finally, because we discovered, soon, that it spoke, too, for all the others — and they accepted that it was part of their communal dream. So altogether the pattern language for that campus is really like a poem of two hundred statements going from the very, very big things about this place all the way down to the little tiny ones about window sills and plants and so forth. It describes in almost poetic but concrete fashion what that world could be like.

Remember now, all this was written before we had designed anything. At that time, we were still trying to imagine the new campus, in our minds.

The beauty of having a verbal picture like a pattern language is its elasticity. It is easy to take its elements apart. This comes about, above all, because the picture is drawn in words. A drawing is too monolithic; even when it contains separable elements, it is much harder to take its elements apart or to discuss them separately. But with a picture made of words, you can discuss the elements one by one, throw some out when they don't work, improve them, work gradually to a proper understanding and agreement based on debate and refinement.

We had a committee of faculty and students that was representing this process — a committee of about ten people. They used to meet with us discussing the pattern language as we gradually put it together. Finally, when there was a general agreement in the committee about an item, then that item would stay in; and if there were points that were debatable or arguable, there'd be some pretty ferocious discussions . . . until it got ironed out.

That committee knew that they were ultimately going to go back to the full community to get the pattern language, as a whole, voted upon. So they were doing their best to represent what they felt was in everybody's understanding. It didn't take all that long. It took maybe three or four or five months, not a long time.


Water and trees: the lake we built for teachers, where they could walk and dream, as they had asked of us.

9 / WE CREATED: THEY CREATED

I must make it clear that the pattern language, though it came from the mouths and hearts of community members, *was created by us*. It was hard to create, an artistic and poetic task: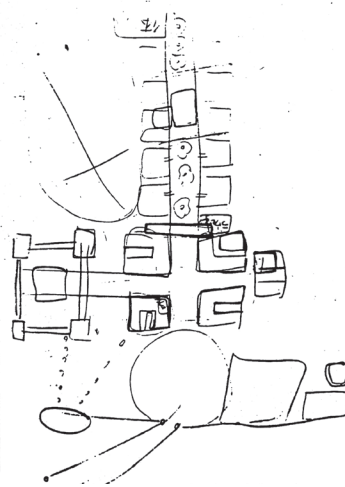 but although it was we who wrote it, and put it together, it was *their* dreams, their hopes, and their aspirations and desires from which it was made. So when they saw it, they recognized it as being theirs. It *was* theirs. And that is what I mean by a collective vision.
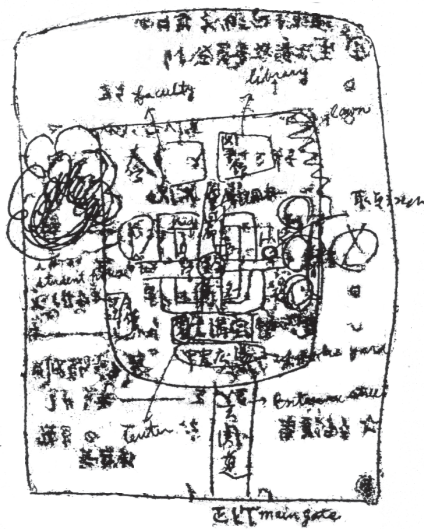
One of the faculty of the Eishin campus made this sketch to show how, in his mind, the communal vision achieved in the pattern language might fit together on the ground. The coherence of the drawing, reflects the coherence already present in the verbal and poetic version.

Another sketch, made by another teacher

So in the end we reached an overall pattern language — a statement of the community's collective vision. To make it work, this statement had to be very *physical*. Even though it was all just words it really described what this campus was going to be like, to the point where after it had been created, discussed, hammered out and then finally voted upon and they said Yes. At that point I used to give this agreed-on pattern language to a particular student or teacher or somebody else in the community, and I'd say, just make me a drawing of what you think this campus is like now.

We still have some of their drawings. Each person could visualize the whole community. Of course no two people visualized it exactly the same. Often they weren't even *nearly* the same in detailed arrangement. But the drawings were all the same in the deeper sense that they all had the same broad structure. They all had the same main place where you came in, they had an entrance gate, and then a second entrance gate — because these were items in the pattern language. They all had a lake and a small stream because that was in the pattern language. They all had a

street where the high school part was; they all had a kind of large elongated courtyard where the college buildings were arranged, because these were in the pattern language.

So each person shared a level of communal understanding. In other words what was clear at that point were the main foci, the main buildings, overall density, juxtaposition, the nature of the buildings, how big were they, how were they related to each other, how people walked about. We knew for instance, at that point, that each classroom was essentially in a separate building (actually two classrooms per building, as we finally did it). So if people drew these things, they did so because they had already agreed that that was the way it ought to be.

So this picture, purely verbal, not very long, not much more than about ten pages long, represented the community members' collective belief about themselves, and about what they wanted that nine-block part of Tokyo to be. They knew then that it would support their life in the way that they understood it and wanted it. They felt then that it was worth going for.

Later they thanked us for building a new way of life for them, because they knew that what they had in that collective vision, and in the actual campus as we built it for them later, was indeed a way of life, and it was their way of life, the way they wanted it.
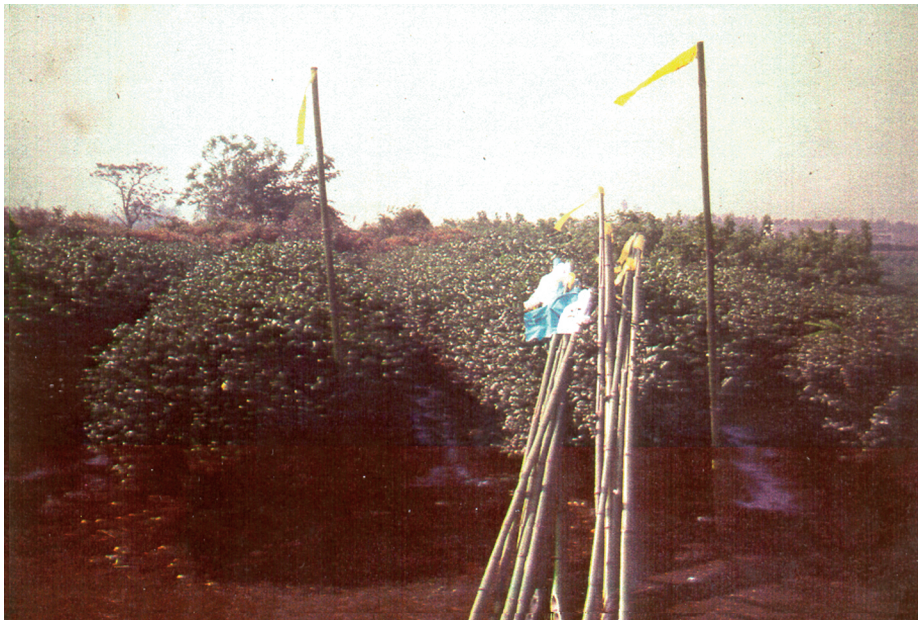
Flags in the fields of the site,
as we prepared to use the pattern language to imagine and walk out the plan.

It is hard work to get a picture like this. But once you have it, it clarifies everything, it becomes a driving force, and the future layout of buildings and development of the site becomes rather easy.

In the Eishin project, once we all had our verbal picture, our collective vision, in the form of the pattern language, then we began to lay the campus out, bit by bit, on the ground. This involves a process which is quite different from the pattern language itself. You have a picture of the new community, you have a verbal picture of it, but of course it is quite another matter to fit that picture to the reality that is actually on the ground, step by step, bush by bush, there's a tree here, there's a beautiful view there, the wind blows a little bit too much over here and so on and so forth. So you are trying to set down this structure that you've understood in verbal terms — now you're trying to set it down physically on the ground.

What we did in fact, was to get a few hundred flags on six-foot poles, and then placed these flags, gradually, throughout the land until we had the structure of the public spaces: what I call (in chap-

ter 3) the hulls of the neighborhood. When we were done it almost looked like a samurai army on the move. But these flags allowed us to grasp, collectively, where one walked, which public spaces were formed in which places. We — and all the members of the community who came there with us — could imagine the public land, feel it, and walk through it. The spaces formed by the flags created the public hull, the public living rooms of society, for that community, on those tea bushes in their nine-block area. That's what we were doing with the flags.

I have come to believe in recent years that the public hull, the hull of public space, is probably best done by the builders with the help and cooperation of the individual families and businesses. But that is an act in itself, the creation of this public hull of space which is going to take the place of all those burnt-out parking lots and nowhere bits of street and asphalt and so forth that we have come to know as the open space in our modern cities. So we set that in place, too. Usually, it was the thing which we did first.

We also made a big working model of the

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Placing flags in the fields of the site where the Eishin campus was later built.
This was the method used to make the plan from the pattern language.

Eishin campus, in rough painted cardboard, at a scale of 1:100. It was about 10 feet square, and filled a whole room, yet it was quite rough so it could be changed and improved without harm. This model was there for everybody to use and work at. And we had this model in a room in the old school, where everybody could see it and look at it. Every day people used to come in and look at this thing. It made it possible to visualize the public hull, in physical substance, so that people could imagine how the individual buildings were going to help to form the public hull.

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10 / THE VITAL NEED FOR A COLLECTIVE VISION

So the problem of collective vision remains: How do we get a vision of the city or of one of its neighborhoods which is a *true* vision, a true collective vision that is shared and held by everybody in the neighborhood?

I believe I have given the answer. *Do it with the people, pulling the statements from their own lips. Make sure you ask each person, always, what is the deepest feeling you have about life, and what does* THAT *dictate. Go one pattern at a time, and when debate is needed, debate it, argue it out, one pattern at a time. Have someone — an architect, anyone trained like the staff members of the Center for Environmental Structure, who is not concerned to impose an egocentric image on the community — coordinating the work of putting this language together so that it can be made coherent and useful — and, if possible, poetic.*

Do all this with a careful awareness of deep morphology so that — as has been explained in chapters 11 and 13 of Book 2 — the system of patterns and sequences becomes *generative*, capable of conjuring up a whole geometric world when it is let loose.