

The Cornell Daily Sun

COVID-19 Briefing News ▾ Opinion ▾ Sports ▾ Arts & Entertainment ▾ Science Dining ▾ Multimedia ▾ Specials Sunspots 4/20 ▾

14TH DALAI LAMA LIBRARY

July 9, 2016

Dalai Lama Library Aims to Provide ‘Scholarly Environment’ to Tibetan Community

By Jeanette Si

Local Buddhists proclaim it “an immense honor” that Ithaca was chosen from dozens of cities to host the 14th Dalai Lama’s Library.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama’s Library and Museum will contain the “writings, teachings and artifacts of all 14 Dalai Lamas,” according to Mayor Svante Myrick ’09, and will “include housing for students of Buddhism and visiting Lamas.”

Susan Ritter, the town of Ithaca’s director of planning, said that the library will be located on South Hill, where the North American division of the Dalai Lama’s Namgyal Monastery currently resides.

The town is currently waiting to receive plans for the library’s construction, according to Ritter.

Tenzin Dechen ’18, the president of the Tibet Initiative at Cornell, said that the library will provide more diverse opportunities for the greater Ithaca community to learn about Buddhism and Tibetan culture.

“Personally, I am very excited for this decision to place the library in Ithaca. Given that Ithaca is the North American seat of the Dalai Lama, this will allow for a more scholarly environment for the Tibetan community here and supporters of Tibet,” she said.

Cornell is home to a thriving Tibetan community which would consider the library’s construction an honor, according to Andrew Card’16, the founding president of the Tibet Initiative.

“The Tibetan community in Ithaca is very vibrant and devoted to preserving their heritage,” Card said. “I am sure that the Tibetan community in Ithaca is feeling overwhelmed with joy. The lineage of the Dalai Lamas is one of the most important pillars of Tibetan civilization and for Ithaca to be chosen for his library is an immense honor.”

Dechen added that Ithaca’s natural beauty and academic focus make it an ideal location for a library dedicated to the study of Buddhism, saying these features set the city apart from other applicants.

“Qualities that make Ithaca stand out amongst the many other cities includes its scholarly environment in the Ithaca community,” Dechen said. “Schools like Cornell University and Ithaca College both encourage research in the humanities. Ithaca’s beautiful and lush environment also serves as a perfect place to enact a library.”

Card said the greater Ithaca community is also receptive to Tibetan issues as a whole, and stressed that the library will be an enlightening establishment for Tibetans and non-Tibetans alike.

“The Ithaca community has been very supportive of the Tibetan community. It’s common to see non-Tibetans attending events at the local Tibetan monastery,” said Card. “I am sure [the library] will provide incredible resources for [all] who wish to explore the richness of Tibetan culture or to find inspiration from the Dalai Lama’s teachings.”