

23-year old New Bedford Man pleads guilty to 2015 murder of Vietnam Veteran

A 23-year-old man pleaded guilty last Thursday in Fall River Superior Court to multiple charges connected to the November 2015 killing of Vietnam veteran Donald DePina in New Bedford, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Alexander Mills, of New Bedford, pleaded guilty to charges of second degree murder and two counts of armed robbery. He was sentenced by Judge Renee Dupuis to life in prison with the possibility of parole after 32 and-a-half years.

On Saturday night, November 28, 2015 the defendant and his co-defendant, Cameron McCarthy, requested that Mr. Depina, drive them to Brooklawn Park. Upon arrival in the park, the defendant who was carrying a small, concealable pistol shot Mr. Depina in the right of the head. The defendant then exited the taxi and shot Mr. Depina again from the outside of the vehicle. The defendant also robbed Mr. Depina of his money.

The defendant was apprehended on November 30, 2015, and has been held in custody since that time. He also pleaded guilty to committing an armed robbery of Perry's Variety on November 27, 2015 and to the pistol whipping and armed robbery of another taxi driver earlier in the day on November 28, 2015. Detective Michael Carrier of the New Bedford Police Department and Trooper Bachir Kouta of the State Police Detective Unit assigned to the District Attorney's office led the investigation into these crimes.

Mr. McCarthy was sentenced in March 2018 to serve 10 to 15 years in state prison after pleading guilty manslaughter.

The case was prosecuted by First Assistant District Attorney Patrick O. Bomberg.

Donald DePina, who was 66, drove a Bluebird taxi in New Bedford. He was a Vietnam veteran and for many years he was the Veterans' Agent for the City of New Bedford. Over his life Mr. DePina was also involved in the statewide leadership on veterans' affairs.

"These were senseless acts of violence, sadly committed by someone who was only 18 at the time. The defendant took the life of a man who was a Vietnam veteran, a father, a person who was very involved in his community, and someone who was loved by all of his family and friends. Members of the victim's family gave powerful statements to the court that included forgiving—but not forgetting—how the defendant's actions have affected them. I commend them for their humanity, patience and attitude during these most difficult circumstances. Mr DePina's death will impact them forever," District Attorney Quinn said.