



Dear friends and fellow stakeholders,

We would like to provide some background information and an update on the FSILG Village effort. The goal of the initial effort was to gain the support of the MIT senior administration for the concept and to begin to connect with alumni and students around the idea. The FSILG Village presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the FSILG community to be part of MIT's long-range facility planning. We seek your support and involvement in taking this project from an initial concept to a realistic option for interested living groups.

As our students and alumni know well, FSILGs are an integral and historic part of the MIT community. Data from a 2013 MIT Alumni Association survey indicates that FSILG alumni are more satisfied with their MIT education and exhibit greater entrepreneurship and business leadership. FSILG alumni are more likely to start a company and to sit on a board of directors than their non-FSILG MIT counterparts. A 2003 analysis of alumni giving demonstrates that FSILG alumni are more engaged with MIT and are more generous donors.

However, the FSILG system is facing some challenges. Changing demographics of the MIT student body and other factors mean that some FSILGs have lower than desired occupancy, which can lead to financial pressure. The gentrifying Boston environment is not as welcoming to student independent living groups. The age and condition of century-old brownstones makes them difficult to maintain.

The initial work on the FSILG Village concept was spearheaded by Stephen DeFalco '83 SM'88, a senior executive and $\Delta\Delta$ alum. He was motivated by his desire to explore new strategies for the sustainability and long-term viability of the MIT independent living group system. In Stephen's words, "I have a deep passion for these groups and believe my experiences in my fraternity led to life skills which have helped my career. I believe this is a crucial effort to ensure that this independent system of living groups is strengthened and is a sustainable part of the fabric of Institute life for the next generation of MIT students."

An informal task force began meeting in 2014. In addition to Stephen, the task force included Jim Champy '63, Life Member of the MIT Corporation, Steve Baker '84 MAR'88, Chair of the Association of Independent Living Groups, and Bob Ferrara '67, Senior Director of Strategic Planning and Alumni Relations in the MIT Division of Student Life. The group met with the MIT leadership team, including numerous sessions with Chancellor Cindy Barnhart. They held several AILG community meetings and implemented a community-wide survey to gather input and assess interest in the concept of the creating FSILG housing on the West Campus of MIT. Subsequently, the task force was expanded to include eleven additional FSILG alumni members. A formal presentation was made to the Division for Student Life Visiting Committee in November 2015.

The key elements of the FSILG Village proposal are:

- Create a voluntary option for those organizations that desire to move into a purposefully built student village as part of the West Campus planning process.

- Each organization would own and customize their house and could enter into a long-term lease for the land with MIT
- Similar to today, alumni house corporations would work with the undergraduate leaders to budget, manage and lead each individual house.

We believe that broad community understanding, engagement and support is critical for the success of the project. Moving forward, the FSILG Village effort will be lead by a steering committee, comprised of alumni, students and MIT staff, supported by three distinct working groups. We expect that both the steering committee and the working groups will include alumni and student leaders representing all aspects of the FSILG community, including members of organizations who have expressed no intention of moving into an FSILG Village.

The three working groups will be:

- FSILG Community Sustainability – Analyze the current health of the system from a financial and occupancy perspective as well as trend lines over the last ten years
- Benchmarking Other Universities – Visits and discussions with other universities to identify best practices that could be incorporated into an MIT design
- Student Design Workshops – Student involvement to help design the FSILG Village concept in a way that preserves the leadership/community experience of the current system with a sustainable, going-forward model

The FSILG Village is an important endeavor that could affect the entire MIT FSILG system, and as such, our intention is to meet with the House Corporation Board and interested members of every FSILG. We also intend to meet regularly with the Interfraternity Conference (IFC), Panhellenic Association (Panhel), Living Group Council (LGC), and the Association of Independent Living Groups (AILG) to consult with and update them on our progress.

We urge you to become involved in this unique opportunity. Our goal is to have broad representation of students and alumni from fraternities, sororities and ILGs. Please contact Pam Gannon at pmgannon@alum.mit.edu if you are interested or if you have questions. The working groups will kick off in May and expect to run through the end of 2016. We hope that many of you can participate and help to make the FSILG Village concept a reality.

Sincerely,
The FSILG Village Steering Committee

Stephen DeFalco '83 SM'88, Chair
 Steve Baker '84 MAR'88, AILG Chair
 David Dellal '17, IFC President
 Bob Ferrara '67, Senior Director, Division of Student Life
 Sasha Crandall Fleischman '18, LGC Speaker
 Pamela Gannon '84, Parent '16, '18, AILG Parent Outreach Chair
 Caitlyn Mason '17, Panhel President