

Visioning the Temple of the Goddess

by Jeanne Leiter

The call went out. . . Women gathering to vision a modern day temple complex.
Thought + Action = Manifestation

On August 19th at 2:00, the priestesses and other TOG Board of Directors gathered together for the purpose of creating a vision of our future temple and temple complex.

Inception: In May, TOG Board Member Ana Diaz-Ruiz asked Xia, the temple director what she was working on for the temple in addition to the seasonal rituals. In brief, she filled Ana in on the two new sections being created for the website and simply as an aside, that she wanted to bring the TOG women together to throw out ideas, big and small, crazy or practical, of what our future temple might look like and then maybe get an artist to draw it and mount it on a large poster board for the lobby at rituals so that the vision could become part of a collective imaging for the whole community as well as the impetus for a building fund. Ana enthusiastically volunteered to take charge of this temple task and opened her lovely Venice home for this gathering. Additionally, not to do anything halfway, Ana plans to have an architect put our ideas into a drawing and eventual plans.

Outcome: Thirteen women (twelve present and one by proxy) came together in Venice, California this August. We came with like minds, hearts, and spirits. After catching up on all of our varied lives and the customary noshing, we relaxed.

Our purpose was to envision the future of Temple of the Goddess. The Temple needs permanent grounds with physical buildings in which to carry out the numerous tasks written in its bylaws-for instance: holding rituals, conducting classes, and administering to congregants' spiritual and physical health. But, what is the first step? What must be done at *Square One* in order to end up with a Temple to call one's own?

We came with joy, anticipation, and not a little trepidation. Just how would we form the stone and wood Temple from our minds, our imaginations?

Xia eased us into a relaxed trance state, had us collect our consciousness and move it into our womb-space. This is the space that brings forth children-the human-kind and the creative-kind. As we moved into this womb-space, this void of creativity, Xia led us on a guided journey.

In our minds' eyes we walked the paths meandering around the Temple grounds, we placed our individual images of buildings, the Sanctuary, and various items throughout. All of us wrote down what to us would be an ideal space.

The twelve women being guided had differing ideas of shapes of buildings, although many envisioned round buildings. All saw buildings made of natural materials, to be eco-friendly and of course all power would be solar or some other Earth generated source. Nothing would contribute to the growing global warming problem.

A common 'stream' running throughout everyone's notes was, water. All of us saw ponds, streams, waterfalls alongside or flowing beneath walkways. Some of us saw a building surrounded by a moat of water, thereby causing people to step across or walk across a bridge.

Besides the buildings that Xia had us envision (Sanctuary, Healing Center, Arts Complex, Educational Center), many women saw other buildings, such as a Library, a Visitors' Center, perhaps housing for

priestesses or priests, caretakers, or for visiting scholars.

The grounds were imagined to be green with all sorts of plants and trees and herb and vegetable gardens. Fountains, gazebos, labyrinths would be strewn across the land to be discovered by the wanderer wending her way through the trees and shrubs in order to meditate or heal in the arms of Nature. All pathways would be gently lighted by solar lights and one would always hear the sounds of birds and windchimes. And Xia's favorite image from the brilliant visionary artist, RA, a black wall fountain with the Temple of the Goddess' principles carved into them.

We cannot possibly place all the elements envisioned on that Sunday onto Temple land. We cannot possibly satisfy everyone's desires as to buildings, fountains, streams, ponds . . . But what we can do is build on this first step. We can put all the ideas into the hopper, look at the common threads, look at the possibility of building those common threads.

Step two, which should be combined with step one and all future steps, is prayer. If Temple of the Goddess community starts to pray for the physical land and Temple, then begins to tithe or set aside an amount every month for this physical Temple, then step three of having an architect create a drawing of a proposed site and then step four of having benefactors give land, money, and time, isn't such a huge undertaking.

Each heroic journey begins and progresses one step at a time. It's time for step two.