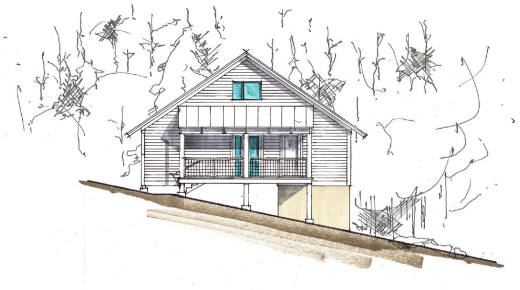
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The MITOC Bunkhouse

The motivation, history, and future of the bunkhouse project



The cabins: Camelot and Intervale

MITOC is one of the few MIT clubs to own property. Our two cabins (Camelot near Rumney, NH and Intervale near Jackson, NH) have been vital resources for over half a century. From official club circuses, open cabins, and social events, to individual club members using the cabins as a base camp for their own adventures, our cabins enable countless club activities. These properties make the outdoors affordable for members, introduce many new students to outdoor recreation and the club, and bring the community together through larger gatherings.

The state of the cabins

Camelot: Camelot is the more heavily used of the two cabins. With roughly 1,000 person-nights of use each year and space for larger events, it's a hub for club activities. However, Camelot was built in 1973, largely by MIT undergrads, and is beginning to show its age. The cabin will not remain safe to sleep in for much longer.

Intervale: The smaller of the two cabins, Intervale is a 15-minute walk from the road and harder to reach. Built in 1993, it is in good condition. It sees significant use in the winter but is too small for large gatherings.

What's the solution?

After over a decade of planning, focus groups, discussions with MIT, and design work by Maclay Architects, we believe that building a new bunkhouse on the existing Camelot land is the best path forward.

Who it's for: The bunkhouse supports MITOC's goal of making outdoor recreation accessible, especially to new students, with inexpensive, year-round sleeping space that requires no experience or special equipment.

Capacity: The bunkhouse will sleep 50 people (five rooms of 10), enough for all but the busiest weekends of the year.

Amenities: The bunkhouse will have electricity, electric heat, and composting toilets.

Fire safety: A sprinkler system fed by a cistern in the basement, 1-hour fire-rated sleeping rooms, an emergency exit window in every room, and a networked fire alarm.

No kitchen: The bunkhouse will not have a kitchen. Building code requirements would have made including one prohibitively expensive. Instead, the existing cabin, expected to remain usable as a kitchen and lounge for another 10 to 20 years, will continue to be used for cooking.



Site plan. The new bunkhouse sits uphill from the existing cabin, reached from the North Groton Road parking lot by the new path and bridge. Rendering © Maclay Architects.

Can the existing Camelot cabin be repaired?

Camelot's loft had to be closed recently because it did not meet modern safety standards; it reopened only after a major repair effort by the cabin managers, and patches like this can only go so far. Making the existing cabin sleep 50 people would mean bringing it up to current code for lodging (sprinklers, fire-rated sleeping rooms, and emergency exits), and the cabin managers and the Town of Groton found no viable way to do that. Building new is the more cost-effective option.

Why not buy a house instead?

The safety requirements for a building that sleeps 50 people differ significantly from those for a single-family home. Modifying a typical house to meet them would cost a large fraction of building new, and we also want to keep the outdoor space and rustic feel of MITOC cabins.

Why not buy new land?

Camelot is about an hour from the higher White Mountains, which works well for hiking trips, and close to the Rumney cliffs, Sculptured Rocks, and the Green Woodlands preserve. Staying at

Camelot also lets us keep the improvements we've made over the years and our relationship with local authorities.

Why not use prefab structures, tiny houses, or yurts?

While yurts and prefab buildings are significantly cheaper, they don't last nearly as long, especially under heavy use through harsh New England winters. From the club's experience with the yurt at Intervale, we expect a yurt to last a decade or two at most. Rather than taking on a new construction (and permitting) project every 10 to 20 years to maintain a passable solution, we want to make a generational investment: a permanent structure that better meets club needs and lasts a century or more. A building that sleeps 50 students must also meet modern building codes and MIT's standards for student housing. Yurts are hard to keep warm and usually rely on wood stoves, which require fire-safety training and carry an ongoing fire risk; the well-insulated bunkhouse will need little electric heat and no fire training.

Why did we build a parking lot?

Good relationships with the local community are vital to our ability to operate out of Camelot. The local town board grants construction permits; obtaining permits and exemptions would not be possible without local support. As a condition of our zoning exemption, the Town of Groton required us to have off-street parking. We were glad to do it, since this no longer means lining a narrow road with 20 cars through the winter. Neighbors and club members alike have responded very positively to the lot, and dozens of MITOCers joined to plant trees and native wildflowers along the sides of the new lot.

Why did we build a bridge and gravel path?

The existing Camelot footpath was sufficient for walking, but the widened path and stronger bridge are needed for construction vehicles and fire safety. Visitors will still park near North Groton Road and walk about 200 meters to the bunkhouse.

How much will the bunkhouse cost?

The project will cost $1.3 million in total, based on 2026 quotes from general contractors for the finished construction drawings. That covers Phase 1 (the parking lot, bridge, access trail, and final construction drawings, completed in 2025) and Phase 2 (about $900,000 to build the bunkhouse itself), including design and project support from architects, engineers, and MIT Facilities.

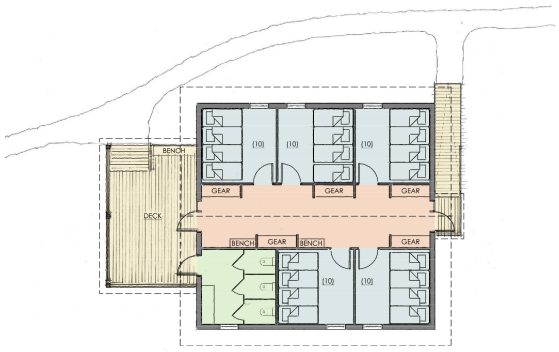
Who pays for it?

Construction is funded entirely by donations. Ongoing maintenance of the bunkhouse will be covered by user fees.

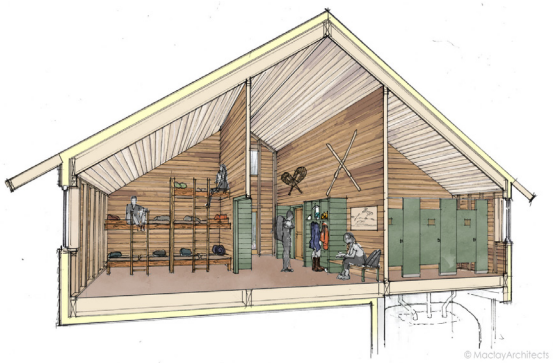
Why now?

The bunkhouse was first planned in 2011, when the existing Camelot cabin was in significantly better shape. As a club, we wanted to take our time to make sure the final project aligned with club needs and complied with MIT's internal regulations.

Now, with buy-in from the club, MIT's full support, and a complete set of architectural drawings in hand, we are ready to break ground next year! The cabin is no longer in the condition it was in 10 years ago. The cabin managers are doing an incredible job keeping the cabin usable for club members. However, we expect that within the next few years the cabin will no longer be safe to sleep in, and we currently have no alternative for hosting circuses of 50+ people, open cabins, and other club social events.



Floor plan. Five 10-bunk rooms off a central gear hall, plus toilets and a deck.



Cross-section. Bunk rooms, gear storage, and toilets under one roof. Rendering © Maclay Architects.

When will it be built?

Phase 1 (the new parking lot, access trail, and bridge) was completed in spring 2025. We plan to break ground on the bunkhouse in late spring 2027 and finish in fall 2027, a single construction season, once the full $1.3 million has been raised.

How can I help?

As of November 2026, 314 donors have given $468,000 toward the $1.3 million project, which paid for Phase 1. That leaves $832,000 to go for Phase 2, construction of the bunkhouse itself, and we need the full amount before we can break ground. Gifts are tax deductible. Give online to the MIT Outing Club Camelot Cabin Fund at **giving.mit.edu/form/?fundId=3892696**, and MIT will send you a year-end statement. For checks, employer matching, and other ways to give, see **mitoc.mit.edu/camelot/donate**.

Questions or comments?

Email **mitoc-bunkhouse@mit.edu**
Visit **mitoc.mit.edu/camelot**