

THE COSTIGLIOLE CHRONICLE



February 2022



Thanks to your support and donations the Bodai Dojo, the Dojo of Awakening, led by zen and sumi-e master Beppe Mokuza Signoritti, can buy two houses and four acres of land with three vineyards in Costigliole d'Asti, situated among the beautiful hillsides of Piedmont.

We are developing a green building project to transform the premises to adapt them to our

needs and make them more functional for carrying out intensive retreats such as sesshin and sumi-e workshops. We transform this wonderful location to create a welcoming structure that can host people from all over the world and make it an ideal place for the practice of Zen meditation.

The year 2022 will be a year of new starts and transformation. We all feel very grateful that life

permits us to grow together and to develop a centre where people can come to recharge, live in a natural and ecological way, be in harmony with the cosmic order and – if you may feel the need: share a spiritual practice.

Work on the terrain

1. The Bamboo Forest



The winter in Piedmont was rather mild this year. This gave us the opportunity to start clearing some ground for the bamboo forest in January. Therefore, we needed to invest in an electric chainsaw, and with this tool we could clear the ground very quickly by felling some hazelnut trees.

The roots of the hazelnuts will be kept in the ground to keep the soil cohesive and resistant to earth-

quakes. Another advantage is that the roots will slowly rot and thus fertilize the bamboo organically. This biological fertilization process was chosen on the advice of Thomas, a specialist on bamboo who owns a big bamboo centre and specializes in growing bamboo.

We will plant the bamboo forest near the houses, to generate shade in a natural way. We have chosen to plant several different varieties.

As there are more than 100 species of bamboo, we selected the varieties most suited to grow in the soil of Costigliole. We are planning to plant the bamboo this spring.



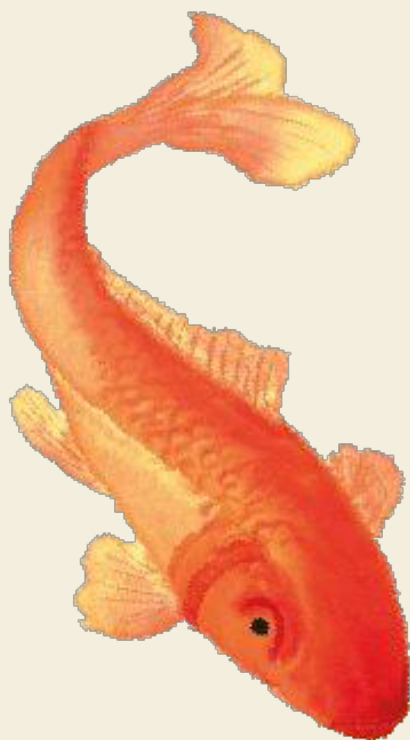
2. The Vegetable Garden

Not far from the houses, between the forest and the vineyard, a sunny slope on the south offers a great possibility to construct a vegetable garden of about 500 square meters. We hired an excavator to dig terraces. The construction will take several weeks, and we will plant the first vegetables this spring. The first seeds and plants we are preparing are garlic, onions, pumpkins and zucchini.

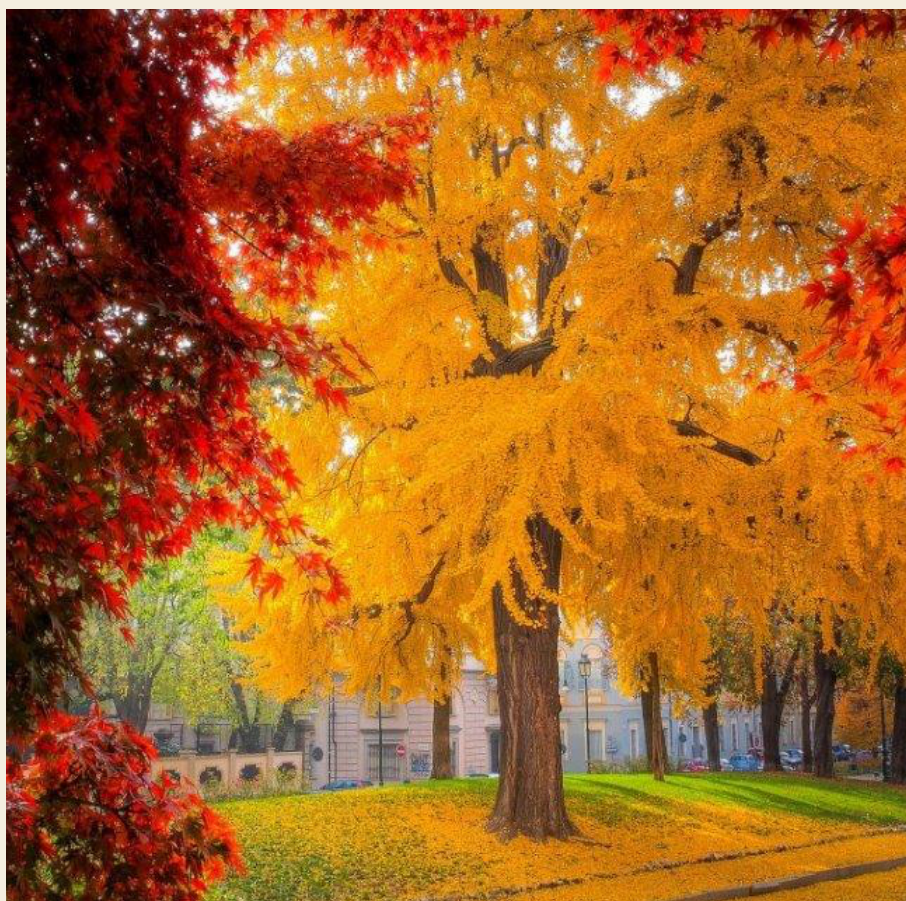
At the end of spring we will start planting tomatoes: we have 10 different species.

3. Water reservoir: the ponds

To water the vegetable garden we will dig two different ponds. The first one will serve as a water reservoir that will be naturally filled with water from the well, and a second one which will contain excess rainwater. The water of the pond will be naturally irrigated to the vegetable garden, which is situated lower, so water will be always available, even during hot and dry summers.



We also want to design a second pond which is quite deep in the centre with a rim of shallow water where plants can grow. In the deep vend of the pond, some koi carp will have their habitat. At this moment plans are being worked out. We will keep you informed about the progress.



4. The Fruit Trees

Different indigenous fruit trees have already been bought to be newly planted on the premises. One of them is the Ginkgo Biloba, a very old tree, already famous in ancient, prehistoric times. The female tree produces fruits which look like golden eggs which have a strong smell. For the project we will plant only male trees without the fruits.

The symbolic meaning of the Ginkgo Biloba is the coincidence of opposites and the oneness of things. It is presumed the tree has magical powers and wards off evil spirits. This is why this tree is often found in Japanese temples and places of worship. It is said that the Ginkgo Biloba was the only tree that survived the toxic fumes of the nuclear bomb thrown at Hiroshima at the end of the Second World War.

Of course, there are also many mature fruit trees on our terrain: figs, cherries, plums, almonds, apples and pears. These big trees need to be trimmed and this will be done by a professional tree surgeon. Of the fruits we will produce our own marmalades and compotes.

You can contribute by adopting one or more trees and receive one of these very tasty jams in return!

5. Flowers

We want to create a beautiful, colorful and harmonious atmosphere on the premises to welcome our guests. So, near the house the first bulbs of tulips, hyacinths, crocuses and daffodils were planted.

Later this spring we will also plant our own collected seeds:



The Construction Plan

We will construct a newly built Zen Centre, consisting of four separate buildings: one is the Zen Dojo in the back, the second one is the central building meant for facilities such as the kitchen, a dining hall and a space to organize workshops. The third and fourth buildings are the five apartments for the residents (front left) and the space to host 15 guests (front right).

To realize this plan, we are talking to the municipality of Costigliole d'Asti. They granted us the status of a Tourist-Destination, so we can develop our hosting facilities. The Dutch architect Dieter Blok is helping us to design an architectural plan. We expect to start the transformation of the houses at the end of this year, when sufficient funds have been raised.



Fundraising

An international group of people from Italy, France and the Netherlands are working on a plan to raise money and goodwill for the project on a local, national and international level.

This group, managed by the Dutch fundraiser Ingrid Oosterveen, will coordinate all future fundraising and crowd funding activities.

Winter Inspiration: The View

In winter the air in Costigliole d'Asti is cold, fresh and clear, and the majestic Alps show themselves in a mighty panorama. The vineyards are without leaves and the slopes turn brown and beige.



How to be involved?

You are very welcome to visit our project or to help by doing samu on the premises.

If you want to adopt a fruit tree, contribute to one of the buildings or to the works on the terrain, your contribution will help us carry out the acquisition, maintenance and renovation of the new Bodai Zen Center of Costigliole d'Asti.

Be welcome to mail us:

dojo@bodai.it

or donate once or annually to:

Associazione Zen Bodai Dojo

IBAN:

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You can also donate through PayPal or credit card by scanning the QR code:

