

**Staff Report – Summary Sheet**  
HPC-00001 (Historic Landmark)  
The Chapel at Tlaquepaque



**City of Sedona**  
**Community Development Department**  
102 Roadrunner Drive Sedona, AZ 86336  
(928) 282-1154 • [www.sedonaaz.gov/cd](http://www.sedonaaz.gov/cd)

**Meeting Date:** May 13, 2024  
**Hearing Body:** Historic Preservation Commission  
**Project Summary:** Designation of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque (ca. early 1970s) as a Historic Landmark  
**Action Requested:** Approval of Historic Landmark designation for the Chapel at Tlaquepaque  
**Staff Recommendation:** Approval of Historic Landmark designation for the Chapel at Tlaquepaque  
**Location:** 336 State Route 179 (within Tlaquepaque Shopping Center)  
**Parcel Number:** 401-19-027J  
**Owner/Applicant:** Tlaq Partners, LLC (Wendy Lippman)  
**Site Size:** ±4.04 acres (Structure proposed to be landmarked is ±800 square feet)  
**Community Plan Designation:** Commercial  
**Zoning:** CO (Commercial)  
**Current Land Use:** Commercial Shopping Center (Tlaquepaque)  
**Report Prepared By:** Steve Mertes, Community Development Director

**Attachments:**

1. Vicinity and Aerial Map.....	4
2. LDC Section 8.7.B (Historic Landmark Designation) .....	6
3. Historic Landmark Designation Application .....	10
4. Historic Resource Eligibility Letter (Prepared by Nancy Burgess), dated 12/28/2023 .....	19
5. Citizen Participation Report.....	22



### **Project Summary**

Case number HPC-00001 proposes to designate the Chapel at Tlaquepaque as a Historic Landmark. The property is located at 336 SR179 and the chapel is approximately 800 sq.ft. in size.

### **Historic Landmark Designation Review Criteria**

The Historic Preservation Commission has the authority to review property nominations for designation as Historic Landmarks in accordance with the [Sedona Land Development Code \(LDC\), Article 8, Section 8.7.B](#), included here as Attachment 2. The Landmark review criteria are outlined in [LDC Section 8.7.B\(3\)](#).

In addition to the LDC Section regarding Historic Landmarks, also attached to this Staff Report for the Commission's review, are the applicant's Historic Landmark Designation Application (Attachment 3) and the Historic Resource Survey from Nancy Burgess, Preservation Consulting, dated 12/28/2023 (Attachment 4)

The Commission is to review the review criteria, the landmark application, and supporting documents, and render its decision based upon consistency with the criteria.

### **Background**

A full background is included in the Historic Landmark Designation Application (Attachment 3). As told in the story, "The Chapel at Tlaquepaque, an Oasis of History and Serenity" (included in the application), the chapel portion of the Tlaquepaque Arts & Shopping Village was created by Abe Miller, a traveler who loved to observe artisans at work in the small villages he visited. Miller hired workers that he felt displayed heart and enthusiasm for this project, and what he accomplished in design, aesthetics, symbolism, and a reflection of the Mexican Culture is visible in every detail of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque. Much of the artistic renderings can be attributed to artist Eileen Conn, who carved birds out of basswood, made canvas drawings of Navajo rugs and relief carvings, but perhaps her most prominent contribution was the painting of the large interior mural that is the focal point of the altar area.

### *Description*

The chapel is approximately 800 sq.ft., with nine leather pews that seat about 36 people. The floor of the chapel consists of hand-laid gold-bronze tile which leads your eye to the ornate back wall that is dominated by Conn's 11'-0" x 12'-0" painted mural which contains the portraits of St. Augustine, Pope Pius X, Bonaventure, Samuel, Peter, and John the Baptist, with Jesus Christ floating above them. The chapel is further adorned with custom stained glass windows created by Deanne Sabek, who first researched stained glass in Spanish architecture. It is said that she wanted to bring the spiritual feeling of being outside into the chapel and chose a color palate inspired by the natural surroundings of Sedona. The glass itself is hand-blown from Germany.

On the outside, the hand-carved Spanish doors, elaborate wrought-iron gates, and the cross-topped bell tower fully represent the spirit of Spanish history and the Mexican culture.

### *Condition*

The Chapel at Tlaquepaque appears to be in good condition both inside and out.

### *Integrity and Consistency with Landmark Criteria*

A full evaluation of the building for historic integrity and consistency with the landmark criteria is in the attached letter from Nancy Burgess, Preservation Consulting, dated 12/28/2023. Staff is supportive of the findings of this letter as being consistent with the criteria for historic landmark designation.

**Recommendation and Motions**  
HPC-00001 (Historic Landmark)  
The Chapel at Tlaquepaque



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**Staff Recommendation**

Staff is supportive of designating the Chapel at Tlaquepaque as a historic landmark. Accordingly, staff recommends approval of Case No. HPC-00001, based upon the consistency with the historic landmark evaluation criteria outlined in the Sedona Land Development Code.

**Sample Motions for Commission Use**

(Please note that the below motions are offered as samples only and that the Commission may make other motions as appropriate.)

**Recommended Motion for Approval**







I, (Commission member), move to approve the landmark designation for Case Number HPC-00001 to designate the Chapel at Tlaquepaque, located at 336 SR179, as a historic landmark based upon the consistency with the historic landmark evaluation criteria outlined in the Sedona Land Development Code.

**Alternative Motion for Denial**

I move to deny the landmark designation for Case Number HPC-00001 based on the following findings (Please specify findings)

# Vicinity Map

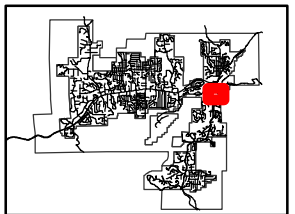
Parcel  
401-19-027J  
Tlaquepaque  
Chapel

-  Parcel 401-19-027J
-  Zoning Boundary
-  Building Footprint
-  Parcel Boundary
-  Trail
-  Street Centerline



0 50 100 Feet

City Index

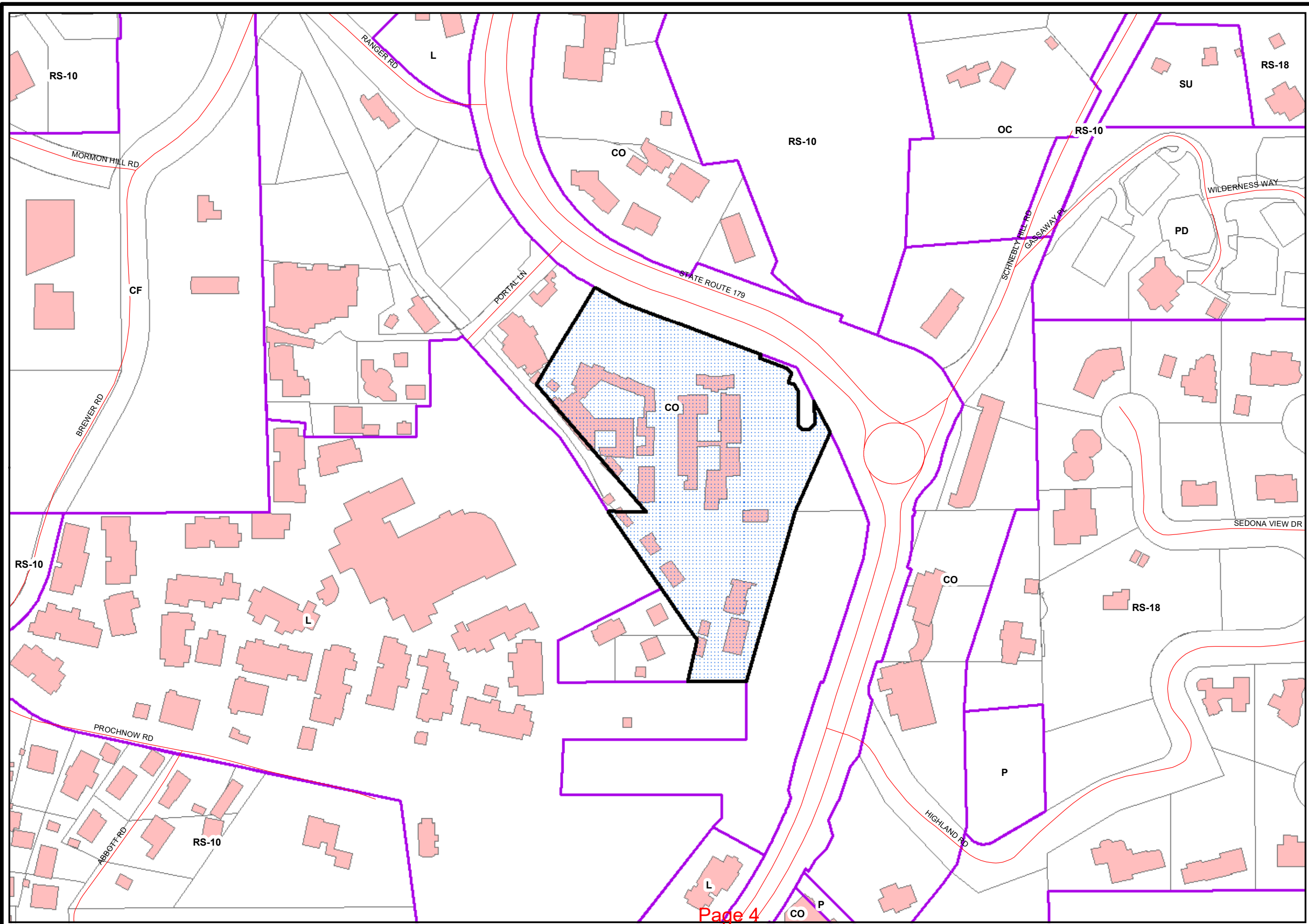


GIS, City of Sedona  
10/05/2018  
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This map is designed to provide information about Sedona, and has been prepared for general planning and informational purposes only. It is not necessarily accurate to engineering or surveying standards. Every effort has been made to make this map as complete and as accurate as possible; however, no warranty of fitness is implied.

The information is provided on an "as-is" basis. The City of Sedona shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damages in connection with or arising from the information contained on this map.



Aerial View

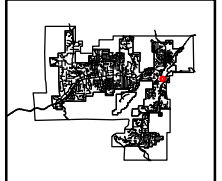
Parcel  
401-19-027J  
Tlaquepaque  
Chapel

-  Parcel 401-19-027J
-  Parcel Boundary
-  Street Centerline



0 30 60 Feet

City Index



GIS, City of Sedona  
11/05/2018  
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## B. Historic Landmark Designation

### (1) Purpose

This section establishes the procedure for the Historic Preservation Commission to designate as a landmark an entire property, an identified portion of a property, or one or more individual structures on a property.

### (2) Application Submittal and Review Procedure

Figure 8-14 identifies the applicable steps from Section 8.3, *Common Review Procedures*, that apply to the review of applications for landmark designation. Additions or modifications to the common review procedures are noted below.

**Figure 8-14: Historic Landmark Designation**



#### a. Pre-Application Meeting

A pre-application meeting shall be held in accordance with Section 8.3.B, *Pre-Application Meeting*.

#### b. Application Submittal and Handling

The application for landmark designation shall be submitted, accepted, and revised, and may be withdrawn, in accordance with Section 8.3.C, *Application Submittal and Handling*.

#### c. Citizen Review Process

The applicant shall prepare and implement a Citizen Participation Plan pursuant to Section 8.3.D, *Citizen Review Process*.

#### d. Staff Review and Action

The Director shall review the application for landmark designation and prepare a staff report and recommendation in accordance with Section [8.3.E](#), *Staff Review and Action*, with the following modification:

**1. Application Acceptance**

Upon acceptance of a complete application, no building or demolition permits affecting the proposed landmark shall be issued by the City until the process as described herein has been completed and the Commission has made its decision.

**e. Scheduling and Notice of Public Hearings**

The application for landmark designation shall be scheduled for a public hearing before the Historic Preservation Commission and noticed in accordance with Section [8.3.F](#), *Scheduling and Notice of Public Hearings*.

**f. Review and Decision (Historic Preservation Commission)**

The Commission shall review the application and shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application in accordance with Section [8.3.G](#), *Review and Decision*, based on the criteria in Section [8.7.B\(3\)](#), *Landmark Designation Criteria*.

**g. Post-Decision Actions and Limitations**

All common procedures in Section [8.3.H](#), *Post-Decision Actions and Limitations*, shall apply, with the following modifications:

**1. Removal of Landmark**

The procedure to remove a landmark status to a property shall be the same as the procedure to designate. However, in the case of removal of a landmark designation, the Commission may initiate the application.

- i. The Commission shall consider and make findings for removal of landmark status and removal from the City of Sedona's Historic Resource Register. The removal of any designated historic resource shall be granted only if the Commission finds that the historic resource no longer conforms to any of the criteria as set forth in Section [8.7.B\(3\)](#), *Landmark Designation Criteria*, or any one or more of the following:
  - a. That the historic resource has been destroyed or demolished by natural disaster, accident or fire;
  - b. That the historic resource has diminished historic significance or value upon a showing of clear and convincing evidence, including that this diminution is not the result of deterioration by neglect or work performed without a permit;

- c. That the historic resource cannot be restored, rehabilitated, stabilized or renovated for any use permitted in the zone in which it is located without causing an economic hardship disproportionate to the historic value of the property substantiated by clear and convincing evidence. Proof of economic hardship shall require a showing that the cost of stabilization of the historic fabric of the property exceeds the appraised value as determined by a qualified appraiser of the historic improvements on the site.
- ii. If the removal of landmark designation from the National Register is initiated by the Commission, the Commission must prove the grounds for removal of a landmark designation meet the criteria for removing properties from the National Register as set forth by the United States Department of the Interior.

## **2. Effect of Landmark Designation**

- i. Upon approval of a landmark designation, the affected property shall be included in the Historic Property Register and on any other applicable documents as appropriate for its preservation.
- ii. No person shall carry out any exterior alteration, restoration, renovation, reconstruction, new construction, demolition, or removal, in whole or in part, on any landmark, without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission pursuant to Section [8.7.E](#), *Certificate of Appropriateness (or No Effect)*.
- iii. No person shall make any material change in the exterior appearance of any landmark or contributing factor, such as its color, materials, light fixtures, signs, sidewalks, fences, walls, landscaping, steps, paving, or other elements which affect the appearance of the historic resource without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness pursuant to Section [8.7.E](#), *Certificate of Appropriateness (or No Effect)*.
- iv. No person shall carry out any demolition, in whole or part, on any landmark, without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness approval from the Commission.
- v. Each property designated as a landmark shall be maintained to ensure weather resistance and a secured condition, faithful to its historic character.
- vi. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent routine maintenance and repair, as defined. Any exterior alteration, restoration, renovation, reconstruction in compliance with the definition of routine repair and maintenance shall be permissible without application and review. Property owners and/or their representatives are encouraged to consult with staff prior to any work being performed to discuss its scope and compliance with the definition of routine maintenance and repair; however, consultation is not required.

### **(3) Landmark Designation Criteria**



The Commission shall evaluate each historic resource within an area that is included in an application and may designate it as a landmark if it is determined to possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; and, being at least 50 years old or having achieved significance within the past 50 years if the property is of exceptional importance; and exhibits one or more of the following:

- a. Association with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of our local, state, or national history; or
- b. Association with the lives of persons significant in our local, state, or national past; or
- c. Embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or representing the work of a master architect, artist, engineer, or craftsman, or high artistic values or representing a significant and distinguishable entity which individual components may lack distinctiveness; or
- d. Information important in the understanding of the pre-history or history of our community or region.

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**The Sedona Land Development Code is current through Ordinance 2023-09, passed October 24, 2023.**

Disclaimer: The City Clerk's Office has the official version of the Sedona Land Development Code. Users should contact the City Clerk's Office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

[City Website: www.SedonaAZ.gov](http://www.SedonaAZ.gov)

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**SEDONA HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DESIGNATION of LANDMARK  
APPLICATION**

City of Sedona • 102 Roadrunner Drive • Sedona, AZ 86336  
928-282-1154 • 928-204-7124 (fax)

HL No. HP-00001  
Date Received \_\_\_\_\_  
Fee Amt. \_\_\_\_\_  
Initials \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Applicant Information:**

Name TLAQ PARTNERS LLC Owner? Yes  No   
Mailing Address P.O. BOX 1868, SEDONA, AZ 86336  
Phone No. (928) 282-4838 Fax No. 282-4805 E-Mail \*  
Contact (if other than above) WENDY LIPPMAN, GENERAL MANAGER

\* wendylippman@gmail.com

**2. Identification of Proposed Landmark:**

Historic Name THE CHAPEL AT TLAQUEPAQUE  
Location PORTION 336 SR179, SEDONA, AZ  
Name of Owner TLAQ PARTNERS LLC  
Address P.O. BOX 1868, SEDONA, AZ 86336  
Phone No. (if other than above) \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor's Parcel Number 401-19-027H (PORTION)

Please check desired historic designation:

Landmark:

- Structure(s), identify THE CHAPEL AT TLAQUEPAQUE
- Property
- Partial Property, describe PORTION OF LARGER PARCEL
- Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

District

**3. Historic Information:**

Historic Use(s) PRIVATE CHAPEL

Present Use(s) PRIVATE CHAPEL

Building Type COVERED NAVE Construction Date(s) EARLY 1970s

Architect/builder ABE MILLER

Integrity REFER TO ATTACHMENT FOR HISTORY

Condition: Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor  Condemned

Explain if necessary MINOR DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

Desired Eligibility Status: Local  State  National

**4. Description of Property (attach a separate sheet if necessary):**

**Site -**

Size of Parcel ± 800 SF

Site Character SPANISH/MEXICAN COLONIAL SACRED

**Building -**

Number of Stories 1 Total Floor Area 682 SF

Foundation Material POURED CONCRETE

Structural Material(s) CMU, HEAVY TIMBER

Exterior Wall Material(s) STUCCO (WASHED) OVER CMU

Applied Ornamentation NICHE, STONE OR CAST ESCUTCHEONS

Roof Type GABLE Roof Material CLAY TILE OVER WOOD DECK

Eaves Treatment APPROX. 2' OVERHANG, EXPOSED RAFTER TAILS

Windows ARCHED STAINED GLASS, STARLIGHT STAINED GLASS

Entry WROUGHT IRON GATES, LARGE SPANISH COLONIAL WOOD DOORS

Porch(es) NONE, PATIO DE LA CAPILLA ONLY

Storefront NONE

Notable Interior EILEEN CONN MURAL

Outbuildings BELL TOWER ATTACHED

Alterations \_\_\_\_\_

NONE

**5. Areas of Historic Significance:**

- Commerce  Community Planning  Economics  Exploration/settlement   
Governmental  Military  Religion  Science  Agriculture  Tourism   
Transportation  Arts & Culture  Other (explain)  \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Description of Historical Significance: (attach separate sheets if necessary)**

Prominent Occupant(s) N/A  
Historic Association RELATES TO "VILLAGE" CONCEPT OF TIAGUIERPARIE  
W/ TRANQUILITY & CELEBRATION  
Relationship to Community Development SUPPORTS COMMERCIAL USES  
W/ CULTURE & ART  
Cultural Affiliation MEXICAN  
Architecture SPANISH / MEXICAN COLONIAL  
District/Streetscape Contribution SENSE OF PLACE  
Context: Isolated/rural  Residential street  Commercial  Central Square   
CBD  Other (explain)  \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Additional Comments: (attach separate sheet if necessary)**

REFER TO ATTACHMENT FOR ADDITIONAL DATA.

Four horizontal lines for signature or text entry.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Owner/Agent \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by HPC Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

**Sedona Historic Property Inventory Form**

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Address:	336 SR 179 (PORTION)	Survey Site #:	
Historic Name:	CHAPEL AT TLAQUEPAQUE	Zoning:	CO - COMMERCIAL
APN #:	PT. 101-19-027H	Acres:	
County:	COCONINO	Subdivision:	PT. HARTS VILLAGE, BLOCK 11 + LONG & LEGAL DESCRIPTION
Owner name:	TIAQ PARTNERS LLC	Owner Address:	PO BOX 1868, SEDONA 86336

**BUILDING INFORMATION**

Construction Date:	EARLY 1970s	Estimated:		Known:		Source:	DISCOVER TLAQUEPAQUE SPRING 2023, PAGES 14-19
Architect:	ABE MILLER	Not determined:		Known:		Source:	ABOVE
Builder:	ABE MILLER	Not determined:		Known:		Source:	ABOVE

**Structural Condition (Describe the current structural condition of the property)**

Good (well maintained, no serious problems apparent):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Poor (major problems; imminent threat):	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fair (some problems apparent):	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruin/Uninhabitable:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Describe: WATER STAINING FROM THE ROOF ALONG TWO SIDES OF BELL TOWER. RED SOIL STAINS APPROX. 2-3 FEET ON EXTERIOR WALL SURFACES			

**USES/FUNCTION**

Current Use:	PRIVATE CHAPEL, BUT AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC FOR SPECIAL EVENTS
Historic Use:	PRIVATE CHAPEL
Sources:	DISCOVER TLAQUEPAQUE, SPRING 2023, PP 14-19

**SIGNIFICANCE**

**A. Historic Events/Trends** (Describe how the property is associated either with a significant historic event, or with a trend or pattern of events important to the history of the nation, the state, or a local community.)

PROPERTY IS WITHIN THE COMMERCIAL CENTER OF SEDONA. PROXIMITY TO OTHER HISTORIC LANDMARKS.

**B. Person** (Describe how the property is associated with the life of a person significant in the past.)

FOCUS WITHIN IS MURAL PAINTED BY EINEEN CONN & STAINED GLASS WINDOWS CREATED BY DEANNE SAGECK.

**C. Architecture** (Describe how the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.)

SPANISH/MEXICAN STYLE AS TYPICALLY FOUND ON LARGE ESTATES/HACIENDAS; REFLECTION OF MEXICAN CULTURE

**Outbuildings:** (Describe any other buildings or structures on the property and whether they may be considered historic.)

ATTACHED BELL TOWER, ADJACENT PATIO DE LA CAPILLA (PATIO OF THE CHAPEL)

**Sedona Historic Property Inventory Form**

**INTEGRITY** (To be eligible, a property must have integrity-it must be able to visually convey its importance.)

**1. Location**

Original site: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moved: <input type="checkbox"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>	Original Site: <input type="text"/>
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**2. Design**

(Describe alterations from the original design, including dates—known or estimated—when alterations were made)

NO ALTERATIONS

**3. Setting** (Describe the natural and/or built environment around the property)

INTIMATE PLACE FOR PRAYER, WORSHIP, CELEBRATION & PERSONAL CONTEMPLATION. LOCATION IN SOUTH-CENTER PORTION OF "VILLAGE" GIVES IT SENSE OF PLACE.

Describe how the setting has changed since the property's period of significance:

SURROUNDING LANDSCAPING HAS BECOME LUSH, GIVING SENSE OF LETTING EXTERIOR SETTING WITHIN THE CHAPEL.

**4. Materials** (Describe the materials used in the following elements of the property)

Walls (structure):	CMU	Foundation:	POURED CONCRETE	Roof:	CLAY TILE / WOOD DECK
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Wall Sheathing:	WASHED STUCCO, EXTERIOR & INTERIOR
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If the sheathing has been altered, what was it originally?

Windows:	FLUSH-MOUNTED STAINED GLASS ARCHES (EXTERIOR VIEW); RECESSED (INTERIOR VIEW) W/ PLASTER FINISH
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If the windows have been altered, what were they originally?

**5. Workmanship** (Describe the distinctive elements, if any, of craftsmanship or method of construction)

DECORATIVE 16-FOOT KEYSTONE AT ENTRANCE W/ WROUGHT IRON GATES & LARGE ARCHED SPANISH COLONIAL WOOD DOORS, EXCELLENT FINISHES AT WINDOWS AND BELL ENCLOSURE

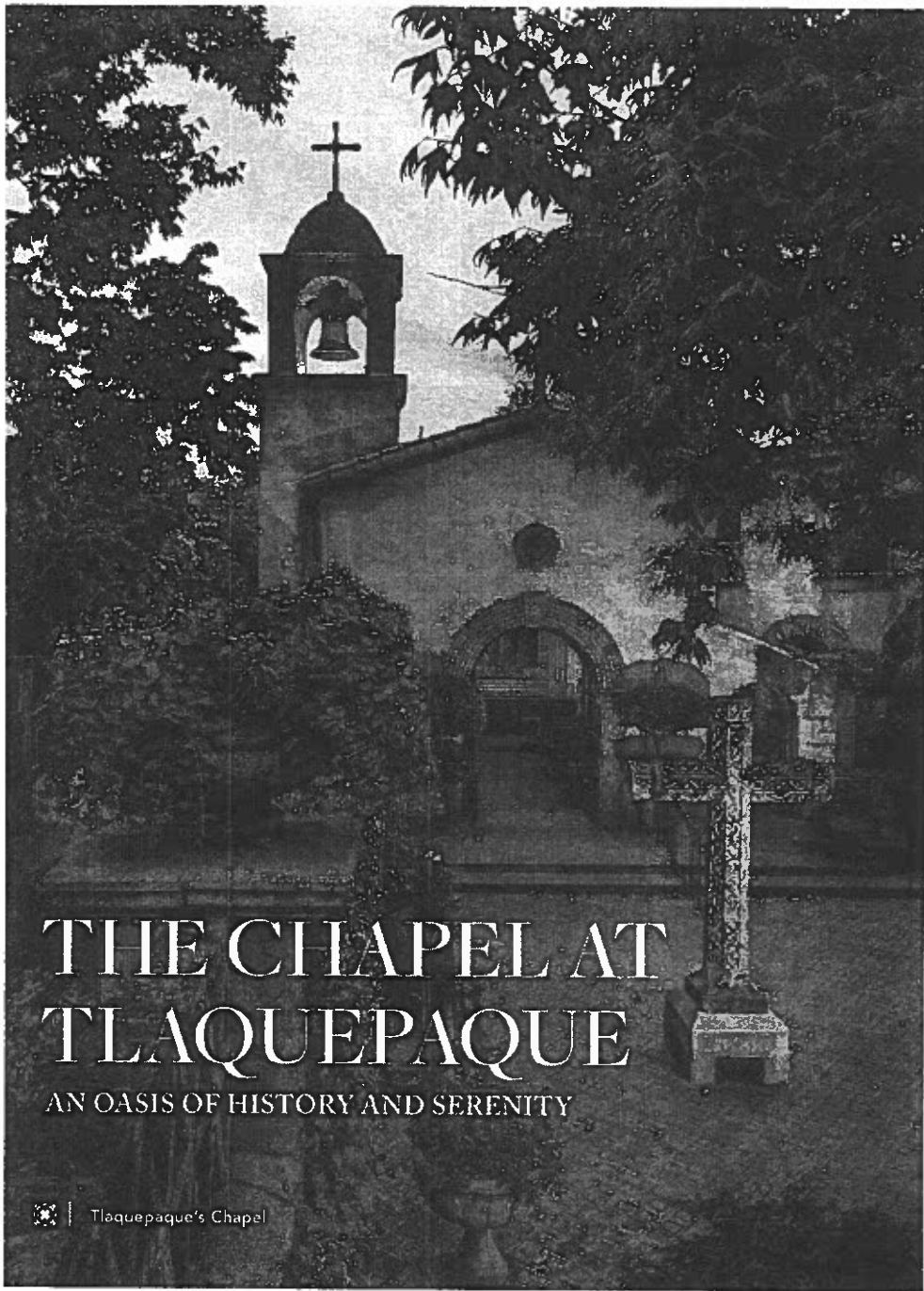
**RECOMMENDATIONS OF ELIGIBILITY** (opinion of surveyor)

Individually, the Property <u>is</u> eligible:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individually, the Property <u>is not</u> eligible:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Property <u>is</u> eligible as a contributor to a potential historic district:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Property <u>is not</u> eligible as a contributor to a potential historic district:	<input type="checkbox"/>
More information needed to evaluate:	<input type="checkbox"/>		

If not considered eligible, state reason:

**FORM COMPLETED BY:**

Name:	JOHN F. "JACK" FIENE	Date:	JULY 10, 2023
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# THE CHAPEL AT TLAQUEPAQUE

AN OASIS OF HISTORY AND SERENITY

Tlaquepaque's Chapel

HIGHLIGHT



A visit to Tlaquepaque Arts & Shopping Village is an integrative experience wrapped in art, nature, architecture, and peace. Abe Miller, its creator, was a traveler who loved to observe artisans at work in small villages. Artists that immersed themselves in ritual and beauty of every form. Communities that inspired human potential in a brilliant manner as they honored the past and brought it forward in celebration.

Miller hired workers to build Tlaquepaque who displayed heart and enthusiasm for the project — as opposed to licensed artisans. The completed project became the town center of Sedona. It's a place where nature and man have harmonized in natural artistry. This intimate village offers a plethora of experiences to delight the traveler — including a sanctuary of peace within its small chapel.

Constructed in the early 1970s, Tlaquepaque's Chapel looks like it's been there a hundred years or more. It stands approximately three stories high with its bell tower.

Miller designed this building to be a private chapel — similar to those on large estates or haciendas in Old Mexico. The hand-carved Spanish doors, its elaborate wrought-iron gates, the bell tower, and the interior furnishings in the chapel reflect a rich Spanish history. Like millennium churches in Europe; entering it can elicit a feeling of being transported into another time and space.

By nature, a chapel is an intimate place. A refuge for prayer, worship, celebration, and personal contemplation. Miller built it because he felt it was important for the community to have a chapel.

Faith and ritual play a huge part in the culture and lives of the Mexican people. As well as in the workers he commissioned to build Tlaquepaque's

chapel. Its simplicity and beauty are a testament to the reverence they held for the sacred art their hands created. Perhaps Miller's inspiration came from his gratitude for the opportunity to create a dream from his vision. What Miller accomplished in design, aesthetics, symbolism, and a reflection of the Mexican culture is visible in every detail of Tlaquepaque's chapel.

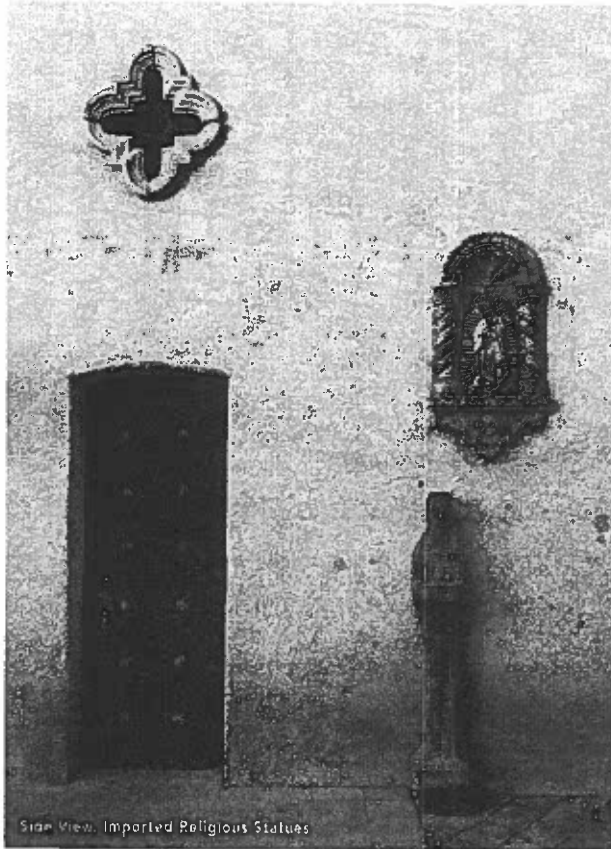
The chapel's entrance features two giant, arched Spanish colonial doors. A tall elaborate wrought-iron gate encloses them, creating an appearance like the entrance to a castle. Above the doors is a 16-foot keystone arch accented by a floral stained glass window. This small window provides the only light from the front of the building.

As seen on the opposite page, the chapel courtyard, Patio La Capilla (patio of the chapel) features a six-foot antique cross in its center. Miller got it to prepare for building Tlaquepaque. The giant sycamores in the courtyard lean into



one another, as if adding an element of nature's quiet observance to this corner of the village. Patio La Capilla also hosts a life-size version of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She is standing in an ivy-covered grotto with a trickling fountain. Passing visitors may say prayers to her. Others make wishes as they toss coins into the grotto where she stands.

Miller also imported religious statues from Mexico for the chapel's small side patio. Ornate stone frames inset into the chapel wall — hold two smaller statues of Our Lady of Guadalupe and The Virgin Mother Mary. Often portrayed together, because they both represent the Virgin Mary. Our Lady of Guadalupe



Side View, Imported Religious Statues

is a core element of Mexico's Catholic identity. She's associated with a series of five apparitions of the Virgin Mary's appearance in a vision before St. Juan Diego in 1531.

Standing approximately five feet tall is a statue of St. Vincent De Paul (patron saint of charities and volunteers). He was renowned for his compassion, humility, and generosity. He's cupping his hands, holding coins or donations from people passing by. A stone bench beside him, resembling Mayan architecture serves as a place to sit and contemplate. A smaller door with decorative metal art and a stained glass cross above it suggests a clergy's entrance.

Tlaquepaque's chapel is approximately 800 square feet, with nine leather pews that seat about 36 people.

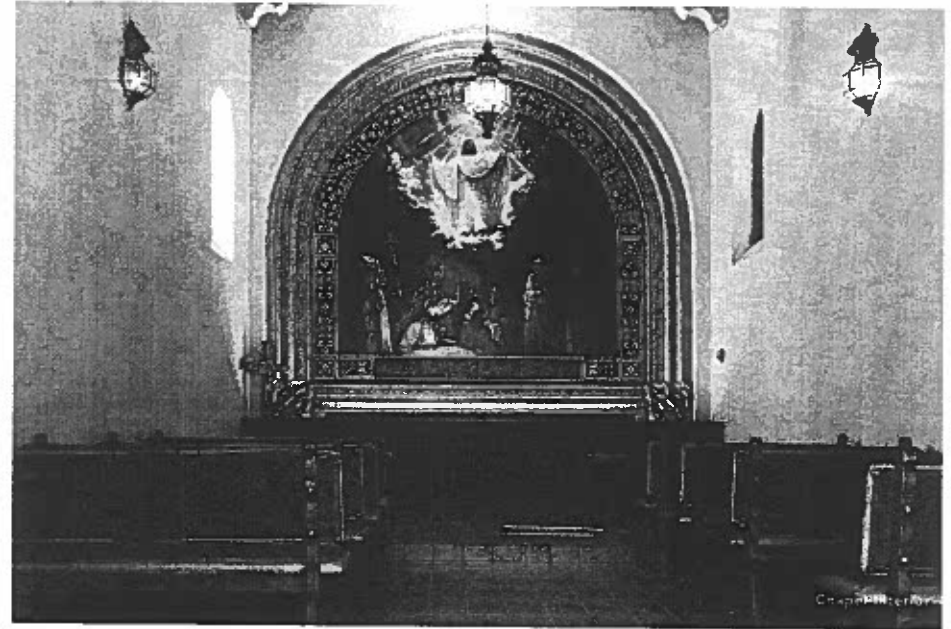
The floor is a beautiful gold-bronze tile with yellow hues. It gives a glow to the room. Although each piece was hand laid by unlicensed artisans; they are perfectly level and aligned.

Upon entering the chapel, a spectacular 11-foot by 12-foot painted mural fills the front wall. Its visual impact creates a silent reverence. There's a quiet, embracing energy for prayer and meditation that feels like it's transmitted by the serenity of the building itself.

This stunning mural covering is the work of artist Eileen Conn. Abe Miller commissioned her to paint it. The story is — a dream led Eileen to Sedona. Her husband Ted also had a dream around the same time that he was to look for a greenhouse. Arriving in Sedona, Ted developed a close friendship with Abe. He approached Miller and offered to barter the groundskeeping of Tlaquepaque — in exchange for a greenhouse on the property and the Japanese building, (currently The Secret Garden Cafe). The Japanese building would become Eileen's studio; making her one of Miller's first tenants.

Most prominent artists are multi-talented. Eileen Conn was no exception. She carved birds out of basswood and became a petit point artist. Petit point is a canvas embroidery similar to cross-stitch embroidery but even finer on a smaller scale. In addition, she made canvas drawings of beautiful Navajo rugs and relief carvings.

Many artists wanted to paint the chapel mural. Miller asked if Eileen would consider it after seeing something in her. "He first tested me before he gave me the challenge, to see how I worked. He was so cool — I loved that" she said. Referring to Miller as a "Down to earth, hands-on, CEO."



He paid her five thousand dollars, which she used in exchange for the rent of her Tlaquepaque studio. Before beginning the mural, Miller sat down with her and shared all that the chapel meant to him. He said he didn't see the building as a revenue space. He wanted the Tlaquepaque community to have a place to go to. His words were an inspiration for Eileen.

Eileen started out with a sense of trepidation and concern it might not be good enough. However, she remembered a passage she had read from the Edgar Cayce readings that said, "Before anything comes into the earth plane — it's already done on a higher level." She believed that and prayed for God's guidance to create it.

Her research of San Pedro Tlaquepaque, showed that the predominant religion of Mexico is Catholicism. As were the stone statues Miller was getting for the chapel. This led her to design a theme with portraits of St. Augustine, Pope Pius X, Bonaventure, Samuel, Peter, and John the Baptist as seen in the photo above. She painted the men having religious discussions in a progression through the

history of Christianity. Painted around 1973, the colors are still vibrant and the detail in it is exceptional.

Above these religious leaders, the mural depicts Jesus Christ standing on clouds in a deep blue sky. There is an aura of brilliant light and a white dove flying above him. Some interpretations suggest he's releasing the dove for peace. It also feels like a resurrection. Or, as Eileen commented, "Christ's ascension." Eileen revealed that "Except for his face," she had copied the figure of Jesus Christ from a Rembrandt painting. "I know what Christ looks like and Rembrandt didn't capture his face," she shared. "I didn't completely capture him either," she admitted — "but I did my best."

She wanted to include a verse from the Bible at the bottom of the painting. Contemplating which verse to use, she received a divine message. "There is one passage in the bible that summarizes the entire book. Look in the four gospels," was her direction. The verse she used is John 8:12 which reads, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life."



#### EILEEN CONN AT WORK

Eileen began her work by first painting the geometrical border. In the bottom two corners, she used web plaster to create the large gold squares with the Boy Scout symbol for the Trinity.

"The mural took three months to complete. One month for the base and border of the frame. And two months to paint. Billy Moon created the plaster base for Eileen to paint the mural. They crowned it in a gold leaf frame. Miller had his private pilot, Percy Horkney, fly him to Las Vegas and bring it back. He then installed it himself and he and his wife, Carolyn, painted the frame gold.

When Eileen completed the painting, Miller asked her to sign it. Knowing it was not all her original inspiration, Eileen signed the mural E. Conn in Bonaventure's book. She felt the message of the mural was the most important element and that people wouldn't really care who painted it. Miller was not happy with her signature. He insisted she sign it in red in the lower right-hand corner of the mural. He told her she would not get paid if she didn't.

Years earlier, when Eileen was living in Albuquerque, she carved the cross that's displayed on the wooden altar in the chapel. It represents the Lord's Prayer and the body's seven chakras according to Edgar Cayce. Cayce channeled a reading that explained the entire Lord's Prayer and what it means in more metaphysical terms. Eileen designed a corresponding symbol and color for each chakra, then added seven colored gemstones. She describes the cross as "The Lord's Prayer put into visual terms." She gifted it to Miller for the chapel upon completing the mural. Candles lining the entire altar during weddings, memorials, and special events illuminate Eileen's cross.

Eileen Conn's mural in the chapel is perhaps her best-known work to date. It's definitely worth a visit to see it in Taquepaque's chapel. However, all of her art, from an award-winning petit point Navajo portrait to her hand-carved birds — captures a depth of realism known only to a master artist.

There is a quote from Abe Miller on the outside wall of the chapel. It reads, "Some men only dream. Others make dreams come true." Miller created more than an artisan village with Sedona's Taquepaque. He created a harmonic resonance between nature, artists, and the community. The building lends a beautiful spiritual experience to those who enter it. An exchange of energy that lightens the heart and feeds the soul.

TAQUEPAQUE CHAPEL IS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC DAILY. HOWEVER, IT IS AVAILABLE TO BOOK FOR SMALL INTIMATE WEDDINGS AND MEMORIALS. IT IS A NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHAPEL OPEN TO ALL FAITHS. DURING THESE OCCASIONS, THEY RING THE CHAPEL BELL IN CELEBRATION. AFTERWARD, THEY ALSO OPEN IT TO CONCERTS DURING TAQUEPAQUE'S SPECIAL EVENTS. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT LIZ MILLER, EVENTS MANAGER, AT LIZ@TLAG.COM OR (928) 282-4834.



Chapel Mural Details, Eileen Conn

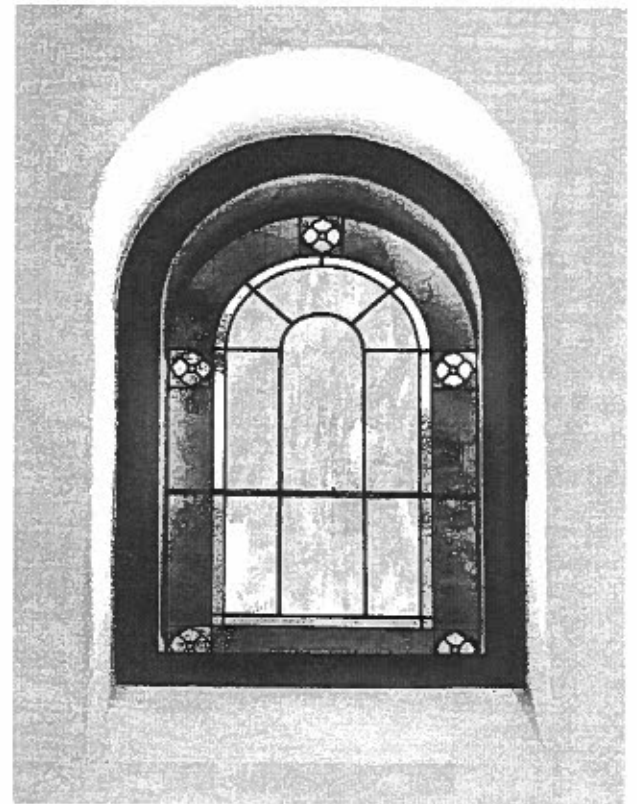
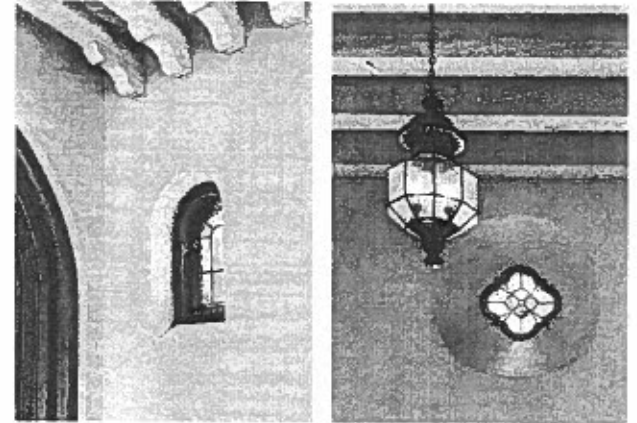
## BEAUTY, SOULFULNESS AND SPIRITUALITY IN THE DETAILS

Abe Miller and his wife, Carolyn, commissioned Deanne Sabeck to create the stained glass windows for the chapel. Sabeck was one of Taquepaque's first three tenants with her glass gallery Kuivatu. Like Eileen Conn, Miller gave Sabeck absolute control of the project from design to completion.

In keeping with the pure architectural design of Taquepaque, Sabeck researched stained glass in Spanish architecture. She wanted to bring the spiritual feeling of being outside into the chapel and chose a color palette inspired by the natural surroundings of Sedona. The earthy tones of yellow-gold, orange, brown, and bronze also correspond to the colors used throughout the building's interior furnishings. Sabeck selected hand-blown glass from Germany and kept her designs simple for the viewer's interpretation.

In-set high on the white-washed stucco walls of the chapel, her two large rectangular stained glass windows create a soft, and reflective lighting. This natural light streams in through the daylight hours and feels like Spirit illuminating the mural. The floral stained glass crosses of the smaller windows balance the natural interior light from all four directions.

ARTICLE WRITTEN BY  
RIVERANN POLINARD



**Nancy Burgess**  
**Preservation Consulting**  
**P. O. Box 42**  
**Prescott, AZ 86302**

December 28, 2023

Ms. Cynthia Lovely, Principal Planner  
City of Sedona  
102 Roadrunner Drive  
Sedona, AZ 86336

Re: Determination of Eligibility for City of Sedona Landmark program, The Chapel at Tlaquepaque, 336 State Route 179 (portion), Sedona, Coconino County, Arizona.

The City of Sedona Historic Preservation Ordinance Sec. 8.7, Procedures, defines “contributing” as a “classification applied to any historic resource signifying that it contributes to the defining characteristics and integrity of the landmark”. Further, in reviewing the City of Sedona historic preservation ordinances, I do not see a specific requirement that a historic resource be of a certain age to be eligible for the Landmark program.

The National Register Bulletin #15 defines seven aspects of historic integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

This assessment of the eligibility of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque for the Landmark program will take these criteria into consideration.

According to the applicant’s documentation, the Chapel at Tlaquepaque was completed in the early 1970s, more than 50 years ago.

The *location* of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque in the south-central portion of the Tlaquepaque complex was chosen by Abe Miller so that the Chapel, which is not open to the public but is available for special events, would be tucked away from the hustle and bustle of his large complex of Tlaquepaque. In locating the Chapel there, he gave it its own sense of place, but it is still well incorporated into his shopping and restaurant complex. The location has not changed; the parcel has not been altered (approximately 800 square feet).

December 28, 2023

Cynthia Lovely

Page 2

The inspiration for the *design* of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque as described in the application to the City of Sedona for designation as a Landmark was based on “Spanish/Mexican Colonial” features. The Spanish Colonial period dates from about 1565 to 1840. With the occupation of Mexico by Spain, the influences of Spanish Colonial architecture, particularly regarding Christian churches, would have been quite common. Some elements of Spanish Colonial architecture include masonry construction, arches, carved wooden doors, small, narrow windows, red tile roofs, wrought iron elements and enclosed gardens. In Mexico, these elements would often have been reinterpreted in other materials, such as adobe, and influences of ancient cultures in their building materials and designs would also have had an influence. The Chapel at Tlaquepaque exhibits several of these architectural elements: masonry (stucco over CMUs), arches, carved wooden doors, small windows (in this case, stained glass) a red tile roof and a walled garden. The architecture of the Chapel is unchanged. There have been no additional structures.

The *setting* was chosen by Abe Miller to include the Chapel in the “Village” setting of Tlaquepaque, taking advantage of Oak Creek, landscaping and gardens that are prevalent in the complex and integrate the Chapel into the overall design style of Tlaquepaque. There apparently have been no significant changes to the immediate setting.

To evoke the inspiration for the Spanish/Mexican Colonial design of the Chapel, Miller used modern materials which evoke Spanish Colonial architectural elements: concrete masonry units, stucco, red tile roofing material, three dimensional decorative masonry embellishments and small windows.

Literature included with the application describes the *workmanship* required to construct the Tlaquepaque complex, including the Chapel. Workmen hired by Abe Miller were for the most part hired for their “heart” and “enthusiasm” rather than their refined skills, reminding Miller of artisans working in a small village in Mexico. Miller apparently wanted a more rustic appearance than would have been achieved had he used highly skilled labor. The workmanship of the Chapel is evident in the building.

December 28, 2023

Cynthia Lovely

Page 3

The integrity of “*feeling*” can be elusive in evaluating a property that the evaluator has not actually seen. However, Miller’s inspiration in designing the Tlaquepaque complex and, specifically, the Chapel at Tlaquepaque, to reflect the Spanish/Mexican Colonial architectural culture while at the same time building a modern shopping center in a beautiful setting in the heart of Sedona, reflects a dedication to his vision to build an “artisan village” which reflects the Spanish/Mexican Colonial architecture that he so admired. In building the Chapel, Miller desired to create a space for “prayer, worship, celebration and contemplation.” All of these elements, and especially the interior of the Chapel, with the historically inspired elements such as the wood and leather pews, religious mural and stained glass windows, along with the enclosed garden contribute to the “feeling” of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque and its location, design, setting, materials and workmanship.

The *association* of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque with the traditional building materials and designs of Sedona commercial properties was probably very different from those existing in the early 1970s. But Miller had a vision and he created his dream. Today, and in the 1970s, Tlaquepaque is and was unique in Sedona. As a fairly modern community, Sedona lacks the traditional Revival styles of commercial building constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Miller took advantage of a beautiful setting along Oak Creek and created a historically based design concept that was and is, “one of a kind” in Sedona.

In my opinion, based on the criteria set forth in the Sedona ordinances regarding Historic Preservation and the National Register criteria for Historic Integrity, the elements of the Chapel at Tlaquepaque “contribute(s) to the defining characteristics and integrity of the landmark” and is well qualified to be designated as a City of Sedona Landmark.

Sincerely,

Nancy Burgess  
Preservation Consulting  
928-445-8765

## Re: Mailing Labels

Wendy Lippman <[wendydlippman@gmail.com](mailto:wendydlippman@gmail.com)>

Mon 5/6/2024 3:52 PM

To: Steve Mertes <[SMertes@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:SMertes@sedonaaz.gov)>

Cc: Cari Meyer <[CMeyer@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:CMeyer@sedonaaz.gov)>

Yes, that is correct.

I got a few returns - dupes with Garlands I believe.

Wendy

On Mon, May 6, 2024 at 3:48 PM Steve Mertes <[SMertes@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:SMertes@sedonaaz.gov)> wrote:

Hi Wendy.

I am completing the packet for next Monday's meeting and wanted to confirm my understanding that you received no responses from your neighbors that you sent the Landmarking Application Notice to. I need to add this to the packet for the Commission.

Thank you!



Steve Mertes  
Director of Community Development

Community Development  
102 Roadrunner Drive  
Sedona, AZ 86336  
[smertes@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:smertes@sedonaaz.gov)  
(928) 203-5108

*City business hours are Mon-Thur 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Public safety 24/7*

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**From:** Wendy Lippman <[wendydlippman@gmail.com](mailto:wendydlippman@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 24, 2023 3:49 PM  
**To:** Cari Meyer <[CMeyer@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:CMeyer@sedonaaz.gov)>  
**Cc:** Steve Mertes <[SMertes@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:SMertes@sedonaaz.gov)>; Cynthia Lovely <[CLovely@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:CLovely@sedonaaz.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Mailing Labels

Great. Thanks for the help

On Thu, Aug 24, 2023 at 3:44 PM Cari Meyer <[CMeyer@sedonaaz.gov](mailto:CMeyer@sedonaaz.gov)> wrote: