



Suspicious Hyannis death under review

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HYANNIS — The Cape and Islands District Attorney's Office and Barnstable police are investigating the death of a Framingham man after an alleged assault at Cromwell Court in Hyannis last week.

Isaac Grossett, 31, was pronounced dead at Cape Cod Hospital on Feb. 3, a day after an altercation at the apartment complex on Barnstable Road, First Assistant District Attorney Michael Trudeau said Thursday.

Whether Grossett's death was caused by the fight or a subsequent car accident could determine if manslaughter charges are brought against his alleged assailant.

Barnstable police were originally called to the parking lot of the complex for a car accident shortly before 1 a.m. Feb. 2, according to a police report filed in Barnstable District Court and the Barnstable police log.

Grossett was found inside a Nissan Maxima that had struck another parked vehicle in what police described in the report as a "very low-speed and minor collision."

Investigators learned that Grossett, before the car accident, was visiting a woman at an apartment where he got into a fight with her boyfriend, Ronald Franklin, 46, of 80 Winter St. in Hyannis, according to Trudeau and the police report.

Franklin admitted to punching Grossett "two or three times" during the fight and was charged with aggravated assault and battery resulting in serious bodily injury, according to the report.

Franklin pleaded not guilty at his arraignment Feb. 3 and was held over the weekend for a dangerousness hearing. On Monday the prosecution asked instead that Franklin be held on \$15,000 bail, Trudeau said.

Franklin was released on \$500 bail and is scheduled to appear in court again March 29.

The investigation into Grossett's death is continuing, Trudeau said, adding that investigators are collecting witness statements and are waiting for autopsy and toxicology reports from the medical examiner's office.

"We will make a determination if any additional action is going to be taken," Trudeau said.

Although a doctor from Cape Cod Hospital told police it is unlikely the car accident caused the severe head injury Grossett suffered before his death, Franklin's court-appointed lawyer said Thursday it is doubtful the fight between the two men resulted in the fatal injury.

"It's a very, very problematic case for the prosecution," attorney William Gens said about the possibility of linking the fight to Grossett's death.

Gens said he has an eyewitness who says Grossett got into the car and "floored it" before the accident.

"He wasn't just backing his car out of a parking lot," Gens said.

The case would likely come down to a battle of experts in neurology and accident reconstruction, Gens said.

The Boston-based attorney also has filed motions to get access to criminal records for Grossett and the woman, as well as any video recorded by the management of Cromwell Court or other properties in the area.

It is unclear what sparked the fight, but it appeared his client was called to the apartment by the woman because she did not want Grossett there, Gens said.

Attempts Thursday to reach Franklin's and Grossett's families were unsuccessful.