

34-year-old Brockton man, an alleged hate crime assault suspect found dangerous; held without bail

A 34-year-old Brockton man who allegedly entered onto a Taunton couple's property and violently assaulted one of them in what is alleged to be a hate crime was found dangerous by a Taunton District Court judge today and ordered held without bail for up to 120 days.

Michael Cates was arraigned last week on charges of assault and battery-causing serious bodily injury and assault and battery to intimidate (based on sexual orientation).

On June 29th the male victim was interviewed by a Taunton Police Officer after he reported being assaulted on his property. During the interview, the victim explained that he and his husband were outside their Taunton home, when the suspect drove by his house in an SUV. The suspect stopped his SUV, exited the vehicle and angrily entered onto the victim's property. The suspect then, according to the victim, yelled a homosexual slur, and punched the victim twice in the face, causing him to lose two teeth. The suspect then retreated back to his vehicle and drove off. The suspect and the victim are apparently unknown to one another.

An independent witness and the victim's husband both witnessed the assault occur.

The home had a gay pride flag flying and a rainbow sticker on its mailbox.

An initial investigation conducted by Taunton Police eventually led to the defendant as the chief suspect. After

numerous interviews were conducted and surveillance footage was reviewed, Taunton Police officially filed charges against the defendant on July 23rd, and summonsed him into court for last week's's arraignment.

The case is being prosecuted today by Assistant District Attorney Bryan Thompson.

"I am very pleased the defendant was held without bail as a danger to the victim and the community, which he clearly is. This is outrageous and malicious conduct. Targeting someone because of their sexual orientation, and violently assaulting them, will not be tolerated," District Attorney Quinn said,

Although charges have been filed in Taunton District Court, this case remains under investigation by prosecutors from the district attorney's office and Taunton Police Department officials. Investigators are in contact with Taunton Mayor Shaunna O'Connell's office regarding the ongoing investigation.

"I was glad to hear this defendant was found dangerous and will not be out on the streets. My office is closely monitoring this matter and our Taunton Police Department is continuing to work closely with District Attorney Quinn's office on this ongoing investigation. The allegations in this case are disturbing, and do not represent the values of the residents of this great city," Mayor O'Connell said.