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DENVER ERUV NEWSLETTER

Chanukah 5784

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Message from the President

As we publish this newsletter, we know that everyone is deeply affected by the difficult situation that has been thrust upon Acheinu Bnei Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael, and there is much worry and suffering. So many here and throughout Chutz L'aretz, are bonding with our brothers and sisters in our holy land in extraordinary ways through Tefilah, Torah, Ma'asim Tovim, and Tzedakah. May Hashem bless all of our efforts on their behalf, and may we have a real and lasting Shalom and Nechama very soon.

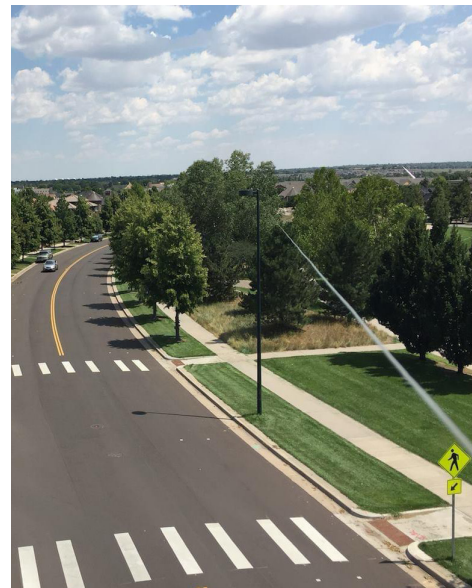
All the while, we must support and strengthen our institutions of Torah and Mitzvah observance here in Denver, Colorado. One of the key components of our Shabbos observance has been the East Side Eruv, which was established here 30 years ago. It is truly beautiful to see hundreds of Frum families with young children, walking the streets of our neighborhoods every Shabbos, as well those that need wheelchairs and walkers enjoying Shabbos to its fullest as well.

An Eruv has and will always be a unifier for our community. It enables all of us to share in Simchas, Shabbos meals, and all the other various gatherings over a Shabbos. With that in mind, we come to you and ask for your support, so that the Eruv can continue to be a unifier especially in these needed times of Achdus. In the spirit of us remaining united, we are seeking a 100% participation in our campaign. Please consider a donation or volunteering your time to this important organization in our community. Everyone's participation will enable the Eruv to help ensure the weekly upkeep, maintenance, and ensuring that the Eruv remains in function throughout the year for all of us to benefit from.

We firmly believe that investing into safeguarding Shabbos through our Eruv, will not only serve as a merit and protection for ourselves but also for Jews wherever they may be. If we faithfully observe and support Shabbos, Hashem will surely safeguard us - all of Am Yisrael - in return.

With best wishes of a Chanukah filled with light for you and your entire family.

Shlomo Fried



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Message from the Rabbi

Rabbi Shmuel Halpern

"More than the Jews kept Shabbat, Shabbat kept the Jews (Rabbi A.J. Heschel)."

With our much-improved quality of life, we don't realize how badly we need Shabbat. But we ignore it at our own peril.

Though we have unimaginable comfort and convenience, we are more stressed, anxious, depressed, and emotionally unregulated than ever before. Somehow, all the time-management and yoga apps in the world do not bring us the peace of mind that we so desperately crave. When we run around, explains the Talmud, we lose a bit of our eyesight, our perspective becomes cloudy, and we aren't quite sure where we're going and why we're rushing to get there.

On Shabbat, most of the world keeps spinning. Driving to work is replaced with buying seeds for the garden or grabbing a bite to eat. The pace may have slowed, but the process is more-or-less the same. But Shabbat isn't another version of Sunday; it's a world unto itself. On Shabbat, there's no need to be in constant motion. Everything is exactly the way it needs to be. We had all week to make our mark; now it's time to "let go and let G-d."

As honored guests at Hashem's table, we have no need to work, but there would be no Shabbat without preparation. Cooking and cleaning, shopping, and table-setting are just some things we do to welcome the Shabbat Queen. But before we can invite her into our homes, we must first make space in our hearts. Shabbat, ever the polite guest, enters only with an invitation; if we are content without her, she'll find somewhere else to deposit her gifts. One-sided relationships are an impossibility, and

it's no different with Shabbat.

Imagine a husband and wife whose business responsibilities keep them apart all week. Weekends, though, are spent together. But the husband has just purchased a new book, bike, and lawnmower, and he can't be bothered to connect. "Mister," says the family therapist, "weekends are your one chance to bond. Ignore the opportunity, and you're checking out of your marriage." Shabbat is no different. She visits only once each week. If we are busy carrying our week into Shabbat, finding ways to do as many mundane activities as possible, we lose our chance to experience the true joy of Shabbat.

Shabbat is a day of rest, a time to enjoy each other's company and appreciate the finer things in life. But if we stop there, we sever our greatest connection to the Source of infinite blessing. Like all living things, Shabbat has a body and a soul. To be mechalel Shabbat (usually translated as desecrating Shabbat) is to take the living and breathing Shabbat and to make it soulless, to turn it into a chahal, a corpse. Throughout Shabbat, we have a choice: embrace what is different about Shabbat, and escape the spin-cycle of 21st-century living or be as week-day-like as our halachic conscience allows and render Shabbat a corpse.

When we take a moment on Friday to yearn for Shabbat, realizing just how empty a G-dless world would be, and when we hold delicious challah in our hands and say, "Thank you, Hashem, for bringing forth bread from the earth," our hearts begin to open to the message of Shabbat — faith. We celebrate Shabbat with tasty food, exquisite wine, and good company, but the real meaning of the day lies in our enhanced spiritual connection to our loving Father in heaven.

One can eat the finest meat and sit on the most exotic beach yet experience absolutely no pleasure — the mind is far away and the heart inaccessible and cold. There are many paths towards mindfulness, but the most powerful tool of all is to appreciate

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that the physical sensation of Shabbat pleasure is a tiny bit of G-d's infinite love and goodness

Nowadays, people travel across the world and spend tens of thousands of dollars to traipse through remote backwoods with no WiFi to experience the simple beauty of being human. Well, we have the same and even greater opportunity every week, and it's free, with no need to schlep — it's called Shabbat. Though we may have high-tech lights, crockpots, hotplates, and urns, Shabbat is still a day of perfect simplicity — a time to just "be," just like it was for our ancestors before us.

The Jewish home is a sanctuary within space, and Shabbat is a sanctuary within time. The walls of the Shabbat sanctuary are the thirty-nine prohibited labors, and the positive Shabbat mitzvot is its furniture and decor.

Shabbat is celebrated best as a community. Though it's essential to attend shul all week, Shabbat brings an extra mitzvah to gather together for prayer and Torah. Whether hosting or being hosted by others, a Shabbat meal is a beautiful opportunity to bond with other Jews at the table of Hashem.

Each Shabbat the Jewish home is filled with an extra measure of holiness that is peaceful, calming, inspiring, and invigorating. And what the four walls

of the home do for the family, an Eruv does for the community. We wander around town all week long, schlepping along our worldly possessions. Come Shabbat, we, and our property, are at rest — we've arrived. The Eruv "expands" our living room and ensures we can keep Shabbat as a community. On this holy day, all the Jews living within the Eruv share one giant meal.

When we're on the move, yearning, and striving for success, we often crash into others. But when we're peacefully at rest, as we should be each Shabbat, we all happily share the same bread.

Interestingly, the word Eruv has nothing to do with strings atop utility poles and everything to do with the one box of matzah shared by all Jews within the Eruv. Eruv means mixture; my meal is your meal, and your meal is mine. There are no divisions. We're all one.

When the story of Jewish communal survival is written, Shabbat in general, and the Eruv in particular, will figure very prominently.

"I have a beautiful gift in my infinite storehouse of good," says Hashem. "Shabbat is its name, and I give it to you, my beloved Jewish nation." Cherish it. It's a matter of emotional and spiritual survival for our families and community.

What is over 14 miles long and keeps a community together?

By Michael Schwartz

If you answered the East Side Denver Eruv, you were right!

Did you know that the East Side Denver Eruv is so large that it is checked in overlapping sections each week! Another fun fact: When the Eruv was first constructed in 1992, it was checked to be intact 3 consecutive weeks before being declared operation.

Our Eruv anniversary is Shabbat Chanukah! **Special thanks to our Eruv founders:** Jay Moskowitz, Dr. Yitzchak Teitelbaum, and Jack Greenwald, z"l, and to our original checker and director, Yaakov Watkins.

Help the East Side Eruv remain operational, and celebrate our anniversary, by making your donation of \$260 (\$5 a week for 52 weeks)!

The Origins of the East Denver Eruv

By Dr. Yitzchak Teitelbaum

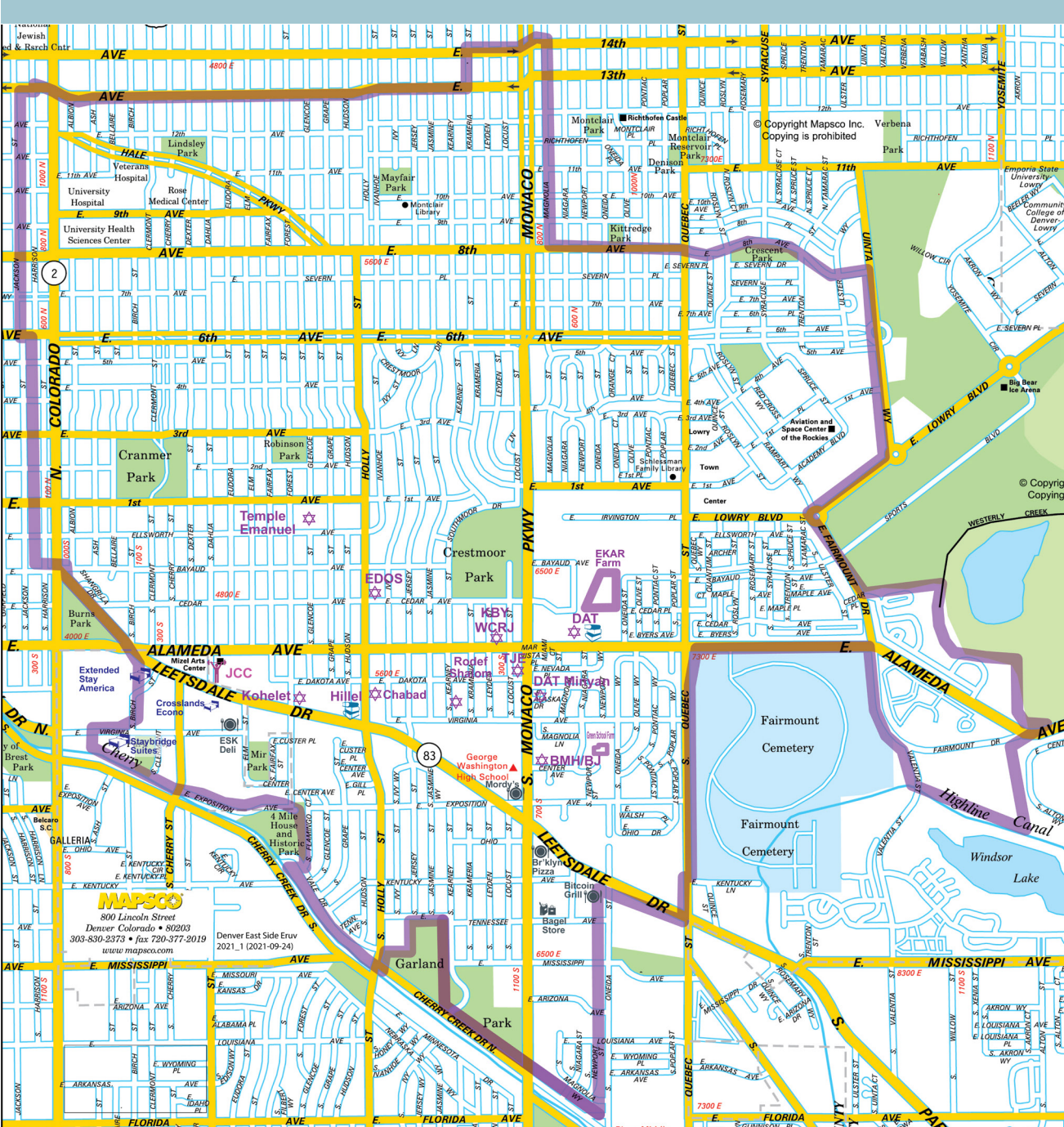
In the mid- 1980s the Orthodox community in east Denver began thriving; there were many families with young children davening at EDOS and TRI as well as some observant families at the BMH Synagogue. In the absence of an eruv, parents of children who were not able to walk to shul had a choice to make- one parent could attend services, but not both. Similarly, those who were infirm and reliant on being pushed in a wheelchair to come to shul were also not able to attend. And one couldn't carry anything on Shabbat- not a house key, tissue...nothing. In response to this situation consideration of erecting an eruv began. The core group of people involved in this effort were Rabbi Dr. Stanley Wagner ob'm, Mr. Jack Greenwald ob'm, Mr. Jay Moskowitz, and me.

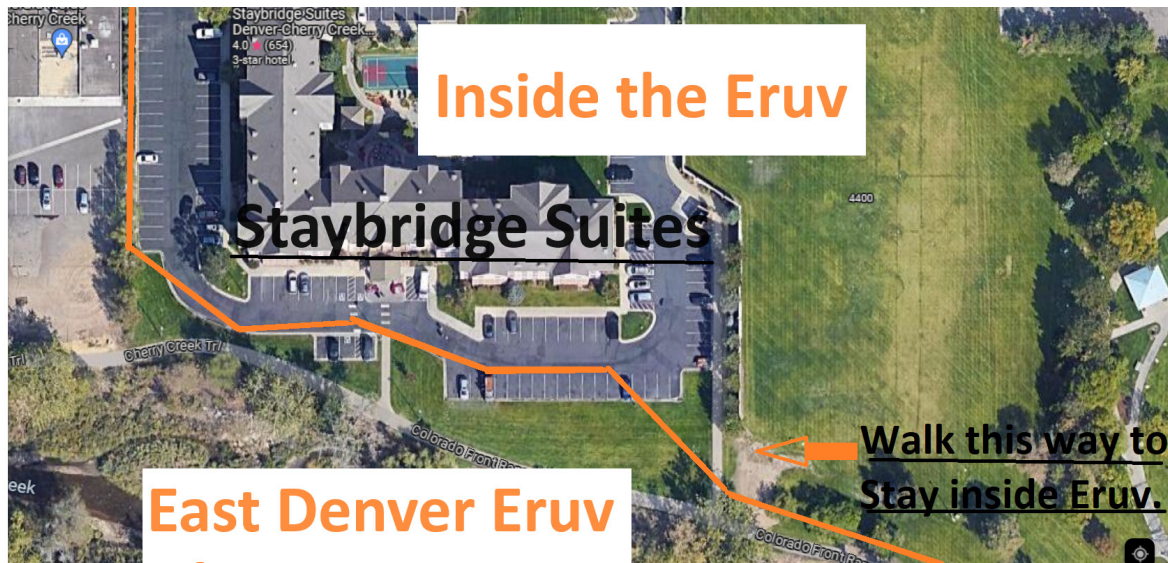
The project was initiated in 1986 and ultimately took six years to complete. Between the city of Denver, the city of Glendale, and the state of Colorado there were 16 different agencies that needed to sign off on this project. Jay Moskowitz did the heavy lifting and met with most of them, while I handled a few others. One of the major hurdles to negotiate was the need to obtain permission from Denver City Council. There was local opposition that we needed to overcome, and success was not guaranteed. We were very fortunate that one member of the Council, Mr. Tim Sandos, was very supportive; together with his assistant, Ms. Gloria Leyba, he was able to advance the measure and have it approved by the Denver City Council.

Rabbi Shimon Eider z'l was the foremost posek for eruvin in the United States at that time. We elected to have him be the rav hamachshir of our eruv so that no one- even people who might personally choose not to avail themselves of the eruv- could question its halachic status. We brought Rabbi Eider to Denver to examine the local geography and to advise us regarding suitable boundaries of the eruv. Together with Rabbi Mordechai Twerski who functioned as the local posek, and Mr. Yaakov Watkins, the first Executive Director of the East Denver Eruv Committee, we identified suitable boundaries that encompassed approximately 95% of the observant Jewish population at the time. Other rabbis who provided counsel and assistance included Rabbi Yaakov Hopfer and Rabbi Yisroel Kagan. Many other people in the community- too many to recall or list- also assisted over the years contributing time, effort, and money.

With approval obtained and funds raised, construction began. Construction was completed by late November 1992. We were told that the eruv needed to be inspected, and demonstrated to be intact, for 3 consecutive weeks before it could be relied upon for use. This was done, and on Shabbat Chanukah, December 26, 1992, the east Denver eruv went live. And the rest is history.

Full Eruv Map





Public Service Announcement

By Andrew Baxt

It is important to know where the Eruv lines are so that one does not accidentally walk out of the Eruv on Shabbos. A good example of this is the Eruv around the Staybridge Suites. As can be seen from the attached picture in order to stay inside of the Eruv on Shabbos one needs to exit from the back of the Hotel through the Cherry Creek park.

Special Thanks to our Eruv Checkers & Fixers

Andrew Baxt

Miriam Mezer

Mark Brooks

Seth Parkoff

Rabbi Yitzchak Estreicher

Eric Reimer

Kenny Harstack

Howie Shapiro

Chanan Margolis

Glenn Zazulia

East Denver Eruv Musings

By Glenn Zazulia

On our Website...

I joined the East Denver Eruv board in 2001 and created its original website, denvereruv.org, that year. We were one of the first of just a handful of eruvim around the world with an Internet presence, where one could find a map of our eruv, check the weekly status, and register for email alerts. Now, many communities with eruvim have associated websites, but searching the term “eruv” in Google still brings up our Denver website usually in the first 10 listings.

On our Volunteers...

Though we have had a dedicated executive director going back to our first, Yaakov Watkins, this has always been an organization run by volunteers. That really took off about 7 years ago, when then exec director Tuvia Gorden-Bennett, followed by Aaron Toys, implemented a volunteer checking system. Until that time, we paid a dedicated “checker”, who along with the exec director checked the entire 11-mile boundary. Since then, the eruv was divided into several segments, and a team of volunteer checkers were trained and now check their sections weekly.

I joined that team a few years ago and have been checking ever since. Except during the coldest months or weeks when it snows, I like to check my section by bicycle. That way, I get some physical exercise and fresh air while following the eruv lines and examining my set of *lechis*.

On some clever *lechis*...

Speaking of *lechis*, which are the vertical poles that form the series of pseudo-doorposts

around the eruv, we have a few very creatively constructed (and halachically approved) *lechis*. I'd like to share two of my favorites. With our last southern expansion, incorporating Cherry Creek Drive between Oneida & Kearney, we now leverage a long series of high voltage electrical transmission towers, with the high-tension wire serving as an eruv line. The principal of *gud asik* allows for a short *lechi* to virtually join up with the eruv line many feet higher. When Yitzchak Estreicher built this extension, he resourcefully procured and precisely placed the



following official-looking sign to serve as a *lechi*:

Completing this creative segment, he constructed the following additional *lechi*, made to look like an official telecom/network utility box:



These clever constructs not only serve an important function for the eruv, but their stealth, inconspicuous nature reduces the possibility of antisemitic vandals bringing down our eruv.

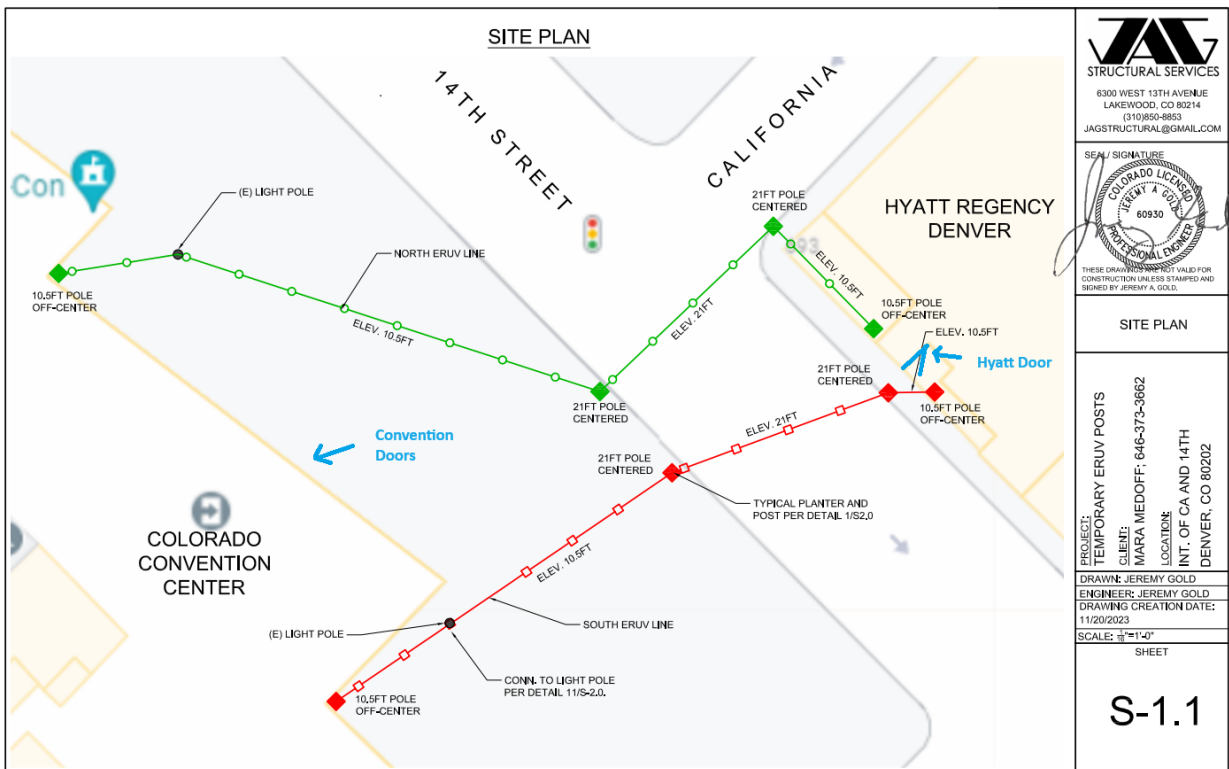
Wrap Up... If you benefit from and enjoy having an eruv every Shabbos, consider joining our group of volunteer checkers or the board of directors to help keep it up. Contact info@denvereruv.org.

A Project of the East Side Eruv

Andrew Franklin Baxt (Aaron)
 The Director of the Est Side Denver Eruv
 561-558-3499

I recently had the honor of building a Temporary Eruv for Mara Medoff representing the Jewish National Fund Convention here in Downtown Denver that was held last Shabbos. I want to thank Rabbi Shmuley Halpern for all his help with this project. Since this project was in Downtown Denver there was a lot of Formal paperwork needed for the Permit to set this Eruv up including the hiring of Jeremy Gold PE. An Eruv as you know is a symbolic series of doors surrounding an area enabling a someone to carry on the Sabbath. The sides of the door are usually poles called Lechies and the top of the door, the lintel is usually represented by wires. We mounted the poles into planters for stability. We calculated that the planters filled with dirt weighed about 500 lbs. each.

Note the below site plan.

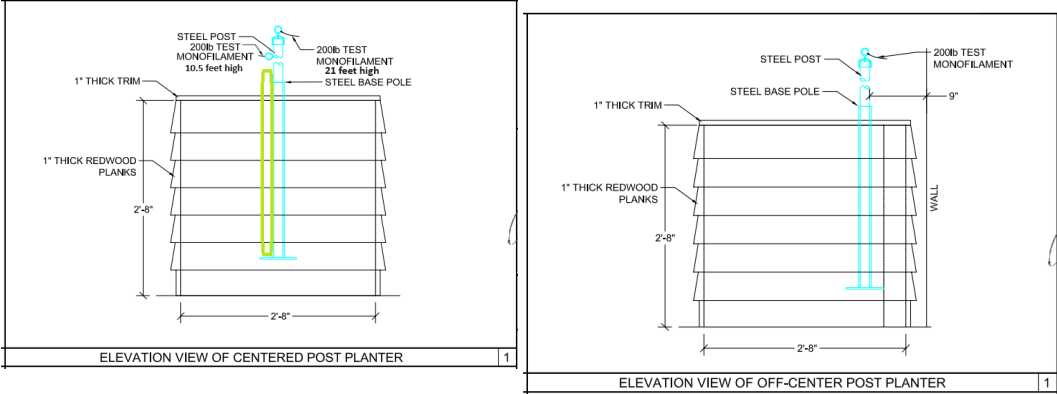


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There needed to be two types of leshies centered and side. There were 4 centered twenty-one foot leshies attached to 4 side ten and one half foot leshies. For simplicity we called the leshies planters.

Note the below centered elevation view and the side elevation view drawings.



As can be seen from the next two pictures the base and the walls are built like a house.

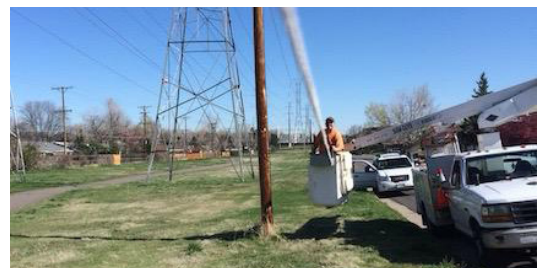
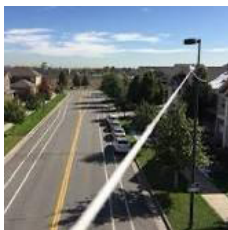


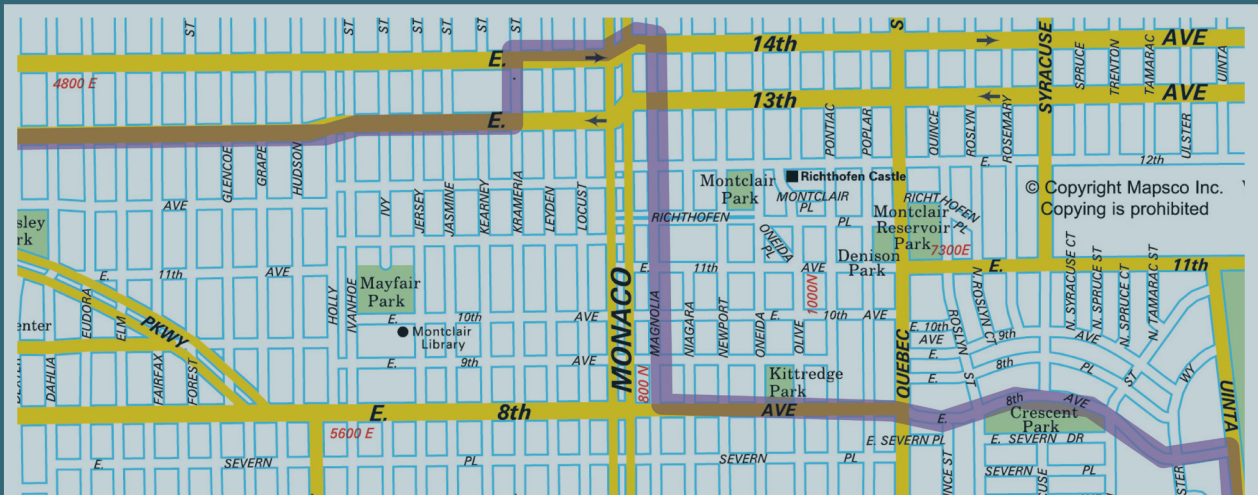
Two side planters filed with dirt and topped off with wood chips.



Me attaching a monofilament wire from the side planter to a center planter.

Photo Gallery





Thank you

Please consider donating to the East Side Denver Eruv, to help us keep serving you better.
Wishing you A Freilichin Chanukah!

Eruv Status Update

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