Workers try to beat winter at dorm site

The new dorm going up on the far-West Campus is the result of three years of planning, thousands of man-hours of work, and an MIT investment of more than $5 million.

The dorm plans date back to 1971, when the Committee on Student Environment (CSE) was instructed to begin a new study, released in the spring of 1973, replaced a 1963 CSE report which had provided the basis for planning of MacGregor House, and for the renovation of Burton House.

The CSE recommended that the "big house" concept — the idea of a house unit of 300 or more people — be rejected in favor of smaller house units of about fifty residents. By using these small house units, the committee said, students could find their own social group among a group larger than the average suite in the newer dorms, but smaller than the whole house.

The dorm is being constructed along those lines. A total of six units, each housing 50 residents, are planned along a long central hallway. Each three-story unit will center on a common area with a kitchen where residents will be able to cook. A connecting hallway with MacGregor will allow residents to take Commons and use the laundry facilities in that dorm.

Construction of the dorm began in June, and is scheduled for completion next September. Labor problems during the summer, however, have slowed the work, and MIT officials are not certain now that the dorm will be fully ready for occupancy in time for next year's incoming students.