



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.**

Series I: Wexner Heritage Foundation, 1947-2004.

Subseries 2: Writings and Addresses, 1947-2003.

---

Box  
69

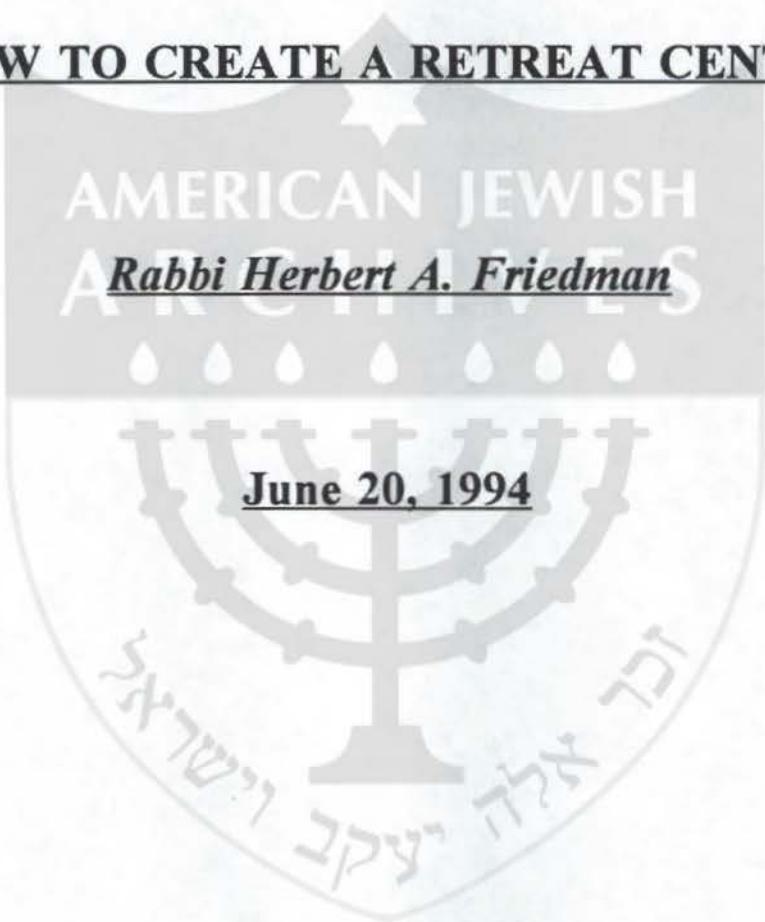
Folder  
15

"How to Create a Retreat Center." June 1994.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the  
American Jewish Archives website.

---

## **HOW TO CREATE A RETREAT CENTER**



*Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman*

June 20, 1994

**FACILITY TO BE LOCATED  
ON, OR ADJACENT TO,  
SAME CAMPUS AS THE ACADEMY**

To Serve as Retreat Center,  
Conference Center, or  
Residential Inn for Parents

**NEED FOR SUCH FACILITY**

Retreat Centers are recognized by leaders in religion, business, academe, science and government as places where serious thinking, learning and discussion can occur under carefully tailored conditions.

Life in today's complex, crowded, fast-paced environments does not easily allow for unhurried ruminations, thoughtful conversation or uninterrupted reading. Electronic devices intrude, normal business demands ever-more time and energy, simple pleasures are crowded out to the extent that family tensions increase - and life becomes a "hassle" or "rat race". Such circumstances are not conducive to quiet reflection on life's larger questions. A place away becomes the answer - a place skillfully arranged to house any individual who wishes to come and study or think; or any group with a common interest, which wants to meet for a day or three or seven.

**DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES**

The sleeping quarters must be very inviting, even luxurious, up to the standards, say, of the Ritz-Carlton or similar hotel chain. The kitchen must be staffed at an equivalently high standard, so that the meals can actually be enjoyed, not merely endured. There must be two kitchens, kosher and non, in order to serve the widest range of guests and groups.

Most importantly of all, the facilities for conducting the lectures, seminars, workshops, plenaries, video presentations or what-have -you, must be comfortable and efficient. Various types and sizes of rooms must be constructed and properly furnished, so that it is never necessary to start shifting furniture from room to room at the last moment.

Seminar rooms should be of two sizes - one, to accomodate up to 12 persons; the other, up to 22 persons; all seated around one table. Chairs should be swivel type, mounted on casters. Plenary rooms should also be of two sizes - one, to accomodate up to 50 persons, and the other to hold up to 300 persons. Seating should be classroom style, so that each participant is seated behind a table, to facilitate note-taking, drinking glass, and access to a table microphone. There must also be an auditorium with 500 seats.

All the obvious audio-visual equipment must be integrated into the construction of each room, or pair of rooms back-to-back.

The number of sleeping rooms will determine the maximum size of any group seeking to use the facility, and the size of the group will determine the number of meeting rooms to be constructed.

Open public space is very necessary, for use as reception area, cocktail hours and socializing. Lounge furniture and fireplace are attractive components of the public space.

A library, with club chairs, reading tables, private alcoves and walls filled with books will become one of the most sought-out spaces for quiet and privacy.

An exercise room, sufficiently equipped, together with an indoor lap pool is almost mandatory in today's world where so many people are exercise-conscious. Of course, the usual outdoor sport facilities must also be available - tennis courts, volleyball court, croquet lawn and swimming pool.

### **MULTIPLE USAGES**

Residence for Parents coming to the Academy to visit their children.

Retreat Center for Individuals who are attracted to study with distinguished faculty.

Conference Center for Organizations seeking a quality facility, removed from urban distractions or conventional hotels with lobby and elevator congestion. The number of such facilities in the United States is remarkably low.

### **PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATION and MARKETING**

The facility should be incorporated as a 501[c]3 tax-deductible entity, under the supervision of a small Board, headed by a Chairman.

The academic head of the institution could be called Dean, and the administrative head called Manager.

The Dean handlesd faculty, curricula, reading and video materiel, for both individuals and groups. He is the intellectual leader of the institution.

The Manager handles staff, finances, physical plant, grounds, marketing, and all related matters.

Both Dean and Manager are co-equal executive officers, work closely together, and report to the Chairman.

