

18-year old New Bedford shooter convicted at trial

An 18-year-old New Bedford man who fired an illegal gun outside of a Thompson Street home during the middle of the day in March 2017 was convicted of a litany of charge after a trial held in New Bedford Juvenile Court last week, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Joelle Perez, who was a juvenile at the time of the incident, was found by a jury to be a Youthful Offender, meaning his case is treated as an adult case. After a four-day trial, the jury convicted him of carrying an illegal firearm and five counts of attempted assault and battery by discharge of a firearm.

On March 2, 2017 the defendant engaged in a joint venture with co-defendants to threaten two witnesses to another crime and members of their family outside of a home on Thompson Street in New Bedford.. The incident took place at approximately 12:39 p.m. The incident began with the defendants and others walking up to the front of the home to call one of the witnesses a rat. The group then walked east on Thompson Street and began confronting another witness and the witness' father while brandishing knives.

At some point during the escalating incident, this defendant fired shots in the general vicinity of where all the witnesses were standing. One of the shots struck the concrete foundation of the house, causing a fragment to chip off and strike one of the witness' mother. The defendant then ran off towards County Street.

Despite the fact that the defendant has now been convicted of shooting multiple times at multiple victims in broad daylight, Judge John Spinale allowed the defendant to stay on the street

with a curfew until he is sentenced on March 1. The ruling was made over the objection of Assistant District Attorney Matthew Sylvia, who prosecuted the case.

"I am pleased the jury convicted the defendant as a youthful offender for these very serious acts of violence," District Attorney Quinn said. "Given the serious nature of the charges, I am disappointed the defendant was not held in custody pending sentencing on March 1. Based on the jury's verdict he clearly presents a danger to the community."