COUNCILOR SAYS MIT CONDO BUY UNLAWFUL

By Tony Zamparuti

MIT's recent purchase of eight townhouses in Cambridge violates two city council resolutions, one binding and the other non-binding. Cambridge city councilor David Sullivan '74 claimed.

Walter Milne, Special Assistant to the President for Urban Affairs, contended neither claim is valid and MIT's purchase was legitimate.

In 1981 the city council passed the "Institutional Expansion Ordinance," prohibiting non-profit institutions from building dormitories in specific residential areas, including the location of the new townhouses.

The resolution defines "dormitory" as any housing for institutional affiliates who are permanent residents. Sullivan said.

The townhouses will be sold or rented to members of the MIT community who are permanent residents, Sullivan said.

In 1980 the city council unanimously passed a resolution asking MIT to refrain from purchasing land in the Cambridgeport Industrial Area, which includes MIT's Simmons property, until the Cambridge Planning Board finished a rezoning review. MIT sent a letter to the council in March 1980 pledging not to purchase land in the area for one year during the rezoning review.

The review ended about one year later, but the city council has not been able to pass any zoning change for the area. "MIT is morally bound" not to purchase property until the city council changes the zoning, Sullivan contended. "The reason the city council didn't do anything is because MIT lobbied us," he added.

MIT is not being fair or cooperative in proceeding with development of the land, including the purchase of the townhouses, with the "excuse that zoning plans are not happening, when in fact the rezoning is being worked on," city councilor David Wylie said.

Milne contended "this particular parcel was never the subject of rezoning by anybody," and added that since the planning board study has been completed, the Institute is no longer bound by its letter or the 1980 council resolution.

MIT purchased the townhouses from the FAR Group, the Institute's sixteen units in the development should be completed in the fall.

As a result of a mistake made by the USASO, this year's Freshman Handbook describes the proposals in having already taken effect, and states, "... instructors will give you letter-grade equivalences as part of your end-of-term evaluations."

"We jumped the gun," Richardson said. The Handbook should have been "musty" rather than "will," according to Richardson.

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