

New Bedford grassroots movement calls upon elected officials to address Malcolm Gracia case

By Davell Thomas

A community forum on the need for New Bedford to launch an independent investigation into the police killing of Malcolm Gracia will be held via Zoom on Wednesday evening.

Community members who organized the June 7 Justice for Malcolm Gracia Car Caravan, which involved more than 75 vehicles in a protest that moved through the city, put together the forum and invited state & city's elected officials (State Representative Christopher Hendricks, State Representative Antonio Cabral, Mayor Jon Mitchell, and all the New Bedford City Councilors) to be part of the forum. Participants distributed posters with the message "We Demand Charges On Tyson Barnes – David Brown – Paul Fonseca -Brian Safioleas - Trevor Sylvia for filing false police reports. Call 508 997-0711. JUSTICE FOR MALCOLM GRACIA"



Justice for Malcolm Gracia Car Caravan.

The public forum is specifically intended to share the details of this case with our elected officials before the community that they claim to represent. The Zoom meeting will run from 6 to 8 p.m. and the Zoom ID is: 996 7358 2873.

Gracia was shot and killed by New Bedford police in 2012. Recently, surveys of community needs and demands showed overwhelming support for “an independent investigation into the New Bedford Police murder of Malcolm Gracia and criminal cover-up.”

Amid a national crisis, a local collective committed to racial and social justice has formed and continues to grow. The collective will continue to organize a grassroots movement in response to state-sanctioned violence and structural racism. The organizers and participants of the collective seek to strategically create change in the policies and practices that have upheld institutional racism, state violence, and injustice. The collective also has a goal of bringing

awareness and education to local residents and organizations on the issues that negatively affect people of color and violate their basic human rights.



Jessica Gracia at City Councilor Naomi Carney's House.

A letter to state and city leaders inviting them to the forum reads:

"We are DEMANDING that you act to leverage your position and exercise your responsibility as a publicly elected official by formally and publicly calling for charges to be brought up on New Bedford police officers Tyson Barnes, David Brown, Paul Fonseca, Brian Safioleas, and Trevor Sylvia for filing false police reports in the murder of New Bedford teen Malcolm Gracia.

All of New Bedford's local elected leaders, along with Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey and Bristol County District Attorney Thomas Quinn III, received a digital invitation to the forum.

The criminal acts of New Bedford police officers Tyson Barnes, David Brown, Paul Fonsceca, Brian Safioleas, Trevor Sylvia present a continuing threat to public safety requiring immediate attention.

Individuals in New Bedford can no longer claim ignorance on this matter. Ignorance certainly is not innocence. We are demanding action by our publicly elected officials. If they choose inaction, we will have no choice but to continue taking further actions. We will not cease until justice is served!"

For more information regarding the collective, movement, caravan, or the Wednesday-night meeting, please contact Davell Thomas at thomasdavell0@gmail.com.

In the pursuit of JUSTICE,

Davell Thomas