

Sunyata Meditation Center Project

Background

The project to build a Meditation Centre in Houston, Texas, to be called Sunyata Meditation Center, was officially launched by Bhikkhuni Triệt Như on 6 June 2016 with the issue of the following Circular to all Sunyata Meditation associations and practice communities.

Circular

CIRCULAR REGARDING THE 5-YEAR PLAN 2016-2020

To the Management Committee of all Sunyata Meditation Associations and Practice Communities

To all meditation friends,

REASONS:

1. The project to establish meditation centers at locations where sufficient favorable causal conditions exist is an action of the 5-Year Plan 2016-2020, as updated by the circular issued by our Founding Master on 22 February 2015.
2. At the Sunyata Tradition Day gathering on 3 April 2016 at the Perris Meditation Center in Southern California, the English-language version of the central website was promulgated to Sunyata meditation students and the worldwide general public. In the future, the need to conduct frequent meditation workshops and retreats for Vietnamese speaking students, as well as English-speaking, French-speaking, and German-speaking students and younger people will grow.
3. The Texas Sunyata Meditation Association has purchased a 9-acre land located at 8851 FM 2445 NAVASOTA- TEXAS 77868 USA. The cost of the purchase was \$375,000. Ms Hiếu Như has voluntarily advanced the money as a loan to the Association.

In light of these favorable causal conditions, the Central Management Committee formally announces to Sunyata meditation students and friends in all 15 Sunyata Meditation Practice Communities the launch of the:

PROJECT TO ESTABLISH THE

SUNYATA MEDITATION CENTER

In January 2016, at a meeting attended by Founding Zen Master Thích Thông Triệt, Bhikkhuni Thích Nữ Triệt Như, the management committee of the Texas Sunyata Meditation Association and a number of meditation students from the Houston practice community, the following was decided:

1. The center will be named SUNYATA MEDITATION CENTER. Its Vietnamese name is THIÊN VIỆN CHÂN NHƯ
2. Founding Master Thích Thông Triệt has designated Bhikkhuni Triệt Như as the person responsible for establishing and managing the Center.
3. As the center is located in Texas, the Texas Sunyata Meditation Association will be responsible for legal matters (such as tax declaration, banking, providing tax receipts) and the Houston practice community will be the main contributor in the support and future maintenance of the center.
4. As the land is located in an area where there is no planning and building restriction, we will be able to build the center to suit our needs and the financial capacity of our meditation student body.
5. There is currently on the land a house with 3 bedrooms, with all modern amenities, a lounge room that can be used as meditation hall, 2 bathrooms, a large kitchen and a dining room. The house can accommodate a retreat for 15 persons. It is located on the right hand side of the land (from the outside looking in), and therefore the new Sunyata Meditation Center will be built in the middle of the land facing the road.
6. It is estimated that the size of the main hall, which will be used as a meditation hall and a meeting hall, will be approximately 3000 square feet.
7. It is estimated that the size of the dining, kitchen and toilets block will be approximately 2000 square feet. The kitchen and toilets will be located far from the main hall.
8. The two areas will be built as a single building of 5000 square feet. This design will minimize costs and provide easy access to those who have difficulty moving around. However, this early plan is just a proposal. It can be altered to meet building standards and the esthetic recommendations of the architects.
9. The budget for this project is estimated at \$500,000.
10. In terms of accommodation, there will be units arranged as duplex (group of 2 units) or quadruplex (group of 4 units) to meet the accommodation needs of meditation students. These units will be scattered inside the pine forest, and will be located not too far from the main hall and dining room. Each unit will have its own bath room and toilet.

Meditation students who wish to secure a unit will be required to pay upfront, details of costs will be provided at a later stage.

11. I attach here a map showing the land and the preliminary design of the project.
12. Detailed drawings will be provided when they become available.
13. Provided below are the bank account details of the Texas Sunyata Meditation Association. Please forward donations direct into the bank account and inform me of your name and Buddhist name so that they can be inscribed on a board of benefactors that will be located in the main hall once the Sunyata Meditation Center is launched.

Bank account details:

EAST WEST BANK:

Bank Routing number (Domestic wires) 322070381

Bank Routing Swift Code (International wires) EWBKUS66XXX

The address of the Texas Sunyata Meditation Association is:

8388 W. SAM HOUSTON PARKWAY Suite 208 - HOUSTON TX 77082 USA

14. Alternatively, you can also write a personal check with the following details:

Pay to the order of: SUNYATA MEDITATION

and send it to the address of the Association:

8388 W. SAM HOUSTON PARKWAY Suite 208 - HOUSTON TX 77082 USA

15. The list of benefactors of the Sunyata Meditation Center project will be progressively published on the central website www.tanhkhong.org

Today, I formally announce to all meditation students this project to establish a spiritual practice center that will provide a reasonable level of comfort to our students and our new friends from all nationalities, when we attend retreats at all times of the year, in winter as well as in summer.

I hope that meditation students who have achieved positive results in their spiritual practice and seen for themselves the benefits of meditation to themselves and their families will voluntarily step forward to lend a hand towards establishing the Sunyata Medication Center in accordance with the Charity Buddhist spiritual practice. I trust that the project will come to fruition if we are all united in our purpose and effort.

May all Buddhas witness the sincerity of all of us so that the project to establish the SUNYATA MEDITATION CENTER may come to an early fruition.

Homage to our teacher Sakkamuni Buddha

The 6th of June 2016

On behalf of the Central Management Committee

TN Triệt Như

Please all management committees distribute this circular to all meditation students in your practice community and publish it on your websites to inform all friends.

Preliminary design



The main hall and activity hall (which is also the dining room) area includes the kitchen, toilets and bath rooms. The front of the main hall is set approximately 160 feet from the external fence (the depth of the land is approximately 520 feet).

A quadruplex consists of 4 units (12ft x16ft) and includes a small common area and kitchen (10ft x 24ft).

The yellow line gives an idea of the walking meditation path. We will plant along the path prunus trees and trees with color-changing leaves.

A pre-fabricated home (mobile home) will be used temporarily as activity room and accommodation while the center is being built.

Fundraising

As at 31 October 2016, a sum of \$318,933 has been donated by 277 meditation students toward the construction of the Sunyata Meditation Center.

The origin of funds is provided in the table below.

Practice community	Number of donors	Total donation
Texas	47	115,048
Oklahoma	4	2,200
Nam Cali	21	12,950
Sacramento	24	14,100
San Jose	28	21,350
Washington DC	7	4,400
Paris	22	39,578

Toulouse	1	6,000
Berlin	0	0
Stuttgart	1	1,500
Switzerland	1	7,977
Montreal	0	0
Ontario	33	36,927
Adelaide	34	18,999
Melbourne	20	8,914
Sydney	31	27,691
Others	3	1,300
Total	277	318,933
Average		1,151

Current activities

A mobile home was acquired and installed on 6 October 2016. The building has been named “Serenity” building.

The first meditation retreat at the center was organized from 9 to 15 October 2016 for 25 meditation students. The retreat was conducted by Bhikkhuni Triệt Như.



Inauguration of the “Serenity” building by Bhikkhuni Triệt Như.



Walking meditation



Qi Gong exercises



Group photo of 9-15 October 2016 meditation retreat participants

