

# Jorakuan Proposal

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Before we meet on 2/15, I would like to provide a proposal which creates a setting with an appearance of decorum when ER visits or resides at DBZ for any period. It can also provide a space for ER to do translation work and visit with “old” students on occasion.

We have stated: ER is retired and will have no administrative or teaching authority at ZSS. This was done to clear up the ethical issue(s) and set the record straight.

It is very unlikely he will see students for dokusan in his NYC apartment, do zazen there, or do any translation work there.

As it stands now, if ER comes to DBZ it is a virtual certainty that he will reside and see students in the monastery building. We understand this is a potentially volatile, and emotional situation and gives his detractors (and ours) the opportunity to protest, and debate his involvement in ZSS affairs. Simply not having him visit DBZ may be a short term solution, but not a longer term one, because of his unique association with DBZ and the support of a segment of sangha members (we of course represent them too).

If we want to leave the door open for Eido Roshi to visit DBZ, to spend some time there for translation work, Obon, special services (memorials, funerals, etc.), anniversary events, even to reside as a guest at sesshins in the future, we need to be consistently clear about his involvement and authority. The best way to signify a change in his involvement is with a separate residence. If that residence is not a ZSS entity, his presence can be maintained in a more neutral atmosphere.

Here is an idea that technically addresses many of our concerns: Convert, and make available, a portion of Jorakuan for use by Eido Roshi when he visits. This will move him out of the Monastery Abbots quarters, and provide for a level of hospitality and respect if it is done properly. This residence is ZSS property now, but we may be able to safely change that, while at the same time developing and protecting the house, if we use specific guidelines.

Will it be complicated to do this? Yes. But Jorakuan needs a lot attention to begin with, and this can be part of a Jorakuan “make over” that is necessary if we want it to remain a viable open space center.

Here is a high level proposal:

Convert Jorakuan to a standalone, nonprofit entity, whose by laws are consistent with ZSS open space spiritual goals, and whose charter is spiritual, artistic, and scholarly development. Its domain would include a more eclectic representation. For instance, Jorakuan could be called “The Beecher House Open Space Foundation” and may render and support:

- A site easement to preserve and protect this historical and natural setting
- Development of Spiritual Studies (Rinzai Zen Translation work, visiting teachers, i.e. Eido Roshi)

- Misogi center (it already has this official and rare designation – one of the few in the world)
- Yoga group center
- Tea Conference Center
- Development for other spiritual disciplines (Other Buddhist or religious groups, Martial Arts, etc.)

We will need to consider the following steps (not necessarily in this order):

- Put this small footprint of land into an easement with specific development limitations. It may even be possible to generate some revenue for Jorakuan with this step. The heating system, insulation, and general physical renovation plan need to be discussed. Improvements in these areas will be required in the future in any case, but if the building will be in use during the winter, heating will be a short term issue.
- Create a charter for the new foundation that explicitly supports the vision and goals of an Open Space, Not for Profit, which is entirely consistent with ZSS goals. It must mandate, in writing and spirit, the highest ethical standards and guidelines and methods of enforcement.
- Write a binding contract that gives DBZ and The Zen Studies Society priority for scheduling and revenue guarantees.
- Appoint a Board of Directors from the disciplines outlined above. One person from ZSS board, a Misogi representative (such as Yuho), Yoga representative (such as Kanze), Tea representative (such as Chika, Urasenke school), Hoenji representative, appoint other spiritual discipline representatives (e.g. Buddhist, Martial Arts, Religious and Philosophical groups).
- Dedicate specific rooms for use by Eido Roshi when he visits. He would reside here during his visits, and do specific translation or other work at this location. He will have to take his meals at the monastery (his dinner could be prepared and carried down). While he is away, all but one of these rooms may be converted for general use.
- Define a decision point in the future that allows for the nonprofit structure to change after Eido Roshi dies. If the formula has been successful, the open space foundation format can continue. If not the organization can be dissolved and have the property deeded back to ZSS.

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Thank you,  
Shinkon