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TWO DEFENDANTS CHARGED IN SCHEME TO STEAL EAST ELMHURST HOME
FROM DECEASED HOMEOWNER BY POSING AS HER SON

*Defendants Allegedly Conspired to Use Forged Death Certificate and Other Official Documents;
Posed as “Sole Heir” of Property, Which They Then Sold for \$530,000;
Face Up to 15 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, along with New York City Sheriff Anthony Miranda, announced today that Jorge Vasquez Jr. and Andy V. Singh – as well as “23-41 100th Street Corp” – have been indicted by a Queens County grand jury and arraigned in Supreme Court for allegedly filing fraudulent paperwork to claim ownership of an East Elmhurst, Queens home. Defendants are accused of acting in concert to impersonate the deceased homeowner, as well as her son, the rightful heir to the home, in order to unlawfully gain access to the payoff information of the mortgage so that the property could be sold. The defendants then used that information to complete the sale of the property.

District Attorney Katz said, “As alleged, these defendants conspired to steal a home left behind by a deceased homeowner and proceeded to sell the property to a sham corporation for more than half a million dollars. Deed fraud is a growing challenge within Queens County, but those who choose to victimize others for their own financial gain will be held to account in this borough. The defendants, including the company, have been indicted on numerous charges and the two individuals face prison time if convicted.”

New York City Sheriff Anthony Miranda said, “We want to thank the Queens District Attorney for their partnership in combating deed fraud. The Sheriff’s Office will continue to collaborate with our partners in all agencies to arrest, prosecute, and bring to justice those criminals victimizing the elderly and families from our communities.”

Vasquez Jr., 40, of Baldwin, NY, and Singh, 34, of Bronx, NY, are charged along with the corporation “23-41 100th Street” in a 10-count indictment. The defendants were arraigned on July 11, 2022 before Queens Supreme Court Justice Judge Donna-Marie Golia on charges of grand larceny in the second degree, three counts of identity theft in the first degree, two counts of falsifying business records in the first degree, criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree, offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree and conspiracy in the fourth degree. Justice Golia ordered the defendants to return to Court on August 10th, 2022. The two men each face up to 15 years in prison, if convicted.

According to the charges, the deceased property owner passed away in 2019, leaving the victim - her only biological son. In October 2021, the victim noticed an email from his mother’s mortgage company that confirmed a change in contact information on the loan, including an email address that the victim did not recognize. When

the victim contacted the mortgage company to inquire about this unauthorized change in information, the mortgage holder informed the victim that the mortgage had been paid off on October 4, 2021. When the victim visited the residence, he saw workers doing construction on the property and removing his personal belongings from the home, including childhood photo albums, and putting them in a dumpster in front of the property. The victim then contacted the District Attorney's Office, who began conducting the investigation.

On November 8, 2021, a fraudulent deed was filed with the New York City Register, which claimed the property had been sold for \$530,000.00 on October 4, 2021 by Jorge Vasquez Jr. "as sole heir" of the deceased property owner, to 23-41 100th Street Corp., for which Andy V. Singh is the sole shareholder and chairman.

DA Katz said in September 2021, defendant Singh allegedly made numerous phone calls to the mortgagee of the property claiming that he was the son of the deceased property owner. He allegedly provided the victim's first name, and the deceased property owner's full name and social security number, and requested a payoff statement in anticipation of the sale of "his mother's" property. Later that same month, the same defendant contacted the mortgage holder once again, this time claiming that he is the deceased homeowner, and was seeking a payoff quote. The defendant allegedly provided the homeowner's social security number during this call as well.

Continuing, said the DA, in order to sell the home, the defendants were required to submit several documents to the title company, including a death certificate for the deceased property owner and affidavits of heirship confirming the seller as the sole heir. As alleged, the death certificate submitted to the title company was forged, as it claimed the deceased owner passed away in 2017 when she actually passed away in 2019. According to the charges, the affidavits of heirship claiming Jorge Vasquez Jr. was the only living heir of the deceased property owner were also fraudulent.

This all occurred without the knowledge or consent of the deceased homeowner's son, the rightful heir to the property.

The investigation was conducted by Assistant District Attorney Rachel Stein, Unit Chief of the Real Estate Theft Unit in the District Attorney's Housing and Worker Protection Bureau, with the assistance of Detective Isabella Frias under the supervision of Sergeant Edwin Driscoll and Lieutenant Steven Brown, under the overall supervision of Chief Investigator Thomas Conforti of the District Attorney's Detective Bureau, as well as Detective Kevin Acon, of the New York City Sheriff's Office, under the supervision of Detective Sergeant Michael Trano, and under the overall supervision of New York City Sheriff Anthony Miranda.

Assistant District Attorney Rachel Stein is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys William Jorgenson, Bureau Chief, Christina Hanophy, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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