

Temple agrees to settle

B'Nai Torah, NCNB to rework \$4.5 million debt

By Wayne Tompkins

Staff Writer

The financially troubled B'Nai Torah synagogue has reached agreement with NCNB Bank to renegotiate its \$4.5 million debt, board members said Thursday.

B'Nai Torah president Jeffrey Deutch said details of the agreement were still being worked out but are expected to be finalized before a signing ceremony at 3 p.m. today.

"It definitely will give us life," said Ken Lipman, attorney for the congregation.

The 500-member Conservative Jewish congregation defaulted in February on loans to pay for its posh new temple at 6261 SW 18th St. in suburban

Boca Raton.

Members, who currently pay \$750 per year in dues and a \$500 special assessment over seven years, kept the building from closure during an emergency meeting in which \$1 million was pledged.

Temple officials had gambled that the building would attract new members and donations to pay for it, but neither materialized.

Lipman said recruitment efforts begun since the crisis have been successful.

"We got a lot of new members just due to our publicity," Lipman said. "Maybe this has been a blessing in deep disguise."