the secular world is a complicated and complex challenge. The starting point in this process is a clear vision shaped by a detailed market study that identifies and assesses alternative uses of the facility and projected revenue flows derivable from each. Market assessments may be tempered by the values of preservation and civic purposes, but these should not cloud assessments of financial realities.

From this follows decisions about the appropriate organizational form. A strategic business decision must be made in the effort to adapt sacred landmarks for other uses, whether to attempt to operate the facility as a for-profit or not-for-profit or public venture

For-Profit: The attempt to operate the Civic as a for-profit business partnership with an array of full and limited partners was not particularly successful. Despite the commitment and apparent dedication of the partners, this approach appears to have floundered due to an array of operational cost and revenue problems, as well as complex and costly maintenance and restoration needs. If the projected use of a facility does not meet the "test of the market," the facility can be operated as a "business" only if some form of public subsidy in the form of tax exemptions or direct public payments can be justified.

Nonprofit: The transfer of the Civic from the Temple Associates partnership to the

Civic Foundation demonstrates the difficulties of adaptive reuse to commercial alternatives, particularly when the facilities require high maintenance and renovation costs. Nonprofit status removes the need to generate a return to stockholders or owners. It also creates an entity that can receive funding from foundations that, due to their legal status, can only make contributions to nonprofits, and an entity that can receive tax-deductible contributions from individuals and businesses. Nonprofit status, however, begins to define purpose. To sustain a facility as a nonprofit requires a compelling purpose and functions that are consistent with contributors' charitable purposes and funding guidelines. Further, many foundations are precluded from, or very reluctant to fund, operating costs, particularly on an ongoing basis. The Civic Foundation appears to have found some success in creating a virtual incubator for artistic and religious endeavors. This model, however, was threatened by problems of tax arrears and capital renovations costs that were transcended only with great difficulty and financial innovation.

Public Use and Public Purpose: An alternative for adaptive reuse of sacred landmarks is acquisition by government for use in housing governmental units. This option was considered by the City of Cleveland Heights but rejected because of the very high cost of renovating the facility relative to new building construction. An intermediate alternative to public ownership is housing some government services that generate rental income for the facility. This could provide core tenants for both profit and nonprofit adaptive reuse. Another intermediate alternative is the use of public funds to facilitate adaptive reuse because the facility serves a historic and/or current public purpose. The Civic experience offers examples of state and city government providing funding, including the innovative use of linked deposits to generate resources to sustain and maintain the Civic.

The experience of the Civic also illustrates the depth and complexity of financial issues confronting adaptive reuse of sacred landmarks, as well as the complexity of financing to address these financial barriers. The transition from Ark to Art was underwritten by a wide variety of financing techniques, including equity investments through partnership of full and limited partners; foundation loans and grants and foundation and government linked deposits; private giving and local government funding; guaranteed loans; rental income; tax forgiveness;

debt transfer; balloon loans; tax deductible donations; federal Community Block Grant funding through the City of Cleveland Heights; State of Ohio Capital Budget allocations; Civic-sponsored fund raising programs; juried art shows; and low interest loans. In addition, the Civic explored federal Historical Tax Credits, Economic Development Administration grants, and congressional line item appropriations. The Civic's experience with financing illustrates four important points: 1) A variety of traditional and non-traditional financial instruments are available, particularly for nonprofit entities. 2) These financial instruments need to be packaged to achieve viable financing approaches. 3) Workable approaches to financing require expertise, creativity, and innovation. 4) Plans for the adaptive reuse of sacred landmarks must be undergirded by sound financing strategies if they are to succeed.

Revealing the enormity of the efforts involved should not discourage others from attempting to carry out related plans. The travails and frustrations involved in creating and sustaining the Civic Foundation have been clearly identified, but the experience of the Civic also demonstrates the deep satisfaction of successfully meeting these challenges, of preserving a sacred landmark as a civic asset, and the privilege of contributing so substantially to one's community. It is hoped that this latter lesson learned will be more than a sufficient restorative for those daunted by the challenge.

THE SACRED LANDMARKS INITIATIVE

The Sacred Landmarks Initiative (SLI) is a program within the Urban Center of the Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, that provides information about Cleveland's religious structures and organizations and their past and present role in strengthening and maintaining communities within the Cleveland metropolitan area. The initiative's four primary activities include researching and documenting the architectural and aesthetic features of Cleveland's religious structures; providing guidance or referrals to religious institutions who wish to preserve their archival materials and artworks, including their stained glass windows; researching and documenting the human and social services engaged in by religious institutions; and researching and documenting the role that various religious institutions and their members have played in the history of Cleveland. The monograph presented here reflects this mission because it not only helps develop a caring concern about sacred places and their fate, but provides information useful for their preservation and ongoing usefulness.

The Sacred Landmarks Initiative of the Levin College Urban Center is one of four such organizations with a common mission that form the Sacred Landmarks Partnership of Northeastern Ohio. This partnership includes the initiatives at the University of Akron, Kent State University, and Youngstown State University, as well as the original one at Cleveland State University. Because preserving archival materials and artworks is a central purpose of the Initiatives, a Sacred Landmarks archive has been created and is maintained in partnership with the CSU University Library.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John J. Boyle, III is a 1962 graduate of Boston College who entered his family insurance business after graduating from college. At age 31 he was elected to Cleveland Heights City council and served for over 18 years as a member of Council, as Mayor and President of Council, as a member of the city's Housing Board, and as a member and Chairman of the Planning Commission. After retiring from City Council, Mr. Boyle became an original board member and the first chairman of the board of The Civic Foundation. He still serves as a member of the board of trustees.

Mr. Boyle began his masters degree in Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University in 1988, but was forced to take a nine year sabbatical to serve as a member of the university's board of trustees. After his service on the board was completed, he resumed his studies and is currently a master's candidate in Urban Planning and Development. Mr. Boyle is currently on leave from his insurance business and serving as Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration at Cleveland State.

THE CIVIC IN PHOTOGRAPHS



Laying the cornerstone for Temple on the Heights (B'nai Jeshurun Congregation), May 24, 1925. Rabbi Abraham Nowak, then- spiritual leader of the temple, is in center behind flag-draped table.

The Great Hall (now home to New Spirit Revival), circa 1965.



From Ark to Art

Exterior of
the Civic,
circa 1966...



...and circa 2000



Above, the lobby doors to the Great Hall (now home to New Spirit Revival). The doors are largely the same as they were when the building was a temple, with the exception of the two panes in each door (now solid colored glass) that originally had etchings of Menorah and other symbols of Jewish religious life.

To the right, the staircase to the balcony (also in the lobby of the Great Hall.)





The Great Hall after renovations (fall 2000).

