

DRAFT – Subject
to Approval by
Board of Trustees



ROCHESTER ZEN CENTER
A BUDDHIST COMMUNITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

February 20, 2015

Minutes recorded by the Secretary.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions of the Board at this meeting were by unanimous vote.

The following were present at the meeting:

Trustees: Thomas Kowal (Chair), Kathryn Collina, Cecily Fuhr, Esq., Sensei Gerardo Gally (via teleconference), Chris Pulleyn, Thomas Roberts, Esq. (via teleconference)

Officers: Roshi Bodhin Kjolhede, Abbot and President; Jeanette Prince-Cherry, Vice President (via teleconference); Scott Jennings, Esq., Secretary and Business Manager; Colleen O'Brien, Treasurer (via teleconference)

Others: Prof. Donna Kowal, Co-chair, Special Events Committee; John Pulleyn, Head of Zendo

- ◆ The Center's Treasurer, Colleen O'Brien, who had planned to participate in the meeting, sent her regrets that she was unable to do so because of an urgent business meeting.
- ◆ The Board asked Tom Roberts to chair the meeting, since the only item on the agenda was a discussion of the possibility that Tom and Donna Kowal might live at or near Chapin Mill so that Tom could work at Chapin Mill on a regular basis and become more involved with the management, repair, and maintenance of the property. Tom Roberts explained that Tom and Donna Kowal would first make an informational presentation to the meeting and answer questions. Because of their interest in the matter, they would then leave the meeting, as required by law and the Center's by-laws, while the Trustees and Officers discussed their proposal.
- ◆ Tom Kowal explained that over the past few years he and Donna had held informal discussions with Roshi, Wayman and Eryl Kubicka, and others regarding the possibility of Tom's and Donna's building a house for themselves at or near Chapin Mill. This would allow Tom to work more regularly at Chapin Mill, while also keeping them within reasonable commuting distance of the State University of New York College at Brockport, where Donna serves as an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication. Tom explained that he would like to help with long-term planning at Chapin Mill,

while also working there regularly and learning from Wayman about systems and procedures relating to the management of the property and facilities. In the long term, Tom and Donna would be interested in possibly succeeding Wayman and Eryl as Chapin Mill Caretaker and Rental Coordinator when the Kubickas are no longer able to serve. If Tom and Donna were to have their own house at or near Chapin Mill, this would allow Wayman and Eryl to continue living in the Chapin Mill farmhouse even if they transfer some or all of their responsibilities to Tom and Donna. The Trustees and Officers acknowledged that it would be beneficial for the long-term stewardship of Chapin Mill that Tom and Donna live on or near the property and that Tom learn as much as possible from Wayman so that at such time as Wayman and Eryl no longer served as its caretakers, Tom and possibly Donna might succeed them.

Tom explained that although Wayman and Eryl had been on the lookout for a suitable property near Chapin Mill that he and Donna might buy, Wayman and Eryl had also suggested the possibility of building a small house in the former strawberry field on the Chapin Mill property itself. This field is a clearing to the east of the barn and parking area, just to the south of the unpaved continuation of the Chapin Mill access drive. Tom estimates that building such a house would require about \$100,000 of materials and about \$100,000 worth of his donated labor. Tom suggested that the preliminary outline for an agreement which Tom Roberts had drafted and circulated to the Trustees and Officers could be expanded upon if the Center agreed to Tom's and Donna's construction of a house on the Chapin Mill property.

- ◆ Tom and Donna Kowal left the meeting while the matter was discussed. Cecily commented that she, Scott, and Tom Roberts, all of whom are lawyers, had identified a number of financial, employment, and tax issues that would have to be resolved were Tom and Donna to build a house on the Chapin Mill property and that some of those issues could prove to be quite vexatious. In view of those issues, it was agreed that it would be preferable that the proposed house be built on land owned by the Kowals, rather than by the Center. The two possibilities would be (1) for the Center to sell a parcel on the periphery of Chapin Mill to the Kowals (under New York law, this would require court approval), or (2) for the Kowals to acquire a suitable parcel from a neighboring landowner. In either case the Town of Stafford's approval would likely be required. Scott pointed out that although the neighboring Seven Springs Country Club has a policy against selling any of their land, the Center had in the past exchanged land with the Club. Accordingly, one possibility would be for the Center to acquire a suitable building site from the Club through exchange and then to sell the site to the Kowals.
- ◆ Tom and Donna rejoined the meeting. They stated that they are very open to pursuing the possibility of building on a parcel that they would own and giving the Center an option to purchase the parcel and any house they build on it, were they to decide to sell at some future time. Tom and Donna will work with Tom Roberts, Wayman and Eryl, and possibly Andris Chapin to identify a suitable building site that Tom and Donna could purchase from the Center or one of the adjoining land owners.
- ◆ The Board thereupon adjourned the meeting.

Submitted to the Board of Trustees on February 26, 2015
by Scott Jennings, Secretary of the Center.
