Residents Ask for Time to Organize

By Eva Moy

While the administration is pushing to quickly finalize a decision about who will live in Senior House after it is renovated, the Senior House-East Campus Action Committee is asking for more time to organize and present alternatives to moving.

The administration "wants to renovate Senior House. That's at the top of their list of things to do. It is highly likely that they want to get this done this coming summer or the next one," said Rebecca Richkus '97, one of the SHEC Action Committee co-chairs.

"We realize that the decision is pressuring and that renovations are not a quick one-month thing," said the other committee co-chair, Dhaya Lakshminarayan '96, who is also East Campus vice president. "We would like time to help them 'do it right.'"

The Graduate Student Council is also mobilizing in response to the proposal that would house undergraduates at Ashdown House, a west campus dormitory. The GSC distributed a survey on the housing needs of graduate students, especially those living on campus, according to GSC President Roger G. Kermode G. The surveys will be collected into a formal report this weekend, Kermode said.

Undergrads need time to organize

"The students have been given very little time to prepare any proposals, get together a thoughtful, cogent statement, or anything like that relative to the [administration's] Strategic Housing Committee," Lakshminarayan said.

"The Strategic Housing Planning Committee, formed last summer, is in the midst of a continuing review of MIT's options for student housing. Dean for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs Arthur C. Smith has asked the committee to present a summary of its findings on Nov. 30, '93.

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The SHEC Action Committee is circulating a petition to residents of the two dormitories, Richkus said. The petition asks the student committee to present a summary of its findings on Nov. 30, '93.

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Lakshminarayan said.

The Strategic Housing Planning Committee could then distribute a survey to East Campus residents and solicit alumni donations that could be used toward renovation.

Clearer statement of goals needed

Both students and administrators feel that there should be more communication between the parties involved. In addition to ensuring that they are heard, students feel that they need a clearer statement from the administration about the need for these renovations.

"Art Smith was very generous with his time," Lakshminarayan said. "He met with us and thought that our ideas for having a student observer on the Student Housing Committee were close to what he thought was best."

"If that's the direction we intend to go, then we hope to slow down the whole process," Smith said.

There is a tradeoff between taking time to gather student input and making adequate preparations for summer work, Smith said. Though student input is important, writing too long will make it difficult to keep renovations on schedule.

"The opportunity to use this summer decreases the longer you wait," Smith said. "You are concerned not to postpone things too long."

I'm certainly sensitive to the fact that we are approaching the black hole of the fall term," Smith said. Expecting students to develop a well-reasoned position during late December is unreasonable, Smith said, but the Independent Activities Period should provide time to...