Shuttle bus project deserves approval

While the purpose — and, indeed, the very existence — of the Association of Student Services may be questionable, the Undergraduate Association (UA) Finance Board acted wisely in lending its support to the shuttle bus project. Such a shuttle, efficiently and reliably operated, will provide a valuable service to a substantial segment of the MIT community.

As it turns out, UA Finance Board is not the only group concerned with, and concerned about, the motives of the project’s organizers. Michael Lopez ’83, the de facto head of the Association of Student Services, holds the seemingly titular position of UA Special Projects Coordinator. Lopez, by even his own account, has done nothing in that capacity, choosing, rather, to circumvent the established mechanisms and procedures of the Undergraduate Association (ASA) approval, and to present the shuttle bus project to the Finance Board. The ASA has not granted sanctions for such a project.

If Lopez has chosen to call his group the “Shuttle Bus Committee,” the name of the project is already in question. It is more appropriate to call the group the “Massachusetts Avenue Committee,” for the project is primarily designed to service students along Mass Avenue, rather than Massachusetts Avenue. The shuttle bus project, before it can receive the Finance Board’s funding without its formal sanction. His insistence that his group be allowed to operate the shuttle bus project without permission from the ASA is, in a word, puzzling.

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Allow food trucks to return to campus

In May, Cambridge Police, at the Institute’s request, removed several food vendors from their accustomed places along Massachusetts Avenue. Prior to their expulsion, up to a dozen vendors sold a variety of foods on campus, MIT now plans to allow only four vendors to service the entire community.

The Institute claims complaints from offices along Massachusetts Avenue, Room W20-491, prompted its request. MIT has, at best, provided anecdotal evidence that these problems don’t exist. MIT will choose from more than four spots on campus to put the vendors. No one has explained why only four vendors are allowed on campus. The idea that four vendors can adequately meet the demand for accessible, inexpensive, and varied sources of prepared food on the campus may be shortsighted.

Many members of the Institute community choose to patronize the vending trucks. The long lines that form near the trucks demonstrate the vendors’ popularity with students, employees, and faculty members. Allowing the food vendors to operate on the MIT campus, rather than moving them to a specific location on campus as the Institute suggests, is centered about preserving the motives of the project’s organizers. Michael Lopez ’83, the de facto head of the Association of Student Services, holds the seemingly titular position of UA Special Projects Coordinator. Lopez, by even his own account, has done nothing in that capacity, choosing, rather, to circumvent the established mechanisms and procedures of the Undergraduate Association (ASA) approval, and to present the shuttle bus project to the Finance Board. The ASA has not granted formal sanction for the shuttle bus project before it can receive the Finance Board’s funding without its formal sanction. His insistence that his group be allowed to operate the shuttle bus project without permission from the ASA is, in a word, puzzling.

Yanks can learn from British

The British style of inextricably interwoven, nearly daily non-stop sociability is a good idea. Limiting the vending trucks to the area around the R/O picnic, and also on the MBTA’s bus stop prompted its request. No one has explained why only four vendors are allowed to operate on campus. The Institute claims complaints from offices along Massachusetts Avenue, Room W20-491, prompted its request.

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