Historic 1876 Adas Israel Synagogue Relocated for the Second Time in 140-Year History

Washington’s First Jewish History Museum to Expand Facilities and Programming in New Location

WASHINGTON, DC (NOVEMBER 3, 2016) – Today Washington’s oldest synagogue, the historic 1876 Adas Israel Synagogue, began a two-step relocation process to its new home at Third and F streets, NW, the second time it has moved in its 140-year history. The new site will allow the Lillian and Albert Small Jewish Museum, run by the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington (JHS), to expand its facilities including exhibition and education spaces which will feature programmatic offerings that explore the heritage of the Washington-area Jewish community through the history of the region.

“It’s not every day you see a building as historically significant and important to the region as this one relocated for a second time,” said Bob Braunohler, Property Group Partners Regional Vice President. “We are pleased to support this effort that gives the synagogue a bigger and better location that will benefit future generations of Washingtonians.”

The Adas Israel Synagogue is the oldest synagogue in Washington. It was built in just three months at Sixth and G streets, NW and was dedicated on June 9, 1876. When the congregation outgrew the synagogue and relocated, the building became a series of churches and served several commercial uses including a grocery store. Plans to build Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority headquarters sparked efforts to preserve and protect the historic synagogue.

With help from the District of Columbia government, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and an Act of Congress, the Jewish Historical Society relocated the building for the first time in 1969 to Third and G streets, NW. Since then, it has functioned as a museum and educational facility for Jewish history in the greater Washington area.

“We have been planning and preparing for this move for a long time and are thrilled that this day is finally here,” said Wendy Turman, Deputy Director of the Jewish Historical Society. “This historic landmark will soon have the opportunity to engage and inspire even more adults and children through expanded exhibitions, educational initiatives and public programs reflecting the story of the Jewish community in the Washington, D.C region.”

The relocation of Adas Israel is part of construction at Capitol Crossing, one of the region’s most ambitious neighborhood revitalization projects. The development includes 2.2 million square feet of
office, retail, housing and open space which will, at long last, unite the East End and Capitol Hill neighborhoods by replacing the District’s most visible physical scar—the I-395 Center Leg Freeway—with a vibrant new neighborhood. Construction on the first building—200 Massachusetts Avenue, NW—and leasing for all buildings on site are both fully underway.

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