Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse
Boulder, Colorado
Historic Context and Survey

Oil painting of Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse by Barbara L. Hoffmann, 1998

Prepared for the City of Boulder, Colorado
By Lara Ramsey and Kathryn Barth, AIA
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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In 1987, the City of Boulder, Colorado received a remarkable gift from the City of Dushanbe, Tajikistan: a Tajik Teahouse for its use and enjoyment. After ten years of community debate, preparation and construction, the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse finally opened to the general public in May 1998.

Lara Ramsey and Kathryn Howes Barth, AIA, performed this study of the history and significance of the Teahouse as consultants to the City of Boulder Planning Department over the course of 2009 and 2010. Lara conducted historical research of the Teahouse gift, site selection and construction process and coauthored this report. Kathryn researched the architectural history of teahouses in general and specifically the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. She reviewed oral histories of Tajik participants in the project, photographed the building, interviewed Vern Seieroe, architect for the project in Boulder, studied the Tajik and American drawings and related photos, and co-authored the report.

Chris Meshuck and James Hewat, City of Boulder Planning Department, coordinated the project, accepted original materials related to the teahouse construction, and reviewed the report.

The study included the examination of historic records, preparation of a Colorado Historical Society Building Inventory Record Form 1403, preparation of an historic background of the building, an architectural description, and an evaluation of the property’s significance in terms of eligibility as a local landmark and for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Project kick-off began on November 7, 2008, with an informational slide show and meeting at the City Planning Department attended by Lara and Kathryn, Vern Seieroe, Andrea Witham, Mary Axe and city staff including Preservation Planners James Hewat and Chris Meshuck. Over the course of the project, a number of individuals who were involved throughout the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse project were contacted for information including: Vern Seieroe, Mary Axe, Roger Ewy, Scott Radersdorf, and Lenny Martinelli. Mary was invaluable in recalling the history of the project and Vern was invaluable in explaining the design and building process. George Peknik’s book, The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, was heavily relied upon as a well-researched and wonderful source of information regarding the teahouse.

Fortunately, the original architectural Tajik drawings (in Russian) for the building executed in Tajikistan and Vern Seieroe’s drawings for the subsequent erection and adaptation of the building in Boulder, were available for study. The City of Boulder scanned the original hand-colored and other annotated blue-prints of the Tajik drawings and Seieroe’s later drawings and made copies of them available to the consultants.

Documents at the Carnegie Branch Library for Local History were consulted, including oral history collections, city files, and photographs. The records of the City of Boulder Central Files were examined. There were no clipping files available for the Teahouse at the Boulder Daily Camera’s archives. Newspaper articles were researched using online archives. The Internet and the search engine Google were used for keyword searches.
Related Searches
A search of the files of documented historic resources at the Colorado Historical Society’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation found no records for surveyed teahouses in the state.

A search of the National Park Service’s National Register database revealed two listed “teahouses” in the United States. The Eugene J. De Sabla Jr. Teahouse and Tea Garden is located in San Mateo, California and was listed in the National Register in 1977. Built circa 1907, the teahouse and garden are “historically significant as an early expression of the influence of Japanese culture on the development of California design at the beginning of the 20th century.”¹

Fig.01 De Sabla Jr. Teahouse, California

The “Chinese Tea House,” located on the grounds of the National Register “Marble House,” is located in Newport, Rhode Island. This teahouse was built in 1913 and modeled after twelfth century Sung Dynasty temples of Southern China.²

Fig.02 Chinese Tea House, Newport, Rhode Island

To provide additional comparative information for evaluation, research was done concerning other teahouse buildings in the country. A Google search of teahouses resulted in two findings: an antique Chinese pavilion located in Tiverton, Rhode Island and the “Swallows’ Rest” Teahouse in Newport News, Virginia. The antique teahouse in Rhode Island dates back to the 1800s. It was restored, disassembled and shipped from China to Tiverton in 2007 and located in the Tiverton Four Corners National Register Historic District. The teahouse is for sale and not a contributing building.³

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The second teahouse is located in Newport News, Virginia. This teahouse was first constructed in 1988 at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC as the centerpiece of an exhibition on the ancient art of the tea ceremony. The thatched teahouse, called “Swallows’ Rest,” is a reproduction of a 17th Century, Enman Teahouse located in Kyoto, Japan. After the exhibition ended, it was dismantled and rebuilt on the campus of Christopher Newport College. In May 2007, the building was relocated again to the Peace Garden at Newport News Park.⁴

The only known “Persian Design” teahouse outside of Central Asia is located in Klagenfurt, Austria.⁵ The teahouse in Klagenfurt (one of Dushanbe’s sister cities) was originally built for an international exhibit in Poland. Afterward, it went to Algiers and then it came back to Dushanbe around 1988. After restoration work, it was sent to Klagenfurt. The Klagenfurt teahouse was designed and built by the same artisans of Tajikistan’s Artists Fund that built Boulder’s teahouse, but is one-quarter the size of Boulder’s.⁶ Klagenfurt’s teahouse sits near a café and concert hall in the central part of the city and is “the only Persian teahouse in Europe.”⁷

According to the Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities organization, the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is the only Central Asian Teahouse in the Western Hemisphere and the first gift of an actual building between United States - Soviet Union sister cities.⁸ At the time of the gift in 1988, Molly Raymond of the U.S. Information Agency stated: “nothing in the history of the Soviet-U.S. exchanges comes even close to this.”⁹

**HISTORY**

⁶ Oral History Transcript, February 10, 1998, 055
⁷ Boulder Daily Camera article, May 15, 1998
⁸ Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities Newsletter, January 1989
The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse construction was the result of a grass-roots effort by a dedicated group of Boulder citizens. Originally called the Soviet Sister City Project, in 1987 it was renamed the Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities when the “Agreement of Establishing Sister City Relations” was signed formally by the mayors of both cities.

Sister City Program

1982-1987 Founding of Boulder’s Sister City Project

During the winter of 1982-1983, Mary Hey and Sophia Stoller sought to develop a friendship and understanding between the people of Boulder and the citizens of a city in the then Soviet Union. Their primary goals were to establish a sister city relationship and develop educational programs focusing on the culture and history of the Soviet Union.

Early on they contacted Sister Cities International (SCI) for assistance in pairing Boulder with a similar city in the Soviet Union. SCI is a nonprofit network (funded in part by the U.S. State Department) that connects partnerships between U.S. and international communities. The sister city movement originated after the close of World War II when the mayors of two towns in France and Germany organized citizen exchanges to promote cultural understanding, friendship and peace. SCI was formally established in 1956 by President Eisenhower in order to “promote peace through people-to-people contact” with all nations of the world.

Boulder’s initiative to form a friendship with a Soviet city was in stark contrast to the political climate at the time. The Berlin Wall was firmly in place and the Soviet Union, which Tajikistan was then part of, was feared as a nuclear threat. During the 1980s through the early 1990s, the Cold War was winding down, yet the prospect of a war with the Soviet Union was still a threat. President Carter had called for military build-up and imposed sanctions against the USSR in reaction to its invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games. The arms race was advancing as President Reagan proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars) and Congress authorized missile procurement and development. By the mid 1980s, however, relations with the Soviets were changing. In 1985, Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev issued a joint statement of cooperation in arms reductions and in 1987 they signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, eliminating intermediate range nuclear weapons and agreeing to work toward further arms reduction agreements. The Cold War ended in 1991 after the Soviet Union collapsed. Mary Axe recalls that “during the 1980s under Gorbachev, the policy of glasnost was introduced which resulted in more openness, greater freedom of information and a revival of ethnic identities within the various republics. Absent this window, I doubt that Boulder would have received a traditional Tajik/Central Asian Teahouse.”

Sophia Stoller and Mary Axe organized the first meeting in February 1983 at Boulder’s Public Library to begin the process of selecting a sister city in the Soviet Union. The group called itself the “Soviet Sister City Project” and was an all-volunteer, non-profit, independent organization. Typically, sister city organizations are sponsored by the city government in which they are located. The group held monthly meetings to narrow down choices, as well as to better inform itself and the public about Soviet people and their culture. Dushanbe was unanimously selected

10 Mary Axe edits, June 2010
13 Mary Axe edits, June 2010
on the advice of a local CU physicist, James Scott, who had visited the city and worked with colleagues there.

Dushanbe, the capital of the then Soviet Republic of Tajikistan, was proposed because of such commonalities as its being situated at approximately the same latitude, having a mountain environment, and serving as the home for universities and scientific research institutes. Mary Axe recalls that in order to pursue this city, the group knew they had to overcome one Soviet sister city policy: any city partnered with had to have a population of at least 100,000. At the time, Boulder’s population was approximately 80,000. Several local scientists who traveled to Dushanbe on business during that time made a point to discuss the matter with the Mayor of Dushanbe, Mr. Nabi Shorakhmatov.14

While the Soviet Sister City Project was seeking a sister city abroad it was also lobbying Boulder city officials and leaders to support its efforts. Colorado Governor Richard Lamm wrote in a letter to the Soviet Sister City Project: “Your efforts to open channels of communication between the citizens of the Soviet Union and the citizens of the United States are vital steps in the long march toward world peace. It is the foundation of mutual understanding that a long lasting peace will eventually rest.”15 In 1984, Boulder’s City Council unanimously passed a resolution endorsing the effort to establish a sister city relationship with Dushanbe.

Mary Hey, the first chair of the organization, traveled numerous times to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C., pleading Boulder’s case and providing information about the proposed partnership with little interest shown by the Embassy officials. Boulder’s group continued to meet monthly featuring speakers who discussed topics as diverse as food and literature. Film festivals were held annually in partnership with CU’s Film Studies program and the Boulder Public Library. The organization published a newsletter and built up its membership.

In August 1985, while attending a symposium in Dushanbe, Boulder scientist Joe Allen hand delivered a letter to Dushanbe’s Mayor Shorakhmatov suggesting a sister city relationship.16

In April 1986, an executive vice-president of Sister Cities International traveled to Moscow to discuss establishing ten sister-city pairings, including Boulder. Six months later, Mary Hey traveled to Dushanbe delivering letters from Mayor Ruth Correll and the Boulder Chamber of Commerce, gifts and samples of Boulder’s products, and children’s art created especially for Dushanbe. Hey also suggested a visit by a Tajik delegation to Boulder. During this visit, Dushanbe agreed in principle to a sister city relationship.17

In the winter of 1986-87, Mary Hey traveled to the Soviet Embassy again, this time bringing with her a newspaper clipping of a Boulder High School Russian teacher who had organized a Balalaika band with his students. This captured the attention of Embassy officials and within a couple of weeks, the Boulder group received a notice from Sister City International that the Soviet policy on population requirements had been changed, allowing a partner city population of 100,000 or possibly 80,000.18

In May 1987, a formal “Agreement Establishing Sister City Relations” was signed by Boulder’s Mayor Linda Jourgensen and Dushanbe’s Mayor Maksud Ikramov during his visit to Boulder.

14 Mary Axe Interview, November 2008
18 Mary Axe Interview, November 2008
The stated goals of the relationship are those of citizen diplomacy: to promote international friendship, peace, and understanding. The sister city relationship with Dushanbe is recognized both nationally through Sister Cities International, agencies in the U.S. and Tajikistan, and locally through a protocol agreement between the governments of both cities.\textsuperscript{19}

With the sister city relationship secured, the Soviet Sister Cities Project renamed itself the Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities (BDSC).

**Dushanbe, Tajikistan**

Dushanbe, capital of the Republic of Tajikistan, is located in the Varzob River Valley beneath the snow-capped mountains of the Hissar Range, at the western edge of the Himalayas. Located at an elevation of approximately 2,500 feet, its climate is somewhat warmer than Boulder’s (elevation 5,430), more like Albuquerque, New Mexico’s. Both Boulder and Dushanbe have approximately 300 days of sunshine per year. Dushanbe has a population of over 600,000 and features wide, tree-lined boulevards and a mix of European-style and traditional Central Asian buildings, shops, Soviet-style apartment blocks, parks teahouses, bazaars and cultural monuments.\textsuperscript{20} Much like Boulder, Dushanbe is home to a major university and a number of scientific institutes and centers. Dushanbe means “Monday” and records show that as early at 1676, villagers from the surrounding area would bring their produce to market each Monday to two small towns that over time developed into the city of Dushanbe.

A more thorough overview and history of Dushanbe and Tajikistan can be found in George Peknik’s book titled *The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.*

**1988-1990: Teahouse Gift**

It was during his 1987 visit that Dushanbe’s Mayor Maksud Ikramov announced his plan to present to the people of Boulder a Tajik “Chaikhona.” A *chaikhona* is a building unique to Central Asia where people gather to meet friends, play chess, enjoy a cup of tea and light snacks. “Choi” is the Tajik and “chai” the Russian word for “tea.”\textsuperscript{21}

Mayor Ikramov brought with him an agreement outlining proposed exchanges, the purpose of the group and a section outlining the gift of the teahouse and a promise that Boulder would give something in return. This document was edited for over three years as it traveled back and forth between the two cities. One section stated that the City of Boulder would donate the land for the teahouse, the BDSC would be responsible for the construction of the teahouse, and the City of Boulder would be the final owner.\textsuperscript{22}

By December 1987 drawings for the Teahouse were completed in Dushanbe by architect Lado Shanidze and in April 1988 Tajikistan’s Ministry of Culture approved the drawings and construction began. Construction of the Teahouse in Tajikistan was carried out by members of the Republic’s Artists’ Fund. In Tajikistan and throughout the USSR during the Soviet period, artists and architects were employed by the Artists’ Fund, working at their facilities and receiving their supplies from the Fund. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 and due to a drastically reduced budget for Tajikistan, the Fund was disbanded.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{19} Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities Website, www.boulder-dushanbe.org
\textsuperscript{20} The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, George Peknik, 2004, Hoopoe Publications
\textsuperscript{21} Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities Flyer: “A Chaikhona (Teahouse)”
\textsuperscript{22} Mary Axe Interview, November 1998
\textsuperscript{23} Mary Axe Interview, November 1998
In October 1988, an official delegation from Boulder visited Dushanbe. Delegation members included local Boulder architect Vern Seieroe, Mayor Linda Jourgensen, Celeste Woodley of the Boulder Valley School District, and Mary Axe, chair of BDSC. During this visit, Seieroe accompanied Lado Shanidze to Leninabad, site of the Artists’ Fund where the building was being constructed. He met several of the master craftsmen who were painting and carving various segments of the Teahouse. The lavishness of the gift became apparent as Dushanbe officials described the 1,700 square foot Teahouse as one decorated with ornate carvings, tile mosaics, a decorative pool and statues.

Back in Boulder, citizens and city leaders were struggling with whether or not to accept the gift. One of the first committees formed late in 1988 was the Teahouse Taskforce, appointed by Mayor Jourgensen, charged with the task of determining the feasibility of accepting the Teahouse gift.

During the year of 1988, letters to local newspapers poured in and the contentiousness of the gift became apparent. Many felt that the gift would require an equally lavish reciprocal gift. Many citizens believed that the City should not spend a dime of public dollars on the Teahouse, given other community needs. Others were concerned about receiving a gift from Dushanbe because of its assumed role in the Soviet Union’s prosecution of the war in Afghanistan and viewed acceptance of the gift as implicit acceptance of the Soviet government. In one article, Vern Seieroe countered, “the cost may be of concern to the giver, but what’s relevant to the receiver is the cultural or educational value of the gift. This is more than a teahouse with a dollar value. This is a piece of Tadzhik heritage. The design is exquisite; it’s like a centuries-old mosque.”

After much debate and consideration and at the Taskforce’s recommendation, the City Council voted 6-1 to accept the gift in May 1989 as “an important symbol of international friendship.” The Council also accepted the recommendation from the Taskforce that the Teahouse be located at one of three sites: next to the Boulder Public Library, in the East Boulder Community Park (which was under construction at that time), or west of the Criminal Justice Center at 11th Street and Canyon Boulevard. The consensus favorite of the Taskforce was the municipal campus site, east of the Boulder Public Library.

Now that the gift was officially accepted, in June 1989 the BDSC formed the Teahouse Trust as a 501c3 to oversee shipping, storing, fundraising, publicity, planning, construction, operation and maintenance of the Teahouse. This group consisted completely of unpaid volunteers. While the City was to provide the land, the BDSC was hoping to raise $200,000 for a foundation and the building’s construction.

Vern Seieroe volunteered to ensure that the original drawings conformed to local building codes and the site. During 1989 and working with translators, Seieroe corresponded with Mayor Ikramov regularly to develop an understanding regarding the construction specifications of the Teahouse. Given that this was to be a joint effort, Seieroe’s letters specified all aspects of the project to help clarify roles and responsibilities. Dushanbe planned to send a crew to Boulder to help assemble the Teahouse. During this planning period, communication with representatives from Dushanbe occurred weekly via telephone or telefax to discuss problems such as transportation. Originally, Dushanbe planned to pay to ship the Teahouse but with the Soviet

25 Colorado Daily article, October 31, 1988
26 Boulder Daily Camera article, May 17, 1989
27 Boulder Daily Camera article, May 17, 1989
28 City Council Memorandum, April 10, 1991
29 The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, George Peknik, 2004, Hoopoe Publications and Mary Axe Interview 11/08
Union on the brink of collapse, Tajikistan’s annual budget was essentially cut in half. Due to this financial exigency, the crates were repacked and the Teahouse Trust assumed the responsibility of paying for the shipping costs, deciding to use transportation by sea.

Over a two-year period from 1988 to 1990, Tajik artists and master-craftsmen constructed the Teahouse in Dushanbe and Khujand (Leninabad), Tajikistan. After the Teahouse was constructed, it was then disassembled, and sent to Boulder with a multitude of other components, arriving in early August 1990. The *Boulder Daily Camera* dubbed it the “Teahouse of the August Moon.”

Vern Seieroe and Mary Axe spent inordinate amounts of time at the home of Earl Sampson, CU Russian professor, trying to coordinate the shipment. Telephone calls were transferred from operator to operator: Dushanbe to Tashkent (in the Republic of Uzbekistan), Moscow, Pittsburg, Denver and finally Boulder. The 200 wooden crates containing the Teahouse traveled by train from Dushanbe to the port of Leningrad, by ship to New Orleans, and by six 20-foot tractor trailers to Boulder. The crates contained hand-painted ceiling coffers, fourteen red cedar columns, eight ceramic tile compositions, furniture including hand carved and painted octagonal tables and stools and bedlike seating structures called *topchans*, bronze sculptures of the Seven Beauties, teapots, cups, cozies, quilts, paint and paint brushes, and a *Kazan* (a metal structure for a wok for cooking Tajikistan’s traditional, famous dish of Pilaf).

The City had fortunately just completed construction of a wastewater treatment plant off 75th Street with space for storage of the crates. The Teahouse Trust had raised over $35,000, $15,000 of which was used to pay for shipping costs. The Mayor of Dushanbe stated that over 300,000 rubles had been contributed to its construction in Tajikistan, valuing the Teahouse at $750,000.

On September 11, 1990 the final “Protocol” was signed by both Boulder and Dushanbe. Among items related to education, cultural exchange, science and technology, the Protocol specifically

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30 *Daily Camera* article, February 27, 1991
stated that Dushanbe would send the Teahouse to Boulder and that Boulder would “exercise their best efforts to install at a public location” and that BDSC would “exercise their best efforts to raise sufficient funds… for site and installations costs.” The Protocol specified that four persons would be sent from Dushanbe to help assemble and install the Teahouse. The Protocol also called for a reciprocal gift.32

Once the Teahouse actually arrived in Boulder and new information about its size and grandeur was received, planning efforts for its location began and fundraising continued. The Teahouse Trust displayed pieces of the Teahouse at the Hotel Boulderado, the Boulder Art Center, Boulder Creek Festival, weekly Farmers Market, and the Boulder Public Library in order to help raise the new estimate of $350,000 needed to construct and maintain the Teahouse. Other fundraising activities included a concert by the winner of the 8th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (1989) Alexei Sultanov of Uzbekistan, and a Ukrainian dance presentation. Vern Seieroe and Mary Axe made countless presentations during this time to civic organizations, schools, and City Council.33 Celestial Seasonings placed membership forms in 300,000 of its tea boxes distributed nationally in an effort to raise money for the Teahouse Trust.34

In the City’s Planning Department, efforts were already underway on a Civic Center Master Plan (later renamed Civic Park Master Plan), a comprehensive look at the civic uses and public buildings in the downtown campus area. It made sense to consider the Teahouse in the context of these planning efforts. In December 1990, Mayor Leslie Durgin appointed a Teahouse Committee to take a fresh look at Teahouse site options and associated costs. It was clear that the City intended to provide the site and the BDSC intended to raise an estimated $350,000 to construct the teahouse.

By April 1991, the committee had evaluated numerous sites and eventually narrowed it down to three sites within the Civic Center: 1) the center of 13th Street between Arapahoe and Canyon; 2) directly west of the Boulder Arts Center (BMOCA); or, 3) east of the Boulder Public Library. The committee also determined that the Teahouse should function as a food and beverage service operation.

At its April 16, 1991 meeting, the City Council determined that its preferred location for the Teahouse was 13th Street at Central Park, with its favorite location in the middle of a closed-off 13th Street, just east of Central Park.

32 September 11, 1990 Protocol
33 Mary Axe edits, June 2010
34 Boulder Daily Camera article, August 9, 1990
Fig. 06 Proposed Teahouse Location East of Boulder Public Library
City Council Memorandum April 10, 1991

Fig. 07 Proposed Alternative Teahouse Locations in Civic Park Plaza
City Council Memorandum, April 10, 1991
In September 1991, the Civic Center Task Force was created to develop a Master Plan for the Central Park Area, including more specific analysis and siting of the Teahouse. After a frustrating December 1991 City Council meeting, Rosemary McBride, a local Boulder citizen, vowed to wear her colorful Tajikistan coat, presented to her during her recent visit there, until the Teahouse was erected. McBride did in fact wear her coat to all public events until the Teahouse’s opening in 1998.

By January 1993, the Civic Park Master Plan was approved by City Council and in April 1993, the City Council voted to locate the Teahouse at 1770 13th Street. The plans for the area placed the Teahouse at the center of the Civic Park Plaza which included the Civic Plaza (the area to the north of the Teahouse site) which was to be used for Farmers Market exhibits and performances and the 13th Street Community Plaza (the street west of the Teahouse site) which was to continue to be used for public events such as the Boulder Creek Festival and the Farmers Market.

In October 1993, a week-long celebration of BDSC’s 10th anniversary and the Teahouse was held. Zubaidullo Zubaidov, then Chief of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, and currently Tajikistan’s Ambassador to Russia, was the honored guest. Each day of the week a special presentation about Tajikistan was made by local experts: “Tajik Botany—from Tulips to Chrysanthemums” by landscape architect James M. Knopf who had traveled in Tajikistan; “Meadows in the Sky” by James B. Thompson, former superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park; “The Teahouse and Its Past” by CU Professor of Fine Arts John D. Hoag; and “Central Asia and the Silk Road” by CU Professor of Art History Ronald M. Bernier. A dedication of the Teahouse site was presided over by Mayor Leslie Durgin and Boulder County Commissioner Homer Page, featuring the honored guest, Mr. Zubaidov. A brief groundbreaking ceremony took place with the dignitaries using a couple of new and shiny shovels. The week ended with a Tajik Feast held at the First Congregational Church with City Councilmember Sally Martin as M.C., Central Asian and Tajik music provided by local band Sol Spice, and featured guest, Mr. Zubaidov.


In September 1994, with the site for the Teahouse finally selected, the City and the Teahouse Trust entered into a 20 year “Option and Lease Agreement” for the site on 13th street, allowing ample time for the Trust to fundraise and build the Teahouse and in turn rent it to a restaurant operator.

In May 1995, the Trust pursued and received a $25,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to bring over four artisans to help assemble the Teahouse in Boulder.

As plans were developed, they were reviewed by city officials, the Downtown Design Advisory Board, and ultimately City Council. Vern Seieroe’s challenge was “to take an open-air structure, enclose it, make it conform to American building codes and ‘not compromise the integrity of the Tajik architect’s traditional design.’” Seieroe traveled to Dushanbe to work with Tajik architect Lado Shanidze on the enclosure designs. The two conceptualized how the enclosed structure would look, but there were a few changes made along the way. The Fountain of the Seven Beauties... was originally planned as a square fountain recessed in the ground.”

35 Boulder Daily Camera article, December 8, 1991
36 Mary Axe, June 2010
37 Mary Axe edits, June 2010
38 Denver Post article, May 16, 1998
39 Boulder Weekly article, March 29, 2007
the design phase, it was determined that more land area was needed to accommodate the kitchen/restroom addition.

On September 18, 1995 the Council approved an amendment to the lease agreement, allowing the Trust more land area to accommodate the Teahouse and the support building and to provide a greater set back from the ditch and plaza.

In late 1994 and early 1995, construction began on the Civic Plaza (located immediately north of Teahouse site) and the 13th Street Community Plaza (immediately west of Teahouse site). The Teahouse site was sodded and stubbed-out for future water, sewer, electrical and gas connections.

In the Spring of 1996, the Teahouse Trust found a local restaurant operator to run the Teahouse and arranged a consortium of six Boulder banks to loan $1 million for construction of the Teahouse. Working pro bono, Pete Jensen of Chrisman, Bynum & Johnson drew up a sublease between a potential operator and the Trust. However, by Fall 1996 the Teahouse project hit a major roadblock when the City disclosed notification from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that the site was considered a superfund clean-up site, due to its past use as a coal gasification plant. The banks promptly withdrew the loan agreements.

Vern Seieroe and Mary Axe were at the “end of their rope.” They went to visit City Manager Tim Honey, who proposed borrowing from city funds to cover construction costs.40 In October 1996, the City Council agreed to earmark a $700,000 loan for the project from Windy Gap funds, which had resulted from the City’s 1996 sale of water rights. The City took the lead on the project and quickly hired an environmental consultant, Maxim Technologies, to complete a soils investigation of the site. A city-staffed project team was formed and included: Vern Seieroe, retained by city as project architect; Angela McCormick, project manager; Glenn Magee, general contractor and architectural project manager; Bill Hutson, construction site superintendent; Molly Winter and Ellen Cunningham, operator procurement; and, Benita Duran, public outreach.41

During the Winter of 1996, Celestial Seasonings offered to house and operate the Teahouse at its 40-acre site in Gunbarrel with construction costs borne by the Teahouse Trust. Council members entertained the idea due to concerns about potential vandalism, but ultimately decided to keep the Teahouse downtown for public enjoyment.

Finally, on March 18, 1997, the City Council formally approved an ordinance to fund construction of the Teahouse. By this time, the environmental consultant had determined that the site did not mandate clean-up under the present regulations, rather it was determined that the site would be excavated during the course of foundation work and soils properly disposed of.42

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1997-1998: Teahouse Construction

40 Mary Axe Interview, November 2008
41 Memorandum to City Council, November 19, 1996
42 Memorandum to City Council, March 18, 1997
In April 1997, the City issued a Request for Proposal and Qualifications for a Teahouse operator. Three businesses submitted proposals and on May 9, 1997, the Teahouse Advisory Committee selected Lenny and Sara Martinelli to operate the Teahouse as a restaurant and café. The Martinelli’s signed a lease agreement with the City on July 7, 1997.

On July 10, 1997 a second groundbreaking ceremony was held which drew about 200 people to the Teahouse site. On hand was Izatullo Khoshmukhamedov, former Trade Minister of Tajikistan; Leslie Durgin, Mayor of Boulder; Jim Pagliasotti, Policy Director, Office of Lt. Governor Gail Schoettler; Jane Healy, Senior Congressional Assistant, Office of Congressman David Skaggs; Mary Axe, Boulder Dushanbe Sister Cities; and, Vern Seieroe, Architect.

Workers assembled one of the ceiling coffers for the ceremony. The Denver Post reported “the teahouse, the largest gift ever presented in the United States by a former Soviet state, should be ready for tea drinkers next spring.” Ruth Correll, former Boulder Mayor, called the Teahouse “a very small dent in a very Cold War.” The Post also reported that Mayor Leslie Durgin “read a letter sent to Boulder by state Senator Dorothy Rupert, which seemed to sum up everyone’s feelings. ‘Drinking tea together is a civil peaceful activity,’ Rupert wrote, ‘Hurry! Hurry!’”

While working to finalize plans, the City identified numerous cost overruns that could put the Teahouse costs at $984,807. The plans were revised to bring the project back into budget: the support structure was redesigned to eliminate the basement and space in the kitchen area; the skylight and fountain were eliminated; the window design was modified; the color in the concrete floor eliminated; the pergola and elevated plaza were eliminated; and, the loading dock was deleted. Private funds were used to bring back the skylight and fountain. A building permit was issued on July 16, 1997 and by September 1997 the Teahouse plans were revised and finalized. On September 17, 1997 the City began clearing the site with a projected completion date of May 14, 1998.

In December 1997 (with the help of the 1994 grant money from the NEA and assistance from the US Embassy personnel in Dushanbe) three artisans came to Boulder to assist with the Teahouse

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43 Denver Post article, July 11, 1997
44 Denver Post article, July 11, 1997
45 Memorandum to City Council, April 21, 1998
construction. Master woodcarvers Manon Khaidarov and Mirpulat Mirakhmatov along with Abdoukodir (Kodir) Rakhimov, plaster carver and painter stayed in Boulder homes while assembling the Teahouse and conducting several popular workshops on their specific crafts.\footnote{\textit{The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse}, George Peknik, 2004, Hoopoe Publications} Manon and Mirpulat, along with Tajikistan’s best artisans, had carved the twelve cedar columns for the Teahouse. They stayed in Boulder for three months helping assemble the Teahouse ceiling. Rakhimov, a well-known painter and master plaster carver, brought the abstract expressionists paintings with him to Boulder. For three months, he worked in a Boulder studio making eight plaster carvings, known as “ganch-kori.” Three of the panels “frame his oil paintings, providing a contrast of old and new, as the latter are considered modern art.”\footnote{\textit{Boulder Planet} article, February 4, 1998} In February 1998, Victor Zabolotnikov, who had created the eight colorful, ceramic panels for the building’s exterior, arrived from Dushanbe to reassemble the dozens of segments and apply them to the exterior walls.

The craftsmen arrived with only blue pin-stripe suits in their luggage and the City outfitted them with insulated hats, coats and pants in preparation for the two months of construction during the cold winter.\footnote{\textit{Boulder Planet} article, December 1997.}

In Tajikistan, it had taken five woodworkers two years to create the Teahouse and seven workers two years to paint it. During his visit to Boulder, Mirpulat Mirakhmatov stated “since it was for America, we went all the way. It took two years from beginning to end.”\footnote{\textit{Boulder Planet} article, December 1997.} City workers, contract laborers and Tajikistan artisans constructed the Teahouse in a little over ten months. As fate would have it, one of the City’s construction crewmembers, Jamshid Drakhti (born in Tehran but residing in Gold Hill, Colorado) was fluent in Farsi and able to communicate easily with the Tajik artists in their native tongue as the Tajik language is a dialect of Persian. “Jamshid was like a son to the men and as much of the construction occurred during Ramadan, Manon and Miruplat were fasting. Jamshid’s partner brought food and a samovar for tea to the site every evening for them to break their fast at sunset.”\footnote{Mary Axe, June 2010}

Sadly, Mayor Maksud Ikramov, who originally conceived of the unusual gift for the sister city and the Teahouse’s original architect, Lado Shanidze, both died before the project was completed.
Fig. 9 Manon Khaidarov and Mirpalat Mirakhmatov, 1997

Fig. 10 Teahouse wood columns during assembly, 1997

Fig. 11 Ceiling Coffers Under Construction, 1997

Fig. 12, Abdoukodir Rakhimov, plaster carver, admiring carved column
Dedication of the Teahouse

On May 15, 1998 a Dedication and Opening Ceremony celebrated the completed Teahouse. The Teahouse opened for business and public enjoyment on the following day.

Special guests at the ceremony included: Leopold Guggenberg, former mayor of Klagenfurt, Austria and his wife; Tajikistan’s Ambassador to the United Nations, Rashid Alimov; United States Representative, David Skaggs, D-Colorado; Tajik artisans Mirpulat Mirakhmatov, Manon Khaidarov (who returned for the opening ceremony thanks to the generosity of the Boulder Daily Camera who purchased their airline tickets) and Kodir Rakhimov; and, Boulder Mayor Bob Greenlee.51

Prior to the opening, the Boulder Daily Camera Editor stated, “Next Friday, the teahouse – the largest gift ever given to an American city by the former Soviet Union – will open its doors for a grand tea party. We tip our hats to the many people who were responsible for making the teahouse a reality. Heading the list is Mary Axe, who never gave up the fight to get the teahouse pieced together and opened as a Boulder landmark.”52

Fig.13 Opening Ceremony (left to right)
Leopold Guggenberger, Manon Khaidarov, Rashid Alimov, Mirpulat Mirakhmatov

Fig.14 Opening Ceremony, Mary Axe

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51 Boulder Daily Camera Editorial, May 1998
52 Boulder Daily Camera Editorial, May 1998
Fig. 15 Jamshid Drakhit (far rear), Miruplat Mirakhmatov, Victor Zabolotnikov, Vern Seieroe, Manon Khaidarov
Exact date unknown (sometime after opening)
ARCHITECTURE

Central Asian Architectural History

Many groups and societies influenced the area of Tajikistan. For more than 2500 years the Persians, considered by many Tajiks to be their ancestors, influenced Tajik language, art and architecture.
Throughout history Tajikistan was the cross roads of many cultures. Alexander the Greek conquered the region in early 327/8 BC leaving Greek influences on Central Asia, and for twelve hundred years traders and explorers like Marco Polo traveled along China’s Silk Road (200BC-1400AD) interacting with the populations along the route bringing Eastern ideas and artistic influences to the area.

In the eighth century AD, Arabs conquered Central Asia, which today includes Tajikistan. They brought Islam to the Persians, including the artistic emphasis on geometric and natural forms and prohibiting the representation of the human form.

Continuing through the end of the sixteenth century, various other groups including Turks, Mongols, Uzbeks, and Kazakhs ruled the area that is Tajikistan today. In the more recent past, from the mid-nineteenth century on, the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union, controlled the region. During the Soviet Period, Tajikistan was called the Tajik Republic of the USSR.

In September 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan became an independent republic. A civil war followed (1992 to 1997) ending with a power sharing agreement by various political factions.

The tradition of taking tea, resting and exchanging information and news has a very long history, going back to the caravanserai that were located about a days journey apart along the Silk Road. This route linked China to the Mediterranean, from Xian, China, through Central Asia to Palmyra, Syria, finally ending at Antioch, Syria, and Tyre, Lebanon. The caravanserai provided traders and travelers with a safe and hospitable place to break their journey and feed and rest themselves and their animals. They were usually a square or rectangle shaped collection of buildings and often grew to be towns or cities.

Caravanserai are discussed as early as the 5th Century BC by Herodotus, the world’s first historian, in “The History:”

“Now the true account of the road in question is the following: Royal stations exist along its whole length, and excellent caravanserais; and throughout, it traverses an inhabited tract, and is free from danger.”

And they are romantically described in the Rubiyat of Omar Khayyam:

“Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way”

The ancient cities of Bukhara and Samarkand, although now part of Uzbekistan, were originally caravanserai stops along the Silk Route which became very large and important cities. They were and still are inhabited by many people who are ethnically Tajik, although they are located about 200km northwest of Dushanbe.

Early buildings found in those cities influenced the massing, materials and design elements found in Central Asian architecture. The pure square and/or rectilinear forms with domes and vertical elements of towers, columns as well as the decorated surfaces, abstract geometric patterns, arched entries, and corbelled friezes found in the early buildings as seen below continue to be architectural features today and are seen in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.

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53 *The History*, Herodotus, 450 B.C.

54 *The Rubiyat of Omar Khayyam*, Edward FitzGerald, 1859, Stanza17
Tan bricks similar in color to those seen above were chosen for the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse enclosure design.

The monochrome colors of mud-brick structures of the tenth century, seen in the Bukhara Mausoleum above, continued for several centuries until small amounts of turquoise color, glazes based on copper oxide, began to be tentatively added to buildings in the twelfth century, as seen in the Kalan Minaret above. Experimentation with greater amounts of applied color continued with the introduction of glazed bricks and tiles and polychrome decoration used more often by the end of the twelfth century.

In the early thirteenth century after the Mongols invaded the region from the east, architectural innovation slowed down until the second half of the fourteenth century when buildings began to be decorated with bright colors and intricate patterns.

Flat blue tiled walls like those above inspired the exterior tiled panels of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.

As a result of an extensive building program during the reign of Timur (1370-1405), Samarkand became a very beautiful city. Historic records indicate that in 1404, one hundred and fifty thousand skilled laborers and craftsmen from all over the Islamic world were at work in Samarkand. Historic colored tile work still embellishes present day buildings throughout Central Asia.55

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse has imagery found in Persian (Islamic) palaces, mausoleums, mosques and madrasas. The decorated surfaces included geometric forms, flowers and other natural forms.

55 UZBEKISTAN, Heirs to the Silk Road, Johannes Kalter and Margareta Pavaloi, Thames and Hudson, 1997, p.84-85
Traditionally, tea was served to male friends and associates at home or in the open air. Often teahouses were open structures that had a primary commercial function, but also functioned as social and sometimes political centers. Business was done in teahouses, marriages were arranged and community problems were solved. Teahouses were the community centers of the time.

**Contemporary Teahouses**

Teahouses in Tajikistan and Central Asia today are meeting places for all, young and old and women and men. They continue to have a commercial and community function, as well as a social component.

Incorporating the Persian aesthetic tradition, contemporary teahouses are usually beautifully crafted structures that showcase the artistic talents of local artisans.
Water and gardens, representing Paradise, are traditional elements of Central Asian design and are often integral components of the building and its site. Tajik teahouses can be grand places that host weddings and parties or be simpler places for the average person. They can be located along a river or be covered spaces that open to gardens.

The Rohat and Sa’odat teahouses in Dushanbe and the Isfara Teahouse in northern Tajikistan are all excellent examples of traditional teahouse design.

**Rohat Teahouse, Dushanbe:** Built 1959, Soviet Period. Rohat means “comfort” or “relaxation.” Part of the Rohat Teahouse was an historic teahouse that was incorporated into the Soviet design.
Women are shown in the photo above on the second level of this Soviet style teahouse, which is decorated with brightly painted columns, ceiling coffers and what appears to be a decorative pastel tile panel on the rear wall.

Men in warm coats and fur hats drinking tea in the lower level of the teahouse.
During the Soviet period, the scale of the open building was designed to be monumental and impressive.

The historic portion of the teahouse is decorated with carved wooden columns and painted ceiling coffers as seen at the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.
Sa'odat Teahouse, Dushanbe: Sa'odat means “happiness.” The Sa’odat Teahouse has the same large scale as the Rohat Teahouse with a divided stair reaching the upper level. Traditional Tajik design elements of the Sa’odat Teahouse include plasterwork, brightly painted columns and an intricately carved wooden coffered ceiling.
Looking up at the brightly colored painted coffers and beams that are similar to those of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. The columns here are brightly colored whereas the columns in Boulder are carved and not painted.

Typical decorative elements, plasterwork, fountain, colorful wooden tables and stools, are also found in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.

Isfara Teahouse, Isfara, Tajikistan: Isfara is located in northeastern part of Tajikistan, close to the
border with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Some of the same workmen who built the Boulder-Dushanbe Tea house also worked on the Isfara Teahouse, as evidenced by the many colorful painted decorations, carved cornices, coffered ceiling and slender columns as seen in Boulder.

Patrons can be seen sitting in the shade of the overhanging roofed area drinking tea while the street below is busy with cars, people walking and a cart. Numerous elements, such as tiled walls, ceiling coffers, and slender columns, are seen at this teahouse and the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.
Tajik Teahouses in Europe

**Berlin Teahouse in Palais am Festungsgraben, Berlin, Germany (Tadshikische Teestub):** During the Soviet period, Tajikistan sent a display of a teahouse to the 1974 Leipzig trade fair. It was presented as a gift from the Tajik Republic of the USSR to the German Democratic Republic.

It was later moved and installed as an exhibit in the Palais am Festungsgraben in Berlin, which during the Soviet period, served as the House of Culture. Tea and light refreshments can still be enjoyed there today as they were in the days before the Berlin Wall came down.

![Fig. 37 Interior of Tajik Teahouse in Berlin](www.berlin-hidden-places.de)

*Typical Tajik elements from a 1970s exhibit are featured here in this restaurant, located in part of a palace. Carved slender wooden columns and ceiling beams and low tables with cushions for seating were installed in this area. The same items that are found here in Berlin are also found in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse and still found in new Tajik teahouses today.*
Klagenfurt Teahouse, Klagenfurt, Austria (Tadshikische Teestub): The same Tajik artists and artisans who built the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse originally built this teahouse for an international exhibit in Poland. Afterward, it went to Algiers and then it came back to Dushanbe around 1988. After restoration work, it was sent to Klagenfurt, Austria, one of Dushanbe’s Sister Cities. It is located in a city park and has seasonal tea and food service.

Many elements in this teahouse are very similar to those of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, as they were built by some of the same craftsmen. The carved wooden columns have similar proportions and the exterior fascia and carved cornice are brightly painted as in Boulder. This teahouse is one-quarter the size of Boulder’s.

Architectural Description

Site
The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is located in downtown Boulder at 1770 13th Street. The site of the Teahouse is part of the larger Civic Center site that covers Lots 1-3 and 7-12 in Block 14, Boulder Original Townsite, 1868.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is centrally located in downtown Boulder, with the Pearl Street Mall, Central Park, Farmers Market, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art and the Boulder High School all nearby.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is located between two major east-west roads, Canyon Boulevard to the north and Arapahoe Avenue to the south. To the west is Thirteenth Street, a one-way street going from south to north. Beyond parking lots to the east is Fourteenth Street, a two-way street. The Teahouse is immediately bordered on the south by the Boulder and White Rock/Left Hand Ditch.

Boulder civic and community facilities surround the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. Across the irrigation ditch to the south is the Teahouse Bike Path, part of the Boulder Creek Path system, and just beyond the ditch and bike path to the south is the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMOCA). The City of Boulder’s Atrium Building and Civic Plaza, site of the seasonal Boulder Farmers Market, are located immediately to the north of the Teahouse. A public parking lot is located to the east. Central Park is located immediately to the west across the 13th Street Community Plaza.
Fig. 40 Aerial View of Teahouse and Surrounding Area (north is up on image) Google Earth

The Teahouse is surrounded by community activities in Central Park and the Civic Plaza, which holds Farmers Markets twice per week. The Atrium Building to the north houses City of Boulder offices and to the south is the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art. The line of trees between the Teahouse and the Museum shows the path of the irrigation ditch.

The following Site Plan Study shows the building footprint of the Teahouse and the gentle entry ramp that comes up from Thirteenth Street on the west terminating at a planter in front of the entry door. Steps lead to lower dining areas covered with trellises on the north and south sides of the entry ramp. Roses and other plantings shield the dining areas from the sidewalk.

Handicapped access to the north dining area is directly taken from Civic Plaza. Access to the south dining area is via a ramp from the beginning of the entry ramp turning south along the fence to the ditch and then east along the fence bordering the irrigation ditch. As the Site Plan Study drawing is a preliminary drawing, the handicapped accessible ramp to the south dining area is not shown.
Roses shield the two trellised, lower outside dining areas from the main central access to the Teahouse. An existing disabled access ramp starts at the beginning of the sidewalk ramp near 13th Street and turns south where plantings are shown on the drawing. The ramp is not shown on this drawing. A portion of the Bike Path is sketched in on the lower left hand corner of the drawing. The remainder of the bike path that was built is not shown on this drawing.
Trellises and roses line the gently sloping entry ramp. Beyond the gate a disabled access ramp leads to the south dining area along the front fence and continues east along the fence bordering the ditch.

Steps lead up to the entry beyond the fence and the trellised covered north dining area.
Steps lead up to the entry beyond the Bike Path Bridge over the ditch and the ramp to the trellised covered south dining area.

Beyond the Bike Path and bridge over the ditch a sidewalk leads back toward the west to the south dining area.
Ramps provide secondary disabled access to the building. Designated parking is nearby in the east lot.

Deliveries, trash removal and storage occur at the rear of the addition. Disabled parking is located in the lot to the right.
Overall Building Description

Boulder architect Vern Seieroe, AIA, modified the original open Tajik design to enclose the building from the weather and to ensure that it would conform to required safety and building codes and structural and handicapped requirements. In addition, he designed the new rear addition and the required disability access to and throughout the building.

There are two parts of the building, the “Teahouse” portion which houses the public restaurant, and a more utilitarian addition on the east side of the building which contains a commercial kitchen, office space, disabled accessible public restrooms, a hallway leading to a second entrance to the building and a disabled access ramp on the north side of the building. There is also a ramp for restaurant deliveries on the south side of the building. An indented 7'-4” ‘link’ joins the two parts of the building.

The dimensions of the Teahouse are 12m x 15m (approximately 40’x 50’). The overall dimensions of the irregularly shaped addition are 32’x 36’. The entire building with its east addition has total dimensions of approximately 52’- 6” wide along 13th Street x 81’-4” deep.

Floor Plan

Fig.49 Construction Drawing A110, First Level Floor Plan, Vern Seieroe, AIA, Architect (north is up on drawing)

This floor plan of the Teahouse with 14 columns and 8 wall panels (decorative tile on the exterior and carved plaster on the interior) added windows and link to new addition with kitchen, office and rest rooms.

The main “Teahouse” portion of the building has large extending shallow bay wood windows on three sides of the building. The north and south bay windows each enclose a central interior hand-carved wood column. The west bay window incorporates the main entrance and encloses an interior column on each side of the door. Decorative exterior tile panels, framed with beige bricks, flank the bay windows. At each corner of the Teahouse two wood windows meet at a right angle. All windows are triple hung, with operable top and bottom sashes. Except for the eight tile panels that are backed with concrete block, the skin of the building is glass.

The east addition to the building was designed to be subservient to the exuberantly decorated Teahouse. It has simple forms and detailing. Beige colored stucco covers the wood frame walls.
Roof Plan
From the exterior, the Teahouse roof appears to be hipped, but, in fact, it conceals a large skylight that is centered over the interior space above the interior pool with statues. The roof of the addition is flat with the massing being lessened by parapets extending along the plane of the wall of the link.

Looking down on the Teahouse, the hipped roof features a central rectangular skylight that illuminates the restaurant. The addition has a flat roof.
**Building Elevations**

Because of budgetary concerns, changes were made to the design of the Teahouse as it was being constructed. These changes are not shown on the following original construction drawings, and there are no drawings showing what was actually built, or “As Built Drawings.” Because of public safety issues relating to the flood plain, the entire building was raised from Thirteenth Street on the West, and from both the ditch on the South and the Civic Plaza on the North.

**West Elevation:**
On the west side of the building, the main entry is recessed into a large bay window. The entry is composed of a pair of large single pane, glass-paneled doors. The bay window is composed of two west-facing windows and two angled windows. Two decorative tile panels flank the bay window. Windows meet to form the northwest and southwest corners of the Teahouse.

The deep cornice is brightly painted and there is exterior lighting that is not shown on the drawing.

Steps lead to the lower dining areas on the north (left) and south (right). The south dining area is lower than the north one and borders the irrigation ditch.

**North Elevation:**
On the north side of the building, tile panels flank a large shallow bay window composed of four north facing windows and two angled windows. In the interior of the building, there is a carved wood column that is centered in the bay. Windows meet to form the northwest and southwest corners of the Teahouse. Two decorative tile panels flank the bay window.

The deep cornice is brightly painted and there is exterior lighting that is not shown on the drawing.

Steps and a handicapped ramp lead to a service door in the addition. The finished building does not match this drawing: the addition is finished with stucco not concrete blocks as shown and the fence was built in a different design.

**East Elevation:**
On the east side of the building, an indented “link” joins the two parts of the building opposite of where
there is the large bay window and the main entry on the west side. Two decorative tile panels flank the “link” (only partially visible on the drawing). Windows meet to form the northeast and southeast corners of the Teahouse.

The deep cornice is brightly painted and there is exterior lighting that is not shown on the drawing.

Steps and delivery ramp exist on the south side of the building (not seen on the drawing). The disabled ramp on the northeast corner of the addition gives access to the building. An enclosed space to conceal trash dumpsters is not seen on the drawing.

South Elevation:
On the south side of the building, tile panels flank a large shallow bay window composed of four south facing windows and two angled windows. In the interior of the building, there is a carved wood column that is centered in the bay. Windows meet to form the southwest and southeast corners of the Teahouse. Two decorative tile panels flank the bay window.

The deep cornice is brightly painted and there is exterior lighting that is not shown on the drawing.

Steps and a delivery ramp (not shown on the drawing) lead to a service door in the addition. The finished building does not match this drawing: the addition is finished with stucco not concrete blocks as shown.
Exterior Description

The “Teahouse” portion of the building is designed in a Persian/Tajik style and features traditional decorative exterior elements of tile panels and intricately carved and painted wood trim.

Faïence Tile Panels

The panels on the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse “were created using the same technique used to make the walls of many of the great mosques of the Middle East. Faïence was a Persian invention ‘which is one of the most brilliant types of architectural decoration ever used, and one of the most difficult and delicate of all ceramic arts.’” It has been made in the same manner since the 1400s. Craftsmen first fire tiles in different colors and cut them in shapes to form the desired panel. “The technique is difficult, extremely labor intensive, and therefore expensive, but creates faïence of exceptional quality and brilliance.”

Victor Zablotnikov, a Tajik artist, worked in Dushanbe to create the eight colorful exterior ceramic panels that embellish the Boulder Teahouse today. Each panel was made by hand, then cut and fired. The cut tiles were then carefully packed into crates, shipped to Boulder, and finally installed on the building. Each panel is based on the “Tree of Life” motif that is found throughout the Middle East and signifies Eternity.

“Each of the 66’x13’ panels is organized around one of the most important designs in Islamic art, the prayer arch, or *mirab*, framing classic Persian-Tajik vegetal and animal motifs. Because the *mirab* is the focal point in the mosque and in the ritual of prayer one must face it during prostration, a great deal of

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attention has been devoted to its decoration in most periods throughout the Islamic world. Arabesques and other vegetal motifs are also found in the designs of the panels.” 57

The ewer, ibrik, a pitcher that is used for ritual purifications in Islam and also by tile makers is seen on the tile panels. “It’s for washing hands. It’s like a symbol of ceramicists… My professor, Alnis Lipan and I thought it would be the symbol of the ceramicists who worked on the Boulder Teahouse project… There is an ‘L’ for Lipan in some of the ewers on the Choihonas’s ceramic panels. My favorite ceramic panels are the ones with the pomegranates and grapes.. the butterflies came out white and I don’t know why. I love the center of the panel of the pomegranates and I love the one with the grapes and the white butterflies.” 58

**West Elevation - Tile Panels**
The main front entry of the building faces west and is flanked by two large tile panels. Butterflies, grapes and grape leaves are the main design elements of the panels.

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West Side/North Panel
The ewer or *ibrik* is located at the top of the panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by ceramicists after working. Two pink butterflies with two pink flowers are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. A central vertical “tree of life” floral element with a green background and white intertwined arabesques and vines with pink grapes on their stems is set into a *mirab* shaped arch with additional pink and white flowers. The vines and grapes grow up from a large central grape leaf and signify the recurring theme of the “tree of life” that is seen throughout the Teahouse. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two bunches of pink grapes set in a blue eight-petal flower that form the base for the panel.

*Bunches of grapes hang from vines coming up from a leaf and bulb, signifying the continuation of life. Each bunch of grape is slightly different from the others.*
West Side/South Panel

The ewer or *ibrik* is located at the top of the panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by ceramicists after working. Two yellow and white butterflies with two pink bunches of grapes are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. Two additional bunches of grapes are in the lower green surround. A central vertical “tree of life” element with a green background and white intertwined arabesques and vines with pink grapes on their stems is set into a *mirab* shaped arch with additional, pink and white flowers. The vines and grapes grow up from a large central grape leaf. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two bunches of pink grapes set in a blue eight-petal flower that form the base for the panel.

The butterflies in this panel are yellow and white as compared to the pink ones on the north panel, the grapes are nearer them, and the bulb and leaf are different, also.
North Elevation – Tile Panels
On the north side of the building, two tile panels flank a large bay window. The east panel has gladiolas and butterflies; the west panel has eremurus (foxtail lilies), partridges and rosettes.

Fig. 58 North Side of Building with bay window flanked by decorative tile panels. Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo, 2010

With the light shining from the west, it is possible to see through the northwest corner of the building where a raised topchan is located in the interior.
The ewer or *ibrik* is located at the top of the panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by ceramicists after working. Two pink and yellow butterflies with one yellow and two pink flowers are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. A central vertical “tree of life” element of white intertwined arabesques composed of gladiolas on their stems is set into a *mirab* shaped arch with additional yellow, pink and white flowers. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two pink gladiolas set in a blue eight-petal flower that form a base for the panel. This panel is similar to the east panel on the south side.

*Fig. 59 East Panel of North Side*

*Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo 2010*

*Bright yellow marigold looking flowers are interspersed in the panel with pink foxgloves.*

**North Side/West Panel**
The ewer or *ibrik* is located at the top of the panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by ceramicists after working. Two colorful white, pink and yellow partridges with yellow and pink flowers are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. A central vertical “tree of life” element of white intertwined heart shaped arabesques and pink foxtail lilies on their stems is set into a *mirab* shaped arch with additional yellow and pink flowers. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two pink foxgloves set in a blue eight-petal flower, that form the base for the panel. This panel is similar to the west panel on the south side.

![Image of the panel](image-url)

*Fig. 60 West Panel of North Side*  
*Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo 2010*

*Bright yellow is concentrated at the top of this panel in a few flowers and in the pink, white and yellow partridges.*

**South Elevation – Tile Panels**

On the south side of the building, two tile panels flank a large bay window. The west panel has eremurus
(foxtail lilies), partridges and rosettes; the east panel has gladiolas and butterflies.

Because the site slopes toward the irrigation ditch, the base or plinth of the south wall is much higher and more prominent here than at the north side.

South Side/West Panel
The ewer or ibrik is located at the top of the panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by
ceramicists after working. Two colorful white, pink and yellow partridges with yellow flowers are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. A central vertical ‘tree of life’ element of white intertwined heart shaped arabesques composed of pink foxtail lilies on their stems is set into a mirab shaped arch with additional yellow and pink flowers. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two pink foxgloves set in a blue eight-petal flower, that form the base for the panel. This panel is similar to the north side, west panel.

The partridges on this panel are fatter and more monochromatic than the corresponding birds on the north side.
**South Side/East Panel**
The ewer or *ibrik* is located at the top of the panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by ceramicists after working. Two pink, yellow and white butterflies with two pink and white flowers are in the upper corners of the green background panel. A central vertical “tree of life” element of white intertwined arabesques composed of gladiolas on their stems is set into a *mirab* shaped arch with additional yellow, pink and white flowers. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two pink gladiolas set in a blue eight-petal flower that form a base for the panel. This panel is similar to the north side, east panel.

**East Elevation – Tile Panels**
On the east side of the building, the indented link between the “Teahouse” and the addition separates the
two tile panels, and therefore cannot be seen together at one time. Both east panels have phoenix-like birds in the designs and an ewer or *ibrik* is located at the top of each panel. It is used for washing before eating and also by ceramicists after working. Both panels also have a central vertical “tree of life” vase element set into a *mirab* shaped arch.

**East Side/North Panel**
Two colorful red, pink and yellow phoenix-like birds with yellow flowers and white vines are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. A white vase displays a bouquet of yellow flowers with a central purple flower and twelve pomegranates on their stems. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with pink and white daisies set in a blue eight-petal flower, forming the base of the panel.

**East Side/South Panel**
Two colorful yellow and rust phoenix-like birds with yellow zinnia flowers and white vines are in the upper corners of the green surrounding background panel. A white vase displaying a bouquet of yellow and red flowers and twelve pink roses on their stems is set into a *mirab* shaped arch. Below the main panel are three green background square tile areas, with two white and one pink daisies set in a blue eight-petal flower, forming the base of the panel.

**Carved and Painted Wood Cornice and Fascia**
The Isfara Teahouse, constructed in 1992, has cornices, fascias, columns, ceiling coffers, and balusters that are typical to historical and contemporary Central Asian teahouses. These features have been part of buildings for hundreds of years. As a cultural expression they have been used over and over again.
through time. New buildings are inspired by tradition, but they are not copies.

Tajik wood carvers, joiners, and painters still use the same techniques of their fathers and grandfathers, and the same basic images. Buildings have always been built a certain way that feels appropriate to the artisans and to the community. Styles may evolve over time, but the innovations are not abrupt. These traditional buildings feel comfortable and eternal to the people who use them.

The wood trim of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is much like cornices and fascias that are found on many Central Asian buildings today, including as an example, the Isfara Teahouse. The brilliantly colored, hand-carved cornice, fascia and ceiling beams and coffers, as well as the naturally finished columns and balusters of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse are original and new and at the same time founded in very old traditions.

The following two ceiling coffers of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse show similar bright colors and geometric patterns that are combined in different ways, compared to the coffer of the Isfara Teahouse, above. By changing the basic colors or design slightly, the design elements are unique to each building.
This coffer with four divisions is simpler than its corresponding coffer in Isfara that has five. Colors of this coffer feature more pink than the Isfara ceiling coffers which have more green and red. (Fig. 66)

This coffer, with added angled decorative pieces, is a more elaborate design than what is found in Isfara.

The cornice and fascia of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse show similar bright colors and geometric
patterns. Comparing them to the Isfara details we see the same colors used in different patterns.

Brackets supporting the cornice have different but similar patterns and colors that create a visually intriguing design.

Bright colors and flower and geometric patterns are found on the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. The harmonious scale and intricacy of the decoration contribute to the restful feeling and appeal of the building.
The naturally finished wood elements, columns and balustrade of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse are similar to those found at the Isfara Teahouse (see Fig. 66). At the same time, each column is completely unique.
**Interior Description**

Although there is no actual prohibition in the Koran against depicting human or animal forms, from the 8th century on the commandment against graven images was taken to mean that man should not create figural art. It was believed that because God, or Allah, had created the world, man and animals, it was forbidden to attempt to match God by creating artistic figural images. It was also believed that God is the only one who can create something perfect, and in order not to offend God, there should always be a small mistake made deliberately by the artist in decorative work. These design ideas persist to the present and are seen in rugs, pottery, wall hangings, paintings and building design.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse was designed and built in a non-sectarian country, at the end of the Soviet Period, by artists and craftspeople who were diverse in their religious ideologies or lack of them.

Images of flowers or foliage and simplified repeating forms as well as stylized calligraphy are used as decorative elements in the design of the wood, plaster and tile features of the Teahouse.

**Coffered Ceiling**

The intricate coffered ceiling of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is much like ceilings found in Tajik teahouses today. The Isfara and Khujand Teahouses have features that are similar to those in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. In fact, some of the same workmen who built the Khujand ceiling also worked on the Boulder ceiling.

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*Fig. 72 Khujand Teahouse Ceiling, Roger Kovacs Photo, myopera.com*  
Like the Isfara ceiling, the Khujand Teahouse ceiling has elements that were modified in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, such as the color scheme and the octagonal domed areas of the coffers. This color scheme is more pastel than Boulder’s, which features more primary colors and appears to be brighter. In the Boulder ceiling, there are three coffers with octagonal domes.
The ceiling of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is composed of fourteen beautiful wooden ceiling coffers, and each one is a unique design. All the carving was done by hand. No electric power tools were used in the construction of the ceiling. The brilliant colored trim was painted by hand. Three coffers have an octagonal dome element (#3, #8, #10). They are not seen in this drawing as they are not structural but are purely ornamental.

Coffer photos correspond to the above plan. North is up on both drawing and photo layout.
Uniquely designed, carved and painted coffers combine to make a stunning focus for the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.
Wood Columns
Throughout the long history of Central Asia, wood columns, while serving a structural function, have often been ornamental features of the indigenous architecture. Intricately carved slender columns, often from a single tree, are found in mosques and reach up towards the heavens, resembling a grove of trees.

These very tall and slender monolith columns were carved from one perfect tree, at a time when there were more trees in the Tajikistan area. In the late 1980s, when trees for the columns of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse were procured, it was necessary to go to the Lake Baikal region in the USSR to find appropriate trees.

Design features similar to those found on historic Tajik columns are seen in the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse’s fourteen hand-carved cedar columns. Because no cedar trees remained in Tajikistan in
In the 1980s, an appeal was made to Moscow and a military “emergency” was declared and the trees were brought from Lake Baikal in Siberia to be carved into columns.\footnote{The Meaning of the Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse, George Peknik, 2004, Hoopoe Publications, pg. 14.}

Intricately hand-carved columns divide the space of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse for tables and the fountain area.

Slender columns support the interior fascia and cornice surrounding the skylight opening.

The photos below show the delicate, hand-carved details of the column in the south bay window, including a mother bird feeding her baby. A similar detail of a Peacock is found in the north window.
A mother bird feeds her baby at the top of this column with vertical fluting leading to circles, ovals and leaf-like forms.

Carving these lovely, delicate details was done entirely by hand and without the aid of modern computer technology.
Ganch-Kori Plaster Panels

“The Dushanbe teahouse will hold more than 2,000 years of history when the plaster carvings of Abdoukodir Rakhimov grace the walls of the gift from Boulder’s Sister City.” “What separates Rakhimov from other plaster carvers is the time he takes to carve the intricate designs… by hand”.  

In 1998 Kodir Rakhimov, a Master Tajik Carver, designed and created the Teahouse’s eight beautiful plaster panels, four of which frame his abstract expressionist paintings. First he drew a pattern of the overall design on a folded sheet of kraft paper with a pencil. When the design was complete he pierced the paper with tiny holes at about 3 centimeters apart along the lines of the design.

Molds were prepared for what was to become various panels to be joined to create the overall design composition. Wet plaster was poured into molds to a depth of about three centimeters. When the first layer was cured to a firm, but still damp condition, a second mold was placed on top of the first, and a second layer was poured to a depth of one centimeter.

Once the panel of plaster was cured to a dry, hard state and just before carving was to take place, the design was transferred to the panel. A cloth pouch, filled with powdered dry paint, was rubbed over the kraft paper and the powdered paint was forced through the holes. The resulting dots of paint marked the lines of the design. Kodir then used special wood carving knives that had been purchased in the United States to carve the outlined design into the first layer of plaster. When it was dry, the panel was polished. The designs of the panels conform in general to Islamic and Persian tradition and motifs with a modernist quality added into the creative expression.

Fig.84 Kodir Rakimov designing and preparing decorative plaster panels. (Kodir with painting at top right) Vern Seieroe Photo

Plaster panels were poured in two layers and after Kodir designed and transferred the pattern to the plaster, he carved the panels entirely by hand with wood carving knives.

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60 Boulder Planet, February 4, 1998
61 Explanation of technique of ganch-kori plaster, Vern Seieroe, AIA, 2010
Kodir Rakhimrov drew the intricate designs for all the white plaster panels in pencil on brown kraft paper. The designs were based on leaves, flowers, and other natural forms.

Closeup of drawing shows the pencil design and pin pricks. Paint was forced through holes to mark design on the plaster.

The plaster frames of the oil paintings and decorative carved plaster panels contain half hidden gazelles, lions, horses and various floral, arabesques and tree of life designs.

Southwest Corner
A plaster framed painting and an intricate plaster panel with six mihrab shaped, mirrored arches and peacocks define this serene corner of the Teahouse.

Words of wisdom are carved beneath each painting.

Honoring some of those who worked on the project.
Northwest Corner

This plaster panel has more vertically proportioned upper arches than the SW corner. Both north corners have topchans.

Honoring some of those who worked on the project.

Words of wisdom are carved beneath each painting.
Northeast Corner

Compared to the SW and NW corners that have mirrored arches, this corner dining area seems more restrained or formal.

Words of wisdom are carved beneath each painting. Kodir’s master carving created an intricate design that invites contemplative viewing.
Southeast Corner

This is the busiest corner of the Teahouse with all the activities of the bar.

Upon close examination, each of the flowers is slightly different. Words of wisdom are carved beneath each painting.

Because each panel and frame was uniquely designed and carved, they are very dynamic and invite careful viewing over and over.

Oil Paintings
“Rakhimov says that his abstract painting represents ‘Mother Earth’.”

Kodir Rakhimov painted four abstract expressionist paintings of scenes of nature, with motifs of fish, fruit, and the sea. It was his intension, as well as that of Lado Shanidze, to combine traditional Tajik teahouse art forms with modern art.

When Kodir arrived in Boulder, Colorado in January 1998, he brought four oil paintings with him and presented the expressionistic paintings to the Sister Cities Committee and Vern Seieroe for their input. At the same time, he also presented potential designs for more traditional suzani, decorative colorful embroidered cloth panels, that alternatively could have been placed within the carved ganche-kori plaster panels. After much discussion, it was decided to use the expressionist paintings because Lado Shanidze’s overall design intent for the Teahouse was to create a gift that blended both the traditional and modern into one architecture.

Kodir’s paintings are “executed in an international style, rather than in a purely Tajik tradition. However, Kodir draws from several Tajik and Middle Eastern traditions in both his oil paintings and his carved plaster panels…Just as the Teahouse has allowed us to enter into the culture of a distant and sometimes exotic culture through the mystery and power of architecture, Kodir’s painting and carved plaster panels afford us a unique opportunity to explore Eastern culture through color, line, symbolism and even literature and poetry.”

The paintings hang on the north and south walls, on the inside wall of the exterior tile panels.

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62 Boulder Daily Camera, January 14, 1998

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Fig. 101 Kodir Rakhimov painting, looking at the South wall, the East painting  
Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo

This painting of purples with bright oranges and some pink, has abstract images of fish and the sea.
This painting, with green and bright splashes of yellows, has abstract images of the fish and the sea.
This painting, with beautiful warm colors shades, has abstract images of the sea.
This painting, with beautiful pinks and green shades, has a watermelon as well as other abstract images.
Central Pool and Seven Beauties Sculptures

Unlike pools in traditional Central Asian teahouses, Boulder’s is not recessed into the floor for safety reasons. The pool is a raised hexagon with colorful tiles recessed in the corners. The tiles were designed and made in Boulder by Victor Zaboltikov who also designed and made the exterior tile panels.

Milan Milashevich created the “Seven Beauties” bronze sculpture, a composition of seven individual statues of beautiful young women playfully drawing water at a gurgling pool. The sculpture is based on a Persian poem, “Haft Paykar,” written by Nazami Ganjavi, a native of Azerbaijan, in 1197AD.
The poem tells of seven princesses from the seven parts of the known world at that time that were brought to be brides of the pre-Islamic ruler, Bahram Gur. Each princess told Bahram Gur a story of love, morality, virtue or justice, which had lessons for life:

“The Seven Beauties Tales
The tales are modern translations, and are not culturally Islamic. The following are summaries of the seven tales spun by the princesses….

The Indian Beauty
An Indian king hears of a town in China where everyone wears black. He visits it and meets the beautiful queen who withholds her love from him. The King returns to his land and then forevermore wears black as a symbol of his sadness due to unrequited love.

The Greek Beauty
A king, whose horoscope predicts danger in marriage, discards his concubines after one night. But the devoted service of one causes him to fall in love with her. She rejects him until he convinces her of his honesty and truthfulness. They marry.

The Turkish Beauty
A man falls in love with a woman whose veil is briefly lifted by the wind. Unbeknownst to him, she is the wife of an acquaintance, who soon dies. Impressed by his virtue when he brings her husband’s belongings to her, she agrees to marry him.

The Russian Beauty
A beautiful and graceful artist feels no man is worthy of her. She shuts herself up in a fortress and declares that only he who finds a way to her will win her. A prince, after discovering the way, answers a set of riddles and wins her love.

The Moroccan Beauty
Several people promise to guide an Egyptian boy, who is lost in a demon-filled desert, to safety, but don’t actually do it. Finally, he appeals to God, who does guide him to safety. The boy then only wears turquoise robes of mourning in renunciation of the world.

The Chinese Beauty
Good, traveling in the desert is robbed and blinded by his companion, Bad. The daughter of a Kurdish chieftain finds and cures him. They marry and Good then becomes king and pardons Bad, who is killed by a less-forgiving King of the Kurds.

The Central Asian Beauty
A young man hears music in a garden. He finds a group of maidens feasting and falls in love with one of them. His passion is returned, but their attempt at an affair is thwarted, so he decides to ask her to marry him. All ends well.”

“No one has been able to determine which of the seven beauties is which. This is one of the many mysteries of the Teahouse!”

The following photos of the seven princesses start with the photo of the center statue. The other photos were taken moving clockwise around the fountain from the front door of the Teahouse.

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This beautiful princess in the central position under the skylight, is balancing a vessel of water on her head.
Fig. 109 (Number 2) Beauty
Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo
Princess carrying a jug of water and twirling her skirt.

Fig. 110 (Number 3) Beauty
Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo
Princess raising a vessel of water in her right hand.
The only princess who is not carrying water, with arms at her side.

Princess with her right arm raised, carrying a vessel in her left.
Fig. 113 (Number 6) Beauty
Princess balancing vessel on her head, graceful extended arms.

Fig. 114 (Number 7) Beauty
Princess holding vessel on shoulder.
Original Teahouse Design and Construction

Design of the Teahouse in Tajikistan

During the Soviet Period, architects, artists, sculptors, and trained artisans such as wood carvers were under the umbrella of the Artists Fund which guaranteed them work and a living wage, and ensured that they had the materials needed for their work and a studio in which to work and sometimes live. Many architects and artists were educated in Moscow or Leningrad during this time.

In 1988, Lado Shanidze, a Georgian born and Moscow trained architect, designed the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse in Dushanbe and produced beautiful hand drawn and colored plans. In 1989, the finished drawings were formally presented to the Mayor of Dushanbe and a delegation of Boulder visitors in Dushanbe.

![Fig.115 Tajik Architect Lado Shanidze, Designer of the Boulder Teahouse](Mary Axe Photo)

1989 presentation of the drawings to dignitaries from Dushanbe and Boulder.

The Teahouse was originally designed to be a traditional raised open-air structure, with an open roof and coffered painted ceiling surrounding a central pool (*Hauz* in Tajik). The pool was to be surrounded by ten hand-carved wood columns, and one column on each side of the building with two columns flanking the central stair, for a total of fourteen columns. Each of the columns was to have a unique design featuring floral, vine and leaf motifs.

The pool was also to be surrounded by traditional seating: eight painted low tables with six stools each and four low hand-made wood tables in the corners called kats (*chorpois* in Tajik and *topchan* in Russian).

The exterior façade of the structure was to be decorated with hand-made blue ceramic faience panels. Also, there was a very small kitchen planned at the rear of the building.

Shanidze’s original hand-colored drawings with notes in Russian follow.
This beautiful drawing gives a very schematic plan for the building. Simple geometric forms and colors are very pleasing.

The floor plan shows a sunken central pool surrounded by eight hexagonal shaped tables and stools and four topchan raised dining areas in the corners. The floor is an inlaid beige stone floor divided into squares by pink stones. Octagonal shaped floor patterns of inlaid purplish stones decorate the floor of the entry and the four corners of the building.

A very small kitchen area (1) is shown on the back wall of the Teahouse opposite the entry. Seven circles signify statues (2) located in a central pool (3). Green grass and flowers surround the rectangular building which is set within a rectangular wall. Curving walls and a grand staircase (4) lead to the building. A light fixture (5) marks each corner of the surrounding wall.

This “Teahouse” was intended to fit on an unknown site at the time it was designed, and thus is a schematic drawing. Due to the many issues of a complicated site located in a flood plain, climate, building code and disabled access requirements, modifications had to be made to the original design.
This drawing reflects the vision for an open-air teahouse. The basic geometry, roof and cornice, tile panels, baluster, columns and proportion of solids and voids reflect the way the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse was actually built.

This front elevation shows an open building on a raised platform, defined by a wall with streetlights at each corner and a grand staircase leading up to the centered entry. This drawing also shows the vision for the seven princess sculptures around a central pool.
Building Section

Fig. 118 Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse: Original Building Section, Lado Shanidze, 1988
*This cross section shows the spatial relationships of an open roof, a sunken pool, a raised site, and a grand stair.*

Reflected Ceiling Plan

Fig. 119 Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse: Original Reflected Ceiling Plan, Lado Shanidze, 1988
*This drawing shows the wood structural ceiling, supported by the columns surrounding the center opening.*
Fig. 120 Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse: Original Column #1 Drawing, Lado Shanidze, 1988

Dimensions are given for carving the fancy capital, six divisions of the shaft and the column base.
A simpler design with four different areas of carving on the shaft, a smaller capital, and less decorated base.
This drawing represents a vision for a tile panel design. Four of the eight tile panels feature birds and flowers.
This drawing shows another type of bird and flower tile panel. Artistic expression resulted in other panels featuring butterflies and grapes.
After the formal 1989 presentation of his design in Dushanbe, Lado and Vern Seieroe were able to sit down together and discuss the design in detail. With the help of a translator, they tackled the various challenges that would be present in Boulder: enclosing the space against the weather, meeting required building and disabled access codes, and programmatic requirements of providing a commercial kitchen with public toilet facilities. Lado sketched out solutions to those challenges on the following drawings.

**Sketch Drawing #1**

At the top part of the drawing there is the main entry with two sets of double doors, two curving ramps for disabled access, and monumental central steps leading up to the entry.

A detail on the right of the drawing shows the side view of the projecting front entry.

The main part of the drawing shows an addition at the rear of the Teahouse that includes two toilet rooms, the kitchen area, two storage areas, and a rear second exit. There is a central axis through the whole addition. A bar area visually blocks the access to the addition. The two toilet rooms are entered directly from the dining area.

A dimension of 1.2m for the depth of the toilet rooms is noted.
A dimension of 4m for the depth of the kitchen is noted.
A dimension of 3m for the depth of the storage is noted.

The overall dimensions of the addition are 5m wide by 7.2m deep, or approximately 16’-4” by 26’-10” (the finished Teahouse measured 36’ by 40’).

The main part of the drawing also shows the concept of shallow bay windows enclosing the perimeter columns and corner windows enclosing the corner columns. The building’s main entry is noted as extending 2m from the building. At both the front and rear entries flanking walls extend a small distance beyond the doors.
Sketch Drawing #1

Fig. 124 Architect Lado Shanidze’s Sketch 1. Plan for modifications, 1989

Sketch shows modifications for entry, adding bay windows, an addition with toilets, kitchen and storage.
Sketch Drawing #2
This drawing shows an early idea for the skylight with a space frame of different colored and tinted glass panels. It also shows a front view of an extended front entry that was to have a flag of Boulder and a flag of Dushanbe. Neither the extended front entry nor this version of the skylight were actually built.

Fig. 125 Architect Lado Shanidze’s Sketch 2, Building Elevation and Section, 1989
Drawing shows skylight with multicolored glass, a projecting entry, and view of front doors
Construction in Tajikistan

For approximately two years from 1988 to 1990, forty skilled artisans, generally in specialized crews, constructed the cornice, ceiling coffers, furniture and sculpture for the Teahouse. Only hand tools were used for woodcarving and for assembling the coffers and cornice. All the painting was done by hand.

In 1988, Manon Khaidarov and Mirpulat Mirakhmadov, master Tajik woodcarvers, received permission to travel to the Lake Baikal region of Siberia to select individual cedar trees for the Teahouse columns before the construction began. As master carvers, they were free to interpret the general design. Architect Lado Shanidze met only one time with them to explain his drawings and order the work.

The painting has just been completed on the raised fascias and cornice.
After returning to Tajikistan, work began on the Teahouse in Khujand where Manon and Mirpulat completed Shanidze’s design for the cornice and coffers, creating the joinery, carving the intricate designs entirely by hand, and painting the finished product. Three crews of six to eight men worked with them on the coffers and furniture for the Teahouse in Khujand. Manon and Mirpulat and their assistants also worked in Dushanbe, carving the intricate columns. The bronze Seven Beauties sculptures were made in Khujand by Milan Milashevich.
Modifications to the Original Design

After the blueprints of the Russian Drawings had been annotated by Lado Shanidze in Tajikistan, Vern Seieroe returned to Boulder and began to modify the Tajik design for the “Teahouse” portion (2100 square feet) of the building. The building had to work in Boulder’s climate and had to comply with all local, State and Federal building, health, safety and disability codes.

In Central Asia, teahouses are often designed to be open to the weather at the sides, which are closed by heavy curtains in cold weather, and at the top where rain falls into a central reservoir or pool. (The design for this reservoir goes back to the Roman impluvium, which gathered water from the roof of a building and saved it in a cistern under the building.)

But neither open sides nor an open roof were options in Boulder with its variable weather and the building’s vulnerability to vandalism. Closing the traditionally open roof area was necessary. A large skylight was designed to bring light into the center of the space, illuminating the painted interior cornice and the Seven Beauties sculptures and fountain.

Adding Lighting
As originally designed, the building would not have had lighting that would have complied with American codes or electrical capacities.

Lighting that could show visitors the beautiful interior detailing and colors without deterring the interior was the goal. The solution was to add high intensity small lighting fixtures supported by thin copper horizontal cables. Small white cone shaped fixtures, small black spot lights, vertical supports and the horizontal cables are found in the photo below (the required sprinkler head is in the center of the coffer).
Contemporary lighting fixtures, a white cone, and black intense spot light are hung from nearly invisible thin cables.
**Adding Windows (Drawing A701)**

Wood windows were designed to enclose the sides and corners of the building. There were fixed corner windows (A1, A2, C1) and triple hung windows (A5) (C4) set in three shallow bay windows on the north and south (B4), which enclosed a single center column. In each of the north and south bay windows there were four sets of triple windows and two smaller windows at a 45 degree angle (C3).

The triple hung windows have three sashes: a fixed middle sash and an operable top and bottom sash. Allowing for the top and bottom sashes to be open at the same time accomplished several goals: it satisfied Lado’s interest in being able to view the ceiling of the Teahouse from the exterior; it created a nice connection with the outdoors and a sense of openness; and, it also provided good ventilation for the evaporative cooling system.

The west bay window (A4) included the main recessed entry with double doors, a column visible on each side of the entry, two triple hung windows and one angled window on each side of the entry.

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*Fig. 132. Construction Drawing A701, Building Section, Details Windows. Vern Scieroe, AIA, Architect. The relationship of the windows to the columns is shown in the left section through the window with light sketched column.*
Designing an Addition
The original Russian design had a little kitchen to make tea on the rear wall of the “Teahouse (Fig. 116). In Lado Shanidze’s sketch (Fig. 124) restrooms and other small rooms leading to a rear exit were envisioned, but the size of these spaces was not adequate. In order for the Teahouse to become an economically self-sustaining restaurant, sufficient space for food preparation, cleanup, and all support activities was needed.

Vern Seieroe designed a commercial kitchen with the required storage, offices, janitor’s room and public handicapped accessible restrooms and a second exit from the building. There is also a ramp for deliveries at the rear of the addition that is not shown on the drawing.

The women’s and men’s disabled accessible restrooms and the hall leading to the secondary exit and ramp out of the building are at the top of the drawing. The restaurant kitchen, dishwashing and office are at the bottom of the drawing.
**Structural Design (Drawings A301, S002, S001)**

Flood control requirements dictated that the building be raised above grade with a 4’-6” crawl space. Lado Shanidze’s original design planned for a raised floor above the surrounding area beyond the Teahouse. The structural system is poured concrete foundation walls and footings supporting steel beam supports for a poured concrete floor.

The site of the Teahouse borders an irrigation ditch and is within the flood zone, so it was necessary to have an adequate crawl space.
The following details relate to the structural design of the first floor, the foundations and footings, as seen on S002 and S001.
Designing Disabled Access

Since the passing of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, all newly constructed buildings in the country must be accessible for those with disabilities, not a concept that would have been considered in Tajikistan where the building was first designed.

Designing dignified access for disabled patrons to the building was complicated because of flood plain issues, requiring that the building be elevated from its site. The terrace elevations on the north and south sides are significantly different. Five steps lead up from the Civic Center Plaza (north) to the main entry and nine steps lead from the terrace along the ditch (south) up to the main entry.

There are two accessible paths for patrons with disabilities to the building, one through the main front door facing west and a second, which incorporates ramps and railings at the north side of the building’s rear addition. Not only was access required for the building itself, but access was desired for the outdoor terrace dining areas as well.

The preferred access point to a building for persons with disabilities is always at the main public entry. The access to the Teahouse is along a route from the west, a 5% gentle incline, from 13th Street to the main entry. Because of the gentle slope, the path is a gracious way to approach the building. A second point of entry and exit is a series of steeper ramps with railings on the north side of the addition to the building.

Patrons with disabilities are able to dine in both the north and south trellised areas. To reach the north area a patron would come directly from the Civic Plaza. To access the south trellised dining area, one meanders along the southwest edge of the rose garden.

Fig.138.Site Plan Study A007, Preliminary Landscaping Planting Plan with Disabled Access, Jim Knopp, Landscape Architect (north is up on drawing)

This plan shows the access route up the central ramp to the main entry and the second means of egress from the building, at the northeast corner of the building. Access to the north trellised dining area is directly from the Civic Plaza to the north. Access to the south dining area, along the fence at the front and south edge of the site, is not shown on this drawing.
This disabled access ramp on the north side of the addition is convenient to the designated disabled parking in the lot behind the building and access to the public restrooms.

The required railings of the ramp match the boundary fence seen to the right.
The access ramp follows the front fence to the south, turning east and terminating at the west edge of the stairs.
Construction in Boulder

In August 1990, 200 wooden crates, weighing about 30 tons that contained the disassembled Teahouse, arrived in Boulder. The wooden pieces were wrapped in paper and then placed in the crates. The crates were first stored at the Wastewater Treatment Plant on 75th Street and then some of them were moved to a large hangar at the Boulder Airport.

The seemingly impossible job of sorting and identifying all of the wooden parts began. It was like one giant Russian wood puzzle with no English instructions. There were 2,342 wooden pieces with a numbering system that had to be deciphered. After it was figured out, then the work started, putting the pieces together to form the coffers. It was necessary to determine the exact size of the building and confirm the correctness of the Tajik drawings. It was found that each coffer had a separate number.
There were numbers and letters on the pieces painted in different colors.

While in storage, it was necessary to lay out all of the interlocking beams of the coffers in order to determine how consistent the wood ceiling was with the dimensions on the Lado Shanidze drawings and to assure that the foundation built in Boulder would fit the necessary structural bearing points of the ceiling. The preassembly of the ceiling beams proved that the ceiling was accurately fabricated to the dimensions on Lado’s drawings. Astonishingly, the ceiling was accurate to within 1/4”.

Here the ceiling is beginning to take form.
Symbols on the crates gave instructions on handling and warning on how fragile the pieces were.

Very few pieces were damaged upon arrival. Left to right the symbols mean, “this side up, do not get wet, and fragile”.

One by one the coffers were painstakingly laid out, and finally, the ceiling started to take shape.
Once the coffers were laid out, the next task was to ensure that all the cornice pieces had been sent and that the cornice would connect properly with the coffers. This preassembly also gave Vern Seieroe and the Boulder carpenters an opportunity to experiment with a design for a roof system that would be supported by the beams of the ceiling.

This photo gives a clear picture of how the bracket was connected to the beams and trim.

On the left and right are the brackets supporting the cornice, and the back side of the fascia can also be seen.
The column pieces were all found to be included, but there were no instructions as to which base went with which shaft and capital. By this time Lado Shanidze had passed away and Vern Seieroe was asked by the wood carvers to match a base with a shaft. It was also important to ensure that the holes, which had been drilled for each column, actually fit the column shanks.
Bricks were chosen from available masonry resources in the United States that were most consistent with the masonry materials that Vern Seieroe found during his visit to Tajikistan in 1988. Concrete block had been considered for use on the exterior walls of the addition on the east side of the Teahouse, but stucco was ultimately chosen for necessary value engineering. Below, these materials of masonry were placed in view with the portions of the preassembled ceiling and a sample of the tile panel to assure visual compatibility. The bricks on the right were ultimately selected for use.

The grouping of tan bricks, on the right, was chosen for the frames of the large exterior tile panels. The brick color chosen is the traditional color of brick that was used in Central Asia almost 900 years ago.

Tajik Master woodcarvers Manon Khaidarov and Mirpulat Mirakhmatov and master plaster carver and painter Kodir Rhakhimov arrived in Boulder in December 1997 to work on the Teahouse. Master ceramicist Victor Zablotnikov arrived in February to work on the exterior tile panels.

Manon and Mirpulat are shown below erecting the columns, coffers and cornices on site. Kodir is shown below demonstrating the ganche-kori plaster technique.
The official groundbreaking was held July 10, 1997 with the anticipated completion date of March 1998. An official City building permit was issued on July 16, 1997 and construction started in September.

The Tajik artists, in coats and pants with leather boots purchased for them in Boulder, guided local Boulder construction workers to assemble pieces of the 2,100-square-foot puzzle.

During construction, Vern Seieroe made changes for the design of the addition, some of which were caused by budget concerns. Comparing current exterior photos to the Elevation Drawings we can see a somewhat different entry sequence and disabled ramp on the north side of the building, as well as a different stair and delivery ramp on the south side of the building. Also, the construction of the walls of the rear kitchen addition changed from concrete block to a frame wall covered in stucco.

The Teahouse portion of the building was built as intended and as construction progressed it became clear how well the coffers and cornices had been built. None of the ceiling pieces or columns warped during the seven years the building was in storage. The building was square and true to within 1/4”, which is better than the usual tolerances found in US buildings.
Design and Construction Team for the Boulder Teahouse Project

The Tajik Designers, Artists and Master Craftsmen who worked on the Boulder Teahouse were:
Architect:
   Lado Shanidze
Plaster Designer and Artist of Contemporary Oil Paintings:
   Kodir Rakhimov
Sculptor of Bronze Statues, “The Seven Beauties”:
   Milan Milashevich
Ceramic Tile Designer:
   Victor Zabolotnikov
Master Wood-carvers:
   Abdumannon Khaidarov, Mirpurat Mirakhmatov, Gaibulo Akhmadchonov,
   Yusufchon Mirakhmatov, Dadochon Butorov, Valichon Temurov
Master Painters:
   Azam Akhrorov, M. Khakaisov, I. Nurmatov,
   Kh. Kudratov, K. Aliev, A. Azimov, A. Pulatov

The Boulder Designers, Artists and Craftsmen who worked on the Boulder Teahouse were:
Architect:
   Vern Seieroe, AIA
Ceramic Tile Designer for bike path:
   Aprylisa Snyder
Construction:
   JDC Construction
City of Boulder Project Management:
   Angela McCormick, City Project Manager, Glenn Magee Architect for the City, Bill Hutson, and
   Bill Boyes, Facilities Managers.
Boulder Community Volunteers:
   Mary Axe, President, Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities, Board of Directors and Members of the
   Boulder Dushanbe Sister Cities, and Members of the Teahouse Trust
The craftsmen and painters are honored in this part of the building. Others who worked on the project are honored in the plaster frames above the paintings.

The inscription in the blue area written in Russian commemorates the building of the Teahouse:
“Master Craftsmen of Tajikistan from the city of Leninabad (Khujand). Constructed in the year 1988.”

In the lower green band the inscription is written in Tajik/Persian Arabic script: “The Master Painters are…” and then lists the names of the Master painters.

Unfortunately, there are no “as-built” drawings of the Teahouse as it stands today.
Teahouse Furniture and Accessories

Numerous accessories were sent along with the Teahouse including cups and a samovar, two beautiful raised, painted and carved corner-seating areas with low tables called “kat” or “chorpoi” in Tajik (or “topchans” in Russian), and two intricate, colorful sets of octagon tables and benches.

Fig. 158 Tajik Kat at Northeast corner of Teahouse
Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo
Used most often by groups, the kats (topchans) add to the authenticity of the Boulder-Dushanbe teahouse.

Fig. 159 Tajik Low Octagon Tables and Stools
Kathryn Barth, AIA, Photo
Perfect for families with small children, these low tables are exquisitely painted.
Teahouse Trail

Completing the site plan is the Teahouse Trail, a walking and bike path that runs between the Teahouse, along the south side of the ditch, and the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art. The Teahouse Trail is an extension of the Boulder Bike Path system and was designed to complement and relate visually to the Teahouse.

The Teahouse Trail was a collaborative work between Tajik and Boulder artists and was symbolic of the unity of the two Sister Cities, Boulder and Dushanbe. Tajik artist Victor Zabolotnikov created the colorful oval ceramic tile panels on the bridge which show scenes of birds that relate in color and subject to the Teahouse.

Boulder artist Aprylisa Snyder designed the recessed tile panels in the path itself, some of which are decorated with blue tiles and granite edges, with etched quotations from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

“...the Teahouse Trail was intended to express the unity of the two sister cities.” The bridge decks “were conceived as flying carpets to symbolize the ‘magical’ journey one takes when going from one culture to the other. As if blown by a breeze, impressed oak leaves are scattered across the path. The oak is a symbol of fidelity and is thus a reminder of the friendship of the two sister cities.”

Fig. 160  Site Plan Drawing with Bike Path, Vern Seieroe, AIA, Architect  (north is up on drawing)
The two bridges of the bike path over the irrigation ditch have tiled blue ovals that relate to the eight large tiled panels on the exterior of the building.

Details show the oval tiled panels that decorate the bridges, the railings and the inset decorative paving stones.

Blue tile panel, purple, blue and yellow flowers artistically connect the Bike Path to Teahouse.
The birds on the oval tile panel are very similar to the tiled panels found on the building.

The path surface has recessed tiles, made by Aprylisa, with quotations that emphasize savoring the moment, the brevity of life and love.
This damage may have been caused by water collecting in the center of the blue tiles and the freezing and thawing cycles of winter in Boulder.
Garden Design

Beautiful planting areas of fragrant roses line the north and south sides of the ramp that gradually slopes down from the Teahouse to 13th Street where they form a right angle, buffering the dining terraces from the street, as shown on the following drawings.

At the southwest fence that the disabled ramp leads down to the dining area and on the north side of the site the planting areas continue along the side of the Teahouse foundation to the stair and accessible ramp at the northeast corner of the site. On the south side of the site, the plantings continue along the irrigation ditch. The planting areas slope down to the level of the north and south covered terraces and they slope more steeply to the south terrace than to the north terrace as the south side is at a lower elevation than the north. Wood trellises are built over the terraces.

Although Dushanbe and Boulder are at different altitudes, and Dushanbe may be a bit milder, they both have about 300 days of sunshine per year and similar fruits and flowers can be grown in both places. This allowed the landscape architect, Jim Knopp, to select plants that were indigenous to Dushanbe or very similar to plants grown in Dushanbe.

The garden has two elements, low water xeriscape plants and roses. Jim Knopf designed the xeriscape parts of the garden and Harlequin’s Gardens (local garden store) owners, Eve Reshetnik and Miki Brawner, designed the Teahouse garden as a demonstration rose garden. The rose garden has more than 50 varieties of roses, including Old Garden roses, Species Roses, Canadian, Climbing and David Austin’s English Roses. It was intended to look “unplanned” in the Tajik tradition and to have a sensual, perfumed and intimate atmosphere. The garden at the Boulder Teahouse continues the Persian tradition of a garden symbolizing paradise.

All of the roses were grown on their own roots, as these are hardier than those that are grown on rootstock. The individual roses were chosen for cold-hardiness, fragrance, disease resistance, bloom sequence, size and color. Modern hybrid tea and floribunda roses were not included as they would have been out of character with the goals of the garden.
The following roses planted at the Teahouse have similar “relatives” in or around Dushanbe:
Persian Yellow, a variant of *Rosa. Foetida*, has double yellow blooms.
Austrian Copper, an orange-yellow shrub rose.
Kazanlik, “The Rose of Shiraz”, has a double pink rose.
Rose de Rescht, a deep magenta-color, Old Garden Rose know for its sweet fragrance.

The following garden plan shows 13th Street to the left of the “gate” and the Teahouse to the right.
The following list of roses corresponds to the plan above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rose Garden Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abbreviations:</strong> AUS = David Austin English rose; B = Griffith Buck hardy rose; CAN = Canadian-bred hardy rose; CL = Climber; F = lightly fragrant; FF = fragrant; HF = hybrid perpetual; OGR = Old Garden Rose; POL = Polyantha; R = repeat-blooming; SH = shrub; sl. = single; dbl. = double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. William Lobb (SH/CL, OGR, Moss, FF, dbl. mauve-purple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rosa Setigera (SH/CL, Species, sl. pink, blooms July)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mme. Hardy (SH, OGR, Damask, FF, dbl. white)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Winchester Cathedral (SH, AUS, f, R, dbl. white)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Gros Choux de Hollandae (SH, OGR, Centifolia, FF, dbl. av-pink)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sydonie (SH, OGR, HP, FF, R, dbl. pink)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Gourmet Popcorn (SH, POL, R, small dbl. white)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Robusta (SH/CL, Rugosa Hybrid, R, deep crimson)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. J.P. Connell (SH/CL, CAN, R, lt. yellow-white)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Ferdinand Pichard (SH, OGR, HP, F, R, dbl. striped crimson-pink)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Persian Yellow (SH, OGR, Species Hybrid, dbl. bright yellow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. William Baffin (SH/CL, CAN, R, sl pink, white center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. UNKNOWN SPECIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Austrian Copper (SH, Species, OGR, bright orange-yellow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Felicite Parmentier (SH, OGR, Alba Hybrid, FF, blush-white)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The roses that were chosen are all very hardy and were chosen for their fragrance and forms. No toxic pesticides are used on the roses.

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EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Colorado Historical Society Historic Building Inventory Form included as Appendix A contains a summary of the historical background and architectural description of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse.

National Register

The form includes the National Register Criteria for determining significance for historic resources. Historic properties may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places if they meet the National Register criteria. The criteria state that “the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant to our past; or
C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.”

Generally properties must be fifty years of age or more to be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they fall within the following category:

G. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional significance.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and Criterion C in the areas of politics/government, social history, architecture, and art. The Teahouse meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G as a resource less than fifty-years of age.69

Significance

Criterion A: The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is a symbol of international friendship. It is eligible under Criterion A for politics and government for its representation of the international policy shift that took place during of the latter period of the Cold War when the United States and the Soviet Union (under the leadership of Reagan and Gorbachev, respectively) were working toward a more open society, to end the arms race, and move into a time of peace, understanding, and friendship. The Teahouse is a tangible example of that shift, as it was the only gift of a building from a city in the Soviet Union to a city in the United States.

The Teahouse is also eligible under Criterion A for social history as it represents the success and intentions of the Sister City International Program first conceived after World War II by President Eisenhower to promote global understanding. The Teahouse represents the philosophy

69 These statements of evaluation require review and concurrence by the Colorado Historical Society’s National Register Coordinator.
that social change and international peace begin with cooperation between individuals. The Teahouse represents the hope for peace between countries at conflict by developing person-to-person relationships and exchange of culture and ideas. The Teahouse gift of friendship from Boulder’s sister city, Dushanbe, located in the former Soviet Union, is the only “chaikhona” (Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse) in the Western Hemisphere. At the time of the gift, the Teahouse was the largest gift ever given to an American city by the former Soviet Union and the only gift of an actual building between the Soviet Union-United States sister cities. “Although the Soviet Union has given other gifts to cities, states and the US government, nothing in the history of Soviet-US exchanges comes even close to this.” (Molly Raymond, U.S. Information Agency, 1988)

**Criterion C:** The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is eligible for listing to the National Register under Criterion C for architecture and art as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represents the work of a master, and possesses high artistic values. The Teahouse is an exceptional example of a traditional Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse, an architectural design tradition dating back to the Silk Road caravanserais of Persian/Tajik culture (2nd – 12th century AD). The Teahouse was constructed by master artists of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) Artist’s Fund carrying out ancient trade skills including: master woodcarvers and joiners Mirpulat Mirakhmadov and Manon Khайдarov; master plaster carver and painter Abdoukodir Rakhimov; and, master artist and ceramicist Victor Zabolotnikov.

The Teahouse was originally designed by Dushanbe architect Lado Shanidze. Local Boulder architect, Vern Seieroe, finalized the design and adapted the open-air design to an enclosed year-round space. Seieroe traveled to Dushanbe to work with Tajik architect Lado Shanidze on the enclosure designs.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse displays high artistic value as seen in its intricately hand-carved and brilliantly painted wood trim and decorative exterior “faïence” tile panels. The Teahouse was originally designed as a raised open-air structure with open roof and coffered painted ceilings above a central pool. Thus the “interior features” were meant to be viewed as “exterior features.” The fourteen intricate coffered ceilings are hand-carved and painted; no electric power tools were used in its construction. The coffers display images of flowers or foliage representing paradise along with stylized and simplified designs representing infinity. The unpainted carved slender columns, carved from a single tree, resemble a grove of trees and symbolically reach up toward the heavens and paradise.

The Teahouse is an integration of art and architecture as seen through its interior features of carved ganch-kori plaster panels, modern abstract expressionist paintings, central pool with the “Seven Beauties” sculptures, and other items such as hand-carved and brightly painted tables (“topchans”), and hand painted octagon tables and benches. The construction is unusual in that it came halfway across the world as a prefabricated building and then was reassembled in Boulder.

**Criterion G:** The Teahouse rises to the high level of exceptional significance required under Criteria Consideration G because it is architecturally significant, maintains a high degree of integrity, is the only architectural gift, and largest gift, known between the former USSR and a city in the United States, and is the only Central Asian/ Tajik Teahouse in the Western Hemisphere. The Teahouse is a symbol of international friendship and represents an international collaboration of citizens, government leaders, architects, artisans, and builders.

Although 50 years has not yet passed since this gift was given, the importance of the gift within the context of the Cold War can be fully appreciated now. The USSR and the United States had
been in a state of political conflict, military tension, propaganda warfare and economic competition since the late 1940s. At the time of the gift, the future relationship between the USSR and the United States was still unknown. The gift occurred during a small window of peace-seeking times between the Soviets and the Americans prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 and due to a drastically reduced budget for Tajikistan, the Artists Fund was disbanded. Mary Axe recalls that “during the 1980s under Gorbachev, the policy of glasnost was introduced which resulted in more openness, greater freedom of information and a revival of ethnic identities within the various republics. Absent this window, I doubt that Boulder would have received a traditional Tajik/Central Asian Teahouse.”

The Teahouse, which draws an estimated 100,000 visitors annually, has been recognized in George Peknik’s book, The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse and in a Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting Network, Inc. DVD video titled “Colorado Spaces, Boulder.” The Teahouse was featured in the Saudi Aramco World magazine and in numerous newspaper articles found in the Boulder Daily Camera, the Denver Post, the Boulder Weekly, the Boulder Planet as well as covered by the press in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The following are excerpts representing the significance of the Teahouse locally, statewide, and nationally (see all articles in Appendix C):

“Although the Soviet Union has given other gifts to cities, states and the US government, nothing in the history of Soviet-US exchanges comes even close to this.” Molly Raymond, Deputy Coordinator of the President’s US-Soviet Exchange Initiative, a Committee of the US Information Agency, 1988

“Your efforts to open channels of communication between the citizens of the Soviet Union and the citizens of the United States are vital steps in the long march toward world peace. It is the foundation of mutual understanding that a long lasting peace will eventually rest.” Colorado Governor Richard Lamm, letter to Boulder’s Soviet Sister City Project

The Teahouse is “a very small dent in a very Cold War.” Ruth Correll, former Boulder Mayor, Denver Post article, July 11, 1997

“This chaikhona, though authentically Tajik, is located in Boulder, Colorado, and overlooked not by the Pamirs but by the Rockies. Eleven years in the making and a product of binational creativity, it is the only chaikhona in the Western Hemisphere.” “Rocky Mountain Chai” article, Saudi Aramco World, November/December 1998, Volume 49, Number 6

“Usually, sister cities exchange small gifts and students – not buildings. Part of the challenge comes from exchanging structures in countries that don’t have much in common when it comes to architectural process and design – not to mention different measurement systems. Add in language barriers, time differences and a quickly changing Tajik political landscape after the fall of the Soviet Union and you start to get the picture. We’re not talking about a government to government exchange, it really is people to people,” Don Mock, past president of the Board of Directors, BDSC, Boulder Weekly, March 29, 2007

71 Those close to project, such as Mary Axe, have stated that the Teahouse received press coverage in Tajikistan. Due to the language barrier and without the assistance of an interpreter, a search of Tajikistan archives was not possible as part of this project.
“Next Friday, the teahouse – the largest gift ever given to an American city by the former Soviet Union – will open its doors for a grand tea party. We tip our hats to the many people who were responsible for making the teahouse a reality. Heading the list is Mary Axe, who never gave up the fight to get the teahouse pieced together and opened as a Boulder landmark.” “Eleven years ago, Boulder and Dushanbe became sister cities. You will recall that the world was much different in 1987. The Berlin Wall was firmly in place. The Soviet Union, which Tajikistan was then part of, was feared as a nuclear threat. And Boulder, like many US cities, was trying to extend a friendly hand to people entrapped behind the Iron Curtain.” Boulder Daily Camera Editorial, May 1998

"The Dushanbe teahouse will hold more than 2,000 years of history when the plaster carvings of Abdoukodir Rakhimov grace the walls of the gift from Boulder's Sister City." His art keeps the 'ganch' art form alive. Today, most are mass-produced from plaster molds. "What separates Rakhimov from other plaster carvers is the time he takes to carve the intricate designs...by hand." Boulder Planet, February 4, 1998

“Every time we see this extraordinarily beautiful treasure, we will be reminded that it represents an important bridge between our two cities… our two cultures.” Linda Jourgensen, Mayor, City of Boulder, “Presenting the Tadzhik Chaikhona” pamphlet, 1990

“The hand workmanship found in the elaborate carved and painted wooden ceiling, the turned and carved columns and the panels of polychromed relief tiles is of high quality. I doubt that any other region of the Islamic world, with the possible exception of Morocco, has such a lively and creative tradition.” John D. Hoag, Ph.D., Professor of the History of Art, “Presenting the Tadzhik Chaikhona” pamphlet, 1990

“By design and by tradition, the teahouse is meant to be a center for cultural activity where patient people can earnestly discuss events of their lives and of our community. In an age dominated by mass media, it will serve as a place where this other sort of communication will happen.” Homer Page, Boulder County Commissioner, “Presenting the Tadzhik Chaikhona” pamphlet, 1990

“It will be a remarkable example of an artistic and architectural tradition which has continued for at least ten centuries. In fact, the Tajik master carvers and builders have remained true to these ancient traditions to an extraordinary degree.” Renata Holod, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of the History of Art, University of Pennsylvania, BDSC Flier, 1990

“This teahouse, in my opinion, represents a wonderful example of Central Asian artistic achievement. Design elements such as its hand-carved cedar columns, the intricate details of its enamel tile panels and the hand-crafter ornamentation harkens back to the centuries-old Persian artistic tradition characteristic to Central Asia in the Soviet Union.” Elizabeth Cunningham, Curator, The Anschutz Collection, BDSC Flier, 1990

“The teahouse, the largest gift ever presented in the United States by a former Soviet state, should be ready for tea drinkers next spring.” Denver Post article, July 11, 1997
“. . .the Teahouse was built, and I want to tell you that it has become one of the most important buildings, one of the most important places in our city.” Boulder Daily Camera article, September 23, 2008

**Period of Significance:** The Period of Significance is 1998, the year the City of Boulder, with the assistance of Tajik artisans, completed the construction of the Teahouse in Boulder.

**Level of Significance:** Properties may qualify for National Register listing for their local, state, or national level of significance. Under National Register criteria, the Teahouse may qualify as nationally significant for its historic associations as the only Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse in the United States and Western Hemisphere and as the only gift of its kind between a city in the former Soviet Union and a city in the United States. The Teahouse may qualify as nationally significant for its architectural significance as an exceptional example of a traditional Central Asian/ Tajik Teahouse, its high artistic value, and as the work of several master artisans.

**Statement of Significance:** The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse is historically significant as a symbol of international friendship, as the only “chaikhona” (Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse) in the United States and Western Hemisphere, and as the only gift of its kind between a city of the former Soviet Union and a city in the United States. The Teahouse is architecturally significant as an exceptional example of a traditional Central Asian/ Tajik Teahouse, for its high artistic value, and as the work of several master artisans.
**Eligible Area:** The Teahouse is closely surrounded by other buildings and public spaces and should have a site boundary that is adequate for its protection, but will not affect the surrounding civic buildings and spaces and their related activities.

*The recommended landmark boundary shall generally follow the fence along the north and west sides of the site, the south edge of the irrigation ditch along the south side of the site, and the building footprint along the east side of the site.* Inclusion of the Teahouse Trail is recommended because it was designed in conjunction with the Teahouse landscape and site plan and contains design elements related to the Teahouse, such as the recessed tiles, surface concrete, fences and bridges.
Boulder Landmark

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse qualifies as a Boulder Landmark for its Historical, Architectural, and Environmental Significance.

**Historic Significance:** The place (building, site area) should show character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community, state or nation; be the site of an historic, or prehistoric event that had an effect upon society; or exemplify the cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community.

1. **Date of Construction:** 1988-1990, 1997-1998. From 1988 until 1990, Tajik artists and master-craftsmen constructed the Teahouse in Dushanbe and Khujand, Tajikistan. The building was disassembled and sent to Boulder in 200 wooden crates. From 1997-1998, with the assistance of Tajik artisans, the City reconstructed the Teahouse at its site on 13th Street.

2. **Association with Historic Persons or Event:** n/a

3. **Distinction in the Development of the Community of Boulder:** (for a more detailed description of the history of the Teahouse, refer to pages 5 – 18 of this report).

The Teahouse gift of friendship from Boulder’s sister city, Dushanbe, located in the former Soviet Union, is the only “chaikhona” (Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse) in the Western Hemisphere. At the time of the gift, the Teahouse was the largest gift ever given to an American city by the former Soviet Union and the only gift of an actual building between the Soviet Union-United States sister cities. “Although the Soviet Union has given other gifts to cities, states and the US government, nothing in the history of Soviet-US exchanges comes even close to this.” (Molly Raymond, U.S. Information Agency, 1988)

**Summary of Teahouse History:**
In 1983, a group of Boulder citizens formed a sister city organization in order to establish a sister city relationship with a city in the Soviet Union. In start contrast to the political climate at the time between the United States and the Soviet Union, the organization sought to promote international friendship, peace and understanding. After much research, the organization pursued the city of Dushanbe, Tajikistan with which to partner. The relationship was formalized in May of 1987, at which time the Mayor of Dushanbe proposed a gift of a Tajik “Chaikhona.” A chaikhona is a building unique to Central Asia where people gather to meet friends, play chess, and enjoy a cup of tea. In December 1987, the drawings for the teahouse were completed and construction began in Dushanbe and Khujand, Tajikistan, utilizing the skilled craftsmanship of over 40 artisans. In August 1990, the disassembled Teahouse arrived in Boulder in 200 crates weighing in at over 30 tons. After much debate and consideration, the Boulder City Council accepted the gift in May 1989 “as an important symbol of international friendship.” Over the next several years, the Boulder City Council convened several different committees to evaluate and discuss potential sites for the Teahouse. The Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities (BDSC) organization was charged with raising funds for the construction of the Teahouse and overseeing the operation and maintenance of the Teahouse. In April 1993, the Boulder City Council voted to place the Teahouse on the east side of 13th Street. In 1996, negotiations with a potential restaurant operator fell through when the site was considered contaminated due to previous uses. The City intervened and approved city financing for the construction of the Teahouse. An appointed committee solicited Teahouse operators and selected Sara and Lenny Martinelli as operators. In 1997, a groundbreaking ceremony was held and for the next ten months City crews, with the assistance of artisans from Tajikistan, erected the Teahouse. On May 15, 1998 a
Dedication and Opening Ceremony celebrated the completed Teahouse. At the time of opening, the Teahouse was referred to as a “Boulder Landmark.”

Significance:
The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse, placed at the heart of the city’s Civic Park, is a constant reminder of the citizen-led initiative to establish a sister city relationship with a city in the then Soviet Union during the latter period of the Cold War era. The Teahouse is a symbol of international friendship and represents an international collaboration of citizens, government leaders, architects, artisans, and builders. The Teahouse represents the philosophy that social change and international peace begin with cooperation between individuals. The Teahouse represents the hope for peace between countries at conflict by developing person-to-person relationships and exchange of culture and ideas.

The Teahouse represents the international policy shift that took place during the latter period of the Cold War when the United States and the Soviet Union (under the leadership of Reagan and Gorbachev, respectively) were working toward a more open society, to end the arms race, and move into a time of peace, understanding, and friendship. Although 50 years has not yet passed since this gift was given, the importance of the gift within the context of the Cold War can be fully appreciated now. The USSR and the United States had been in a state of political conflict, military tension, propaganda warfare and economic competition since the late 1940s. At the time of the gift, the future relationship between the USSR and the United States was still unknown. The gift occurred during a small window of peace-seeking times between the Soviets and the Americans prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 and due to a drastically reduced budget for Tajikistan, the Artists Fund was disbanded. Mary Axe recalls that “during the 1980s under Gorbachev, the policy of glasnost was introduced which resulted in more openness, greater freedom of information and a revival of ethnic identities within the various republics. Absent this window, I doubt that Boulder would have received a traditional Tajik/Central Asian Teahouse.”

4. Recognition by Authorities: The Teahouse has been recognized in George Peknik’s book, The Meaning of the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse and in a Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting Network, Inc. DVD video titled “Colorado Spaces, Boulder.” The Teahouse was featured in the Saudi Aramco World magazine and in numerous newspaper articles found in the Boulder Daily Camera, the Denver Post, the Boulder Weekly, the Boulder Planet as well as covered by the press in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

Architectural Significance: The place should embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, a good example of the common; be the work of an architect or master builder; contain elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or be a fine example of the uncommon.

1. Recognized Period/Style: Central Asian (Tajik) Teahouse

2. Architect or Builder of Prominence: Lado Shanidze and Vern Seiereo, AIA. The Teahouse was constructed by master artists of the USSR Artist’s Fund carrying out ancient trade skills, most notably master woodcarvers and joiners Mirpulat Mirakhmadov and Manon Khaidarov; master plaster carver and painter Abdoukodir Rakhimov; and, master artist and ceramicist Victor Zabolotnikov.
3. **Artistic Merit:** (for a more detailed description of the architecture of the Teahouse, refer to pages 19 – 110 of this report).

The Teahouse is an exceptional example of a traditional Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse, an architectural design tradition dating back to the Silk Road caravanserai of Persian/Tajik culture (2nd – 12th century AD). The Teahouse is a prefabricated structure of about 2100 square feet and is ornately painted in the bright floral and geometric patterns of Central Asia and Persia.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse displays high artistic value as seen in its intricately hand-carved and brilliantly painted wood trim and decorative exterior “faïence” tile panels. The Teahouse was originally designed as a raised open-air structure with open roof and coffered painted ceilings above a central pool. Thus the “interior features” were meant to be viewed as “exterior features.” The fourteen intricate coffered ceilings are hand-carved and painted; no electric power tools were used in its construction. The coffers display images of flowers or foliage representing paradise along with stylized and simplified designs representing infinity. The unpainted carved slender columns, carved from a single tree, resemble a grove of trees and symbolically reach up toward the heavens and paradise.

The Teahouse is an integration of art and architecture as seen through its interior features of carved ganch-kori plaster panels, modern abstract expressionist paintings, central pool with the “Seven Beauties” sculptures, and other items such as hand-carved and brightly painted tables (“topchans”), and hand painted octagon tables and benches. The construction is unusual in that it came halfway across the world as a prefabricated building and then was reassembled in Boulder.

The Teahouse has two parts: the Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse portion of the building and a utilitarian addition to the rear. The original Teahouse portion of the building houses the public restaurant and the addition houses the commercial kitchen, office space and public restrooms. The original open-air Tajik design was modified to enclose the building from weather and to ensure that it would conform to required safety and building codes and structural and handicapped requirements. The original Teahouse portion of the building has large extending shallow bay wood windows on three sides of the building, enclosing the hand-carved wood columns. Decorative exterior tile panels, framed with beige brick, flank the bay windows. At each corner of the Teahouse, two wood windows meet at a right angle. A roof with a large central skylight covers the interior space and is located directly above the interior pool with statues. The addition to the Teahouse was designed to be subservient to the exuberantly decorated Teahouse. It features a flat roof and beige colored stucco covers the wood frame walls with minimal fenestration.

4. **Example of the Uncommon:** The Teahouse ceiling was constructed using only traditional hand tools and without any electric tools.

5. **Indigenous Qualities:** n/a

6. **Other:** n/a
Environmental Significance: The place should enhance the variety, interest, and sense of identity of the community by the protection of the unique natural and man-made environment.

1. Site Characteristics: (for a more detailed description of the Teahouse site plan, refer to pages 31-36 and pages 111-117 of this report).

The Teahouse was sited as part of the City of Boulder’s 1993 Civic Park Master Plan, a comprehensive plan of the civic use and public buildings in the downtown campus area. Plans for the area placed the Teahouse at the center of the Civic Park Plaza which included the Civic Plaza (north of the Teahouse site) used for Farmers Market exhibits and performances and the 13th Street Community Plaza (the street west of the Teahouse site) used for public events such as the Boulder Creek Festival and the Farmers Market. South of the Teahouse is the Boulder and White Rock/Left Hand Irrigation Ditch, the Teahouse Trail, and the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art. East of the Teahouse is a public parking lot.

The Teahouse is slightly elevated above 13th Street grade and its site is highly planned in terms of layout, orientation to the street, walkways, trellises and gardens. The Teahouse front door faces 13th Street and is approached by a gentle entry ramp flanked by dining areas to the north and south. Both dining areas are covered with simply constructed trellises. Beautiful planting areas of fragrant roses line the north and south sides of the entry ramp.

The Teahouse features two handicap accessible paths into the building: one through the front door; and, a second, which incorporates ramps and railings, at the north side of the building, leading into the rear addition.

A detailed garden plan was developed for the Teahouse site with two main elements: low water xeriscape and roses. The rose garden was intended to look “unplanned” in the Tajik tradition and to have a sensual, perfumed and intimate atmosphere. Roses were selected that are indigenous to Dushanbe or similar to plants grown in Dushanbe.

The Teahouse Trail, a walking and bike path that runs between the Teahouse and the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art to the south, was redesigned to compliment and visually relate to the Teahouse. A collaborative work between Tajik and Boulder artists, the Teahouse Trail “was intended to express the unity of the two sister cities.” The trail features recessed tile panels in the path itself and colorful oval ceramic tile panels on the bridges over the path.

2. Compatibility with Site: The Teahouse is compatible with its site in that its placement is central to the Civic Park Plaza area. As originally designed, the Teahouse is slightly raised above grade, giving it an elevated appearance. In Central Asia, water and gardens, representing Paradise, are traditional design elements found at teahouse sites. The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse’s location adjacent to the irrigation ditch and its beautiful gardens are in keeping with this tradition.

3. Geographic Importance: The Teahouse is significant as the only “chaikhona” (Central Asian/Tajik Teahouse) in the Western Hemisphere. Its location in Boulder’s Civic Park Plaza establishes it as a familiar visual feature of the community. At the time of its completion, it was referred to as a “Boulder Landmark.”

4. Environmental Appropriateness: The Teahouse surroundings are complementary to the structure in that the Teahouse is central to the Civic Park Plaza, a community gathering place. It is flanked by Civic Plaza to the north and 13th Street Community Plaza to the west, both locations of Boulder’s well-known and successful Farmers Market. The Teahouse is adjacent to
the Teahouse Trail, part of the Boulder Bike Path system, linking it to other parts of the community, such as Central Park, the Municipal Campus, and downtown Boulder.

The Teahouse is situated in a manner particularly suited to its function. In Central Asia, teahouses serve as gathering places where friends meet to talk or play chess over a cup of tea. They serve a community both socially and commercially. The Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse serves that same function: a gathering place for the Boulder community, visitors to Boulder, and the Persian/Tajik community of the Boulder/Denver area for special holidays and celebrations.

5. Area Integrity: n/a

6. Other: n/a

Other Recommendations

1. The Teahouse was built by Tajik master craftsmen and any elements requiring repair or restoration in the future should be completed by Tajik craftsmen or similarly trained craftsmen. Those building elements constructed by Tajik craftsmen include: the eight large exterior faience tile panels; hand carved and painted cornice; interior ceiling coffers; wood columns; carved ganch-kori plaster panels and frames; large oil paintings; seven bronze statues; and, two corner “topchans” and two sets of octagon tables and small stools. Building elements constructed by local Boulder contractors include: the roof and window enclosures; the rear addition; and, the interior central pool and its tiles.

2. Maintenance of the cornice is already a problem as the paint colors are fading on the east side of the building. Replicating the techniques of painting and the paints themselves will be a challenge. A maintenance plan for the building should be developed, including a paint analysis. Only properly trained painters from Tajikistan or similarly trained craftsmen should attempt to repaint the building.

3. A maintenance budget for the building should be established and a source of funds identified. According to a March 18, 1997 City Council memorandum, the City was to place in escrow the funds necessary for capital refurbishment and equipment replacement. The memo states that the Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau contributed $60,000 to place in escrow to cover future capital costs. This contribution, in addition to a small annual contribution from an operator was intended to provide the city with enough funds to refurbish and replace items in the Teahouse within standard facility management schedules of 25 years. Verification of these escrow accounts should occur.

4. The inlaid tiles on the bike path are in need of restoration and repair.

5. During the consultants’ evaluation of the building it was observed that the placement of items related to the bar area at the southeast corner of the building may cause potential damage to the ganch-kori panels and oil painting at that location.
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