

Informal minutes Board of Directors Meeting
Chief Priest of Zen Center
December 19, 1968
9:45 a.m. at 1881 Bush St. San Francisco, California

ORIGINAL - DO NOT REMOVE FROM FILE

present: Suzuki, Roshi, Silas Hoadley, Tim Buckley
Bill Kwong, Claude Dalenberg, Peter Schneider, Yvonne
Rand, Katagiri, Sensei.

- Agenda: 1- Sokoji Building plan
2- Branch Zendos
especially the relationship with Jean Ross's
group
Berkeley
Mill Valley
3- Budget
prospective budget
New Priest
4- Tassajara report
5- Nature Conservancy offer of land
John Sunier's movie of Tassajara

Claude suggested that we not discuss constitutional changes today.

Claude Dalenberg read the minutes of the last meeting. They were corrected and accepted. We decided to go on to new business while Roshi could meet with us.

SOKOJI BUILDING PLANS

Roshi: it is almost definite that Sokoji congregation will remodel rather than move. The Main Hall will stay the same. There is to be a 2nd and 3rd floor-with 11 apartments and some additional quarters for priests. The basement is to be developed for parking. The current entry hall is to be a kind of kitchen. We could use the main hall for our zendo. The Sokoji congregation would use folding chairs in the Main Hall for their use. Now is the time to ask if we can practice here. We should try to make a decision early so that the Japanese congregation can discuss our proposal. And the Board should discuss Zen Center's future plans.

Silas: What kind of control do we want of our zendo. Do we want freer use of the space? Do we want control or sharing with multiple activities of Sokoji.

WHAT IS TO BE THE JURISDICTION OF THE SPACE

How much space to be want?

Would we be involved with fund raising for the re-modeling?

What would be the financial involvement/relationship with Sokoji congregation?

Apartments- how might we propose use of the space?

Peter: What is expected of us.

Roshi: The Japanese congregation expects us to eventually leave. Right now they want us to stay.-for financial reasons and because of the affiliation with the priests.

Silas: we seem to have a miniature of the situation for Japanese and Americans/relationship and of the possibilities for Zen in America.

Roshi: most of the members of the J. congregation are old and their viewpoint is not so broad. Tho some of them are very enthusiastic about the ZC students.

Bill K. proposed that we leave Sokoji. Past 7 years we have had essentially the same problem. Seems like a good time now. Sokoji-re. modeling plan is flexible enough for us to propose taking more space-eg. apartment space for students, meeting space etc.

Sokoji needs about \$20,000.00 per year income.

Roshi: If we have a kind of monastery instead of apartments-a good idea. Some kind of school system. Even when Yamada Roshi was here Roshi had this idea. where anyone can study Buddhism. We can exchange students.

"My old idea": we would have a monastery but people other than the monks could study too.

who would be in charge- Sumi Roshi, Suzuki Roshi, Zen Center Board, Soto Sect Headquarters?

Must make some plan- long range for the development of Zen in America. But we must not be hasty in doing so. Now Roshi has a great deal of responsibility. No set rules for future yet. Roshi wants to discuss frankly-way of doing things.

We'll do things from that in his name. More and More set up rules. IT IS NECESSARY TO DISCUSS THIS KIND OF THING MORE.

If many teachers and many students of those teachers, and teacher/student disciple relationships develop then there will be no problem. But right now Roshi and his disciples included in Zen Center- disciples have a great deal of responsibility as officers etc. no rules now- and that is difficult.

As long as Roshi was invited by Sokoji he must not leave many problems/confusion. So it is important to have a good successor. To leave to his successor some freedom. And not to leave his successor problems. (That is his successor at Sokoji for the J. congregation.)

Zen Center may want more freedom in using space. may want to feel more that the space we live in is our own. People complain that Zen Center is cold. That is not because of Zen Center but because of the building. Okusan is very strict, because if she is not the J. congregation will complain about us. We could manage young people better and more easily if we had our own space.

We would have freer space use if we were renting living space for students and space for other activities from Sokoji. If we set up some kind of school arrangement ~~there~~ that would be more understandable to the J. congregation-they would understand that things like band practice can't go on in the temple.

Peter: "we should lease the entire building-including partial use of the main hall. -lease for whatever amount the J. Congregation need for their entire expenses. We would be caretakers for the temple."

Underlying this discussion has been the supposition that Roshi wants us to stay linked with Sokoji. Might we want to split entirely?

Possibility that Katagiri would take over Sokoji entirely. Perhaps the new priest may help him. We should discuss this with Kawashiri/

Peter: the Japanese congregation- members are like our old grandfathers. We don't want to throw them away. feelings are secondary. What they feel/what we feel. Just concentrate on what we should do.

Peter: proposed that Zen Center buy Sokoji and rent space to the J. congregation.

Roshi: they will not agree. their feeling is very attached to this building/property.

Silas: what are we trying to develop?

Roshi: a Monastic school: improve the system we have. Set up more rules to organize students. when they can enter./etc. grades- three probably- one year each.) school system for full time students. room for part time students also. Training priests-one of the "subjects".

Claude: would Sokoji be interested in a part in this?

Roshi: no. But they would want me to do it. to take their idea. Some of the younger people may want to help. Mrs. Iwaida would help us.

Tim: when would we be able to hire 2 or 3 teachers.?

Silas: we could use the Asian Studies College. There are many possibilities to raise financial support for something like this.

Claude: how much responsibility should Roshi and Zen Center try to handle. What kind of limit. Only so much Roshi can do.

another idea- Zen Center can be thought of as a kind of umbrella with everyone under it- that seems too much.

Peter: in the '50's there was a propagation of Zen in America- primarily through intellectual study- then practice came from that. America now has changed. the greatest hope for Zen in America is through practice. We mustn't dissipate best students from study of Zen to administer such a big organization

Roshi: I don't mean a school in the usual sense. Just use the word to make the Japanese feel better. Really talking about a monastic situation with something to work on.

Peter: we could have a program in the morning from 5:00a.m. to 7:30a.m. and in the evening zazen, dinner, Buddhist class, zazen-week days.

Tim: we need to offer something more or people would feel impoverished.

Peter: offer alternatives for using time.

1-work here at the temple

2-hold a job

3-go to school

4-socially helping/ service in the city.

Claude: and extension of Tassajara practice like Eihei-ji's extension in Tokyo.

Peter: tassajara might more and more work for the temple here.

Claude: Zen Center seems more and more homeless. For a long time San Francisco zendo was home base. no longer the case.

Peter: proposed Zen Center lease a large part of Sokoji for the monastic school. When the building is being re-modeled we would set certain specifications for what we would want done in the remodeling. with guarantees on our part.

we would have a lease/rental relationship all present agreed.

Peter: finish the balcony upstairs within the next few months. After we make an agreement with the J. congregation we can expand to the downstairs. gradual growth. We can build piecemeal

along with the housing until we can actually begin.
we adjourned at 12:20 for lunch. re-adjourned at 2:05 p.m. in the zendo.

we decided that we should book passage for the new priest who will be coming in March.

Chino Sensei-it is very difficult at Tassajara because he is not in the zendo often and when he comes he is often late. difficult for the students. Roshi will talk with him.

New Priest- we should make booking right away and send him a letter giving him the option to book his own passage. We will send him \$200 to cover expenses in getting ready to come. He is coming to stay permanently- that is our understanding and his also according to Roshi.

Roshi: he wants to stay here. As long as he works for us and we want him we will support him. He is coming as a teacher and as an assistant priest.

"He will be the priest who propagates the Soto way-staying at Tassajara" He speaks pretty good English.

Claude: We should know him quite well before we make a lifetime commitment.

Zen Center has invited Ryogen so he has a responsibility to Zen Center. Informally he may help with Sokoji.

His job is to sit with Zen Center students. He will help Katahira with mimeographing, help with Sunday school. 1st year or so should go to Adult School to study English. He will help with working on lectures, be Katagiri's assistant when Roshi is at Tassajara. He cannot take regular full responsibility for the 1st year.

Claude: his salary should be a house plus \$300 per month for the next year.

Budget: presented by Silas on the basis of work which he has done with John Steiner.

Zen Center expenses per month are \$1300 inc the new priest's salary. and our income is \$1500-1600.

we want to send a reminder to members if their pledge is one month delinquent. should be done personally by Silas when possible.

WindBell last issue of 32 pages cost \$1000 for 6,000 copies.

John Steiner- he has been gone a great deal in the past two months or so. Silas will act as treasurer while John is away. We should try to train someone to do book keeping. Need a manager at Tassajara. Manager's job a good place to train someone who can take increasingly more responsibility. who?

Do we have people at Tassajara who, because of work skills, are accepted who would not otherwise be acceptable?

Peter: we are not fools. use people who can help us. But that is never the major consideration.

Stan White-manager/Ed Brown-head cook with emphasis on changing the menu to a much simpler one for practice period/ Allan Winter as the ass't cook.

Silas: no major expenses are foreseen for Zen Center in San Francisco.

Tassajara projected income for 1969

Students -25 @ \$2.50 per day \$23,000.

projected expenses

\$2500 per month= 30,000.

net deficit anticipated ~~\$17~~ \$7,000.
anticipated guest income \$17,000.
surplus for projects \$10,000.
less 1967-68 deficit \$15,000.

Silas: for the next year we want to try to live within our budget. We should carry our \$15,000. deficit for 2 years or so. Building fund-can we informally suggest that people give us money for such a fund. To pay off the Kitchen/Zendo debt? Public fund raising must be primarily to pay off the land debt. Christmas party-at Della Goerts. too much to have two parties. Eveline Vrait has invited us. perhaps she could have a combined one with Della. BillK. will try to work it out.

BRANCHZENDOS

Bill: people feel that they're being squeezed. that feeling has come out of conversations with Mel Weitsman. That he feels that Berkeley is being used/devoured by the organization/Board/Officers.

Bill expressed the feeling that Mill Valley is an extension of Zen Center. the older students feel that way and the newer students don't so much.

Mel feels (expressed through Bill) that he is being harassed. suggestion: have the group of students at each zendo take care of their own group/zendo etc. They have an obligation to Zen Center to help support the Priests.

Silas: not branch zendos. they have a relationship though and with the priests with Zen Center.

Claude: his understanding of Dick's idea: we are a corporate body. The Branch zendos could in the future spin off. we could spin them off and they could form separate corporate bodies. In the meantime we are one corporate body-spiritually legally, in all ways Branch zendos have the freedoms to separate.

Roshi: "My idea is exactly the same. My hope that they become separate groups when they are strong enough, have more teachers." Expenses etc should be discussed each time. I want to help people who want to sit.

Peter: is the group part of Zen Center?

Does the Board have any responsibility for the affiliate zendos?

Roshi: Mel, as a zen center member helping people in Berkeley area to sit. not in terms of helping Berkeley Zen Center. The Board is not responsible for the affiliate zendos. I hope that the time will come when we must help them when they organize themselves to be branch of zen center. If possible count the kind of activity of helping now as zen center.

Best to have zendos become branches, formally, get closer to Zen Center-Roshi. But now the zendos are separate, Board has no responsibility, and only members are personally affiliated, must become practicing members usually of Zen Center and participate, to train later at Tassajara.

If a student comes from New York and applies for membership what kind of membership-

students of more than a year with Tai-san can have zendo privileges but be annual members pledge should be what is appropriate while they are practicing here.

Housing- Zen Center has leases. legally houses are our responsibilities. Board is ultimately responsible.

Roshi and the Board appoint a housing manager.

Director of San Francisco is responsible for the Zendo, the Houses and the Library. Claude is appointed until the

Spring meeting.

Richard Guild- not sitting so no for housing.

1814- take as a new Zen Center house. so we will assume the lease.

The Nature Conservancy has offered the land which they hold north of Branscomb to Zen Center- unclear exactly what the terms are- 10,000 acres of virgin redwood forest with some buildings and open meadow area- five miles of the eel river runs through it. the offer was indirectly made through Sterling Bunnell. After some discussion we decided that we would be extending ourselves too much. Especially with the development of a monastic school in SF in the offing. And that we can't spread ourselves so thin at this point.

We set the date for our next meeting for Jan 14, 1969
Peter is to be the chairman pro tem.

Respectfully submitted for approval.

Yvonne Rand