

Historic Temple Slated For Renovation

The Beth-El Temple has been standing vacant for years in Indy's Mapleton-Fall Creek neighborhood. Built in 1924 on the corner 34th and Ruckle streets, the structure is the oldest standing synagogue in the city and is a remarkable example of the neoclassical style.

Mark Dollase, vice president of preservation services at Indiana Landmarks says the building was conceived by a notable Indianapolis architectural firm.

"It was designed by Vonnegut, Bohn and Mueller which is the same firm that designed other landmarks like the Athenaeum and the Block's department store amongst other important buildings in the city," says Dollase.

There is already funding in place to replace the temple's deteriorating roof. Indiana Landmarks is working with the city and local groups to find a new purpose for the building. An upcoming meeting will also seek input from the public.

Dollase says the city has made great strides when finding opportunity for some of these historic structures.

"They've really taken a leadership role in recent years trying to find solutions for these properties," says Dollase, "and certainly their willingness to step up with some funding makes all the difference."

Indiana Landmarks is also nominating the building to the National Register of Historic Places hoping to further secure its future.

