MIT officials meet with homeless

(Continued from page 1)

Earlier this week, Guernsey submitted what he called a "typi- cal proposal" to Suduiko, the city councilman. The proposal called for a congress, community housing project that would house 15-20 homeless peo- ple in a separate independent environment. - the sort of envi- ronment in which MIT City residents said was necessary in their No- vember proposal to MIT. Guern- sey said he was in touch with pro- jects in Dorchester several years ago.

Guernsey said he proposed that the pilot project he undertakes somewhere in Cambridge, "ideal- ly on Blanche Street. . . . though we realize that that property is under litigation."

Guernsey said that he had sug- gested to Suduiko earlier this week that one role MIT could play would be to help locate a property on which to build the project. Suduiko said that MIT did not feel it had any responsi- bility to do so, according to Guernsey. Guernsey said that "we are doing our very best to change their minds."

Guernsey said he asked MIT Wednesday's meeting to partici- pate in a coalition of groups to put together a congress hous- ing proposal. Guernsey named were the Massachusetts Council on the Homeless, Christians for Urban Justice, and possible the Cambridge city government.

Milne told The Tech that MIT was willing to work on social problems in the area. He cited the Cambridge and Somerville Program for Alcoholism Reha- bilitation, a school done offered on MIT property at $1 a year for the last decade.

Milne said that he thought that the problem was in "the problem of being a public responsibility. 'We're part of the public,' he said, 'but lots of other people are [too].'"

But Guernsey stressed the im- portance of considering the pub- lic responsibility of corporations. He said that the results of last Wednesday's meeting were "nothing at all." "Our initial meet- ing didn't have real bottom line issues proposed," he said. "If MIT negotiated as the city council- man - in good faith - we can arrive at some reasonable solutions."

Tent City group may use River St. housing for winter

Guernsey said arrangements were being made to let the Tent City members move into temporary housing offered by Cambridge mid-rise developer Alex Steinbergh two works ago. Steinbergh, through a city council- ord order, offered Tent City three rent-free two-bedroom apart- ments at 245 River St. In ex- change, the city would pay util- ies, the order said.

Guernsey said that the group will try to make the apartments habitable by next week. A group of Harvard students would par- ticipate in the "cleanup," he said.

Steinbergh's offer has been misunderstood by some as an ex- change of housing for rent con- trol exemp- tions, according to Guernsey. He said Steinbergh al- ready has the rent control removal permits he wants and that "he had nothing to gain from making the offer." Squatters who were re- portedly occupying the apart- ments were only there for a few days and have since left, Guernsey added.

Guernsey said that the River St. arrangement cannot be settled until some issue regarding insur- ance, supervision and neighbor- hood opposition are resolved. Steinbergh wants an agreement that the Tent City group will leave the housing by March, Guernsey said.

Role of Tent City

Guernsey said that he "was in- volved in the homeless protest for homeless people a few years ago, he said, and is known in the homeless community for his skill and for having run shelters in the past."

The report that appeared Wednesday in Tech Talk ap- peared as a full-page advertise- ment in the Cambridge Chronicle yesterday. The Chronicle's edito- rial Nov. 30 called MIT's actions against Tent City "shameful."

That "no one had any intention of being arrested," and that he never advised anyone to do so. "No one had any idea that MIT would overreact the way they did," he said. "It was a way we would much rather cooperate that confront," he said, express- ing caution that MIT had felt "threatened" by Tent City.

Milne and Suduiko's report in Tech Talk claims that "there were people outside the Tent City who wanted to keep it going as part of their own agenda." It is not contended, the report says, that the original Tent City pro- posal "from the homeless" makes allegations of rent control viola- tions on the Blanche Street houses - allegations made for years by the Simplex Steering Committee.

Cavellini told The Tech that the homeless who joined the Simples demonstration were making their own decisions to do so and that their decision to form an en- campment was their own. Cavellini said that the Simplex Steering Committee did not pro- vide any official support to Tent City, though individual members of it did give aid.

Guernsey said that he "was in- volved in the homeless protest themselves" to Tent City two days after the Simplex demo- stration ended. He had partici- pated in a successful tent city protest for homeless people a few years ago, he said, and is known in the homeless community for his skill and for having run shelters in the past.

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