

# Upham's Corner Westside Neighborhood Association



9 August 2010

Bruce Bird, CEO  
Vinfen  
950 Cambridge Street  
Cambridge, MA 02141

## **RE: Disturbances at Vinfen Facility at 25 Virginia Street, Dorchester**

Dear Mr. Bird:

I'm writing to express the concern and disappointment of our neighborhood association and our neighbors, regarding events, irregularities, and what appears to be poor management at Vinfen's facility at 25 Virginia Street, Dorchester, MA. **We have become aware that there are now significant time periods when no staff are present on the premises, leading to conditions when behavior inside and outside of the house is out of control.**

Our neighbors have been complaining that there is an ongoing pattern of excessive **noise and trash** at 25 Virginia Street. Also, the residents are frequently a nuisance, with rude, uncivil behavior, panhandling on our streets, and an unacceptable amount of smoking near the homes of abutters.

Our neighbors, especially the abutters, report about noise -- **yelling, arguing, coughing, and hacking** outside the house, coming from residents of 25 Virginia St. Frequently this is on the front porch, but also in the rear of the house at a picnic table. This is primarily coming from 2 women and a man who live at the facility. This has become increasingly annoying with the installation of a "smoking gazebo" on the premises.

Neighbors have been instructed by Vinfen administrators to call 25 Virginia St. when they observe the excessive behavior. We have records of one month with 33 attempts to make such calls. On these occasions your **staff have been rude, unresponsive, and have hung up on the callers.** Our efforts with regard to this have been an attempt not to resort to calling the police, but it appears that the situation has deteriorated to the point where police calls are necessary.

Besides their excessive noise, we see that Vinfen residents **throw trash into neighbors' yards and urinate outdoors.** We object to the secondary smoke that comes from the excessive smoking on the premises, especially from the new "smoking gazebo". We object to the several residents of 25 Virginia St. **begging from neighbors for cigarettes and money.** We object to Vinfen residents **trespassing and loitering on the**

**property of the vacant St. Kevin's parish** nearby. And we have a report of one Vinfen resident being seen passed out on the porch.

Most frustrating to us is the lack of responsiveness of Vinfen staff. Whereas calls by neighbors are ignored and the staff are rude, and all too often there are simply no staff present, we must conclude that Vinfen is not a good neighbor.

We are committed to quality of life for all our neighbors, and that includes the residents of 25 Virginia St. However, for that to be possible we need the cooperation of Vinfen and its staff. Please let us know what Vinfen can do to improve this situation, before it becomes necessary for us to take stronger steps to resolve this problem.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Haas,  
President