OPINION

MIT Should Accept New CASPAR Offer

Over the last two weeks the Cambridge City Council and MIT have exchanged proposals to find a permanent shelter for homeless alcoholics and drug addicts. After city officials' latest offer, the two appear close to reaching an agreement and ending the Cambridge and Somerville Progress Against Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation's 19-year search for a permanent shelter.

The various proposals discussed over the last few months have followed two central ideas: MIT would finance the construction of a permanent shelter and Cambridge would reimburse the Institute by giving it four city streets that lie within the campus.

This general formulation has obvious advantages for both parties. The most important issue is that CASPAR finds a permanent home; it provides the community with a valuable service, but needs a permanent facility to replace its ramshackle trailers that it currently operates out of.

MIT's offer is a real boon to the city, because it provides funding that would be hard to come by otherwise. Giving MIT four streets— all of Carleton and Haywood Streets, a section of Amherst Street, and some sidewalks on Vassar Street— seems like a good idea, too. MIT will pay to improve and maintain the streets and sidewalks, which are currently low on Cambridge's list of priorities.

The previous proposals have come under fire for a variety of reasons. Residents were angry about the Institute's initial proposal to build the CASPAR shelter at 340 Green St. in Central Square. The City Council committee working to find an alternate location has run into similar problems with other sites. Residents also expressed the belief that MIT's real goal was moving CASPAR from its current location on Institute property at 240 Allston St. In an effort to improve the value of MIT's nearby University Park development complex.

The lack of relinquishing control to the streets had problems of its own. Several city councillors and Mayor Kenneth E. Reeves are strongly opposed to giving away streets forever. Several city councillors and Mayor Kenneth E. Reeves are strongly opposed to giving away streets forever.

Two things need to happen in the near future: The City Council needs to vote to officially endorse the offer of its CASPAR committee and MIT needs to accept the offer. The compromise on the table accomplishes two things. It allows MIT to move ahead with its plans for the streets in question, while the city retains considerable control over their properties, but CASPAR gets a permanent home.

Letters

To The Editor

Consultants Waste Valuable Computers

Could someone please explain why we have to pay on-campus consultants in various Athena clusters? Not only do they take up valuable work spaces, but they're also not always doing something productive. When I entered the Building 1 cluster today, I found all the workstations in use — and the on-duty consultant there playing solitaire on her DEC. People who need help can use OLC. If there is a real need for consultants to be physically present in a cluster, the least they could do is limit themselves to the RTs — or, better yet, to simply take a seat in a corner of the room.

Stanley Stys '96

Opinion Policy

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Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be typed, double-spaced, and addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 29, MIT Branch, Cambridge, MA 02139, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions in plain text format may be mailed to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. All submissions are due by 4 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

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