



BCPO News

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Beverly City Man Sentenced to 50 Years for 2016 Florence Homicide

MOUNT HOLLY, N.J. – Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that a Beverly City resident who was convicted of fatally shooting a man on a Florence street two years ago has been sentenced to 50 years in New Jersey state prison.

The sentence was handed down to Anthony Harris, 32, on December 20 by the Hon. Charles A. Delehey, J.S.C. A jury found Harris guilty in October of Aggravated Manslaughter (First Degree), Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose (Second Degree), and Unlawful Possession of a Weapon (Second Degree).

The investigation revealed that on the evening of September 21, 2016, a group from Beverly City went to Florence and began fighting with residents in the area of Zinc Street, which is an alley that runs between Second and Third streets.

The jury found that Harris pulled a handgun, began shooting, and struck Ronald Walker, 27, of Florence. Walker was transported to Lourdes Medical Center of Burlington County in Willingboro, where he was pronounced dead. An autopsy performed by Burlington County Medical Examiner Dr. Ian Hood determined that Walker died from a gunshot wound to the chest.

“This is a just and appropriate sentence,” Prosecutor Coffina said. “While it will not bring Mr. Walker back to his family, it demonstrates that the criminal justice system understands the evil, unjustifiable act committed by this defendant, and the tragedy that resulted. Burlington County residents deserve to be able to feel safe in their neighborhoods without the threat of senseless, reckless violence.”

The trial that resulted in the guilty verdict was the second time Harris has been tried for Walker’s death. Judge Delehey declared a mistrial following the first trial in June after the jury indicated it could not reach a unanimous verdict on a murder charge. A grand jury returned a new indictment charging Harris with Aggravated Manslaughter and the weapons charges on September 25.

“This case presented several challenges that were effectively overcome by those involved with our efforts to seek justice,” Prosecutor Coffina said. “I commend Burlington County Assistant Prosecutor Douglas J. Bligh for his skillful prosecution, and the tenacity of the detectives from our office and the Florence Police Department whose investigation produced the evidence needed to gain this conviction.”

The case was investigated by the Burlington County Prosecutor’s Office and the Florence Township Police Department. The lead investigators were BCPO Major Crimes Unit Detective Nick Villano and Florence Police Detective Chris Powell.

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