

Brockton man held without bail after alleged hate crime on gay couple

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 arraigned today and ordered held without bail pending the results of an upcoming dangerousness hearing in Taunton District Court.

Michael Cates was arraigned on charges of assault and battery causing serious bodily injury and assault and battery to intimidate (based on sexual orientation). A dangerousness hearing, which will determine whether the defendant will be held without bail for up to 120 days, is scheduled for August 6th.

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. 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 today's arraignment.

The case was prosecuted today by Assistant District Attorney Bryan Thompson.

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.