

A slaying, and then a siege

Gunman balks, surrenders after Brighton neighbor is shot dead

By [Peter Schworm and Akilah Johnson](#)

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A gunman with a cache of weapons and a history of mental illness fatally shot an elderly neighbor at a Brighton apartment complex yesterday, police said. The shooting sparked a frantic evacuation, and the suspect held police in a standoff before surrendering.

Boston police responded to reports of a shooting on Ledgemere Road around 10:45 a.m. As officers escorted emergency medics removing the victim from an apartment, they were forced to take cover after several gunshots rang out from the second floor. No one was struck by the bullets.

The John J. Carroll Apartments, where the two men lived, is reserved for elderly and disabled residents.

Officers protected the medics as they carried the victim, a man in his late 70s, from the complex and transported him to Brigham and Women's Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Police did not identify the victim pending notification of his family.

As a SWAT team descended on the apartment complex and police cordoned off a stretch of Chestnut Hill Avenue, a crisis negotiator made contact with the suspected gunman, later identified as 54-year-old Randy Moore.

Just over an hour later, Moore, who had barricaded himself inside the building, surrendered without incident and was taken into custody.

"The negotiator managed to talk the suspect into giving up his weapon," Edward Davis, the Boston Police Department commissioner, told reporters at the scene.

At one point during the standoff, Moore dialed 911 on his cellphone and told a State Police dispatcher he had "taken care" of something and needed more ammunition, said a law enforcement official, on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the case.

Moore will be arraigned today in Brighton Municipal Court on murder charges, authorities said.

Davis said it was unclear whether the assailant and victim knew each other. "It did not appear to be a family situation," he said. "We don't have a lot of answers as to why this incident happened."

Bill McGonagle, director of the Boston Housing Authority, said Moore was diagnosed as a schizophrenic and has lived in public housing for the disabled for many years. He said the fatal shooting underscored the danger of placing people with mental illness and substance-abuse problems alongside elderly residents.

"We're moving these folks in next door to our grandmothers and grandfathers," he said. "It's absolutely outrageous public policy. I've been getting complaints about this for 20 years."

Under federal law, housing authorities are required to have a certain percentage of disabled residents in public developments, he said.

Moore had lived in the complex for a couple of years and had apparently not caused any problems, McGonagle said. He had previously lived in East Boston public housing.

Davis said Moore was legally licensed to carry a firearm.

The police commissioner said it was not clear whether he was shooting at police during the standoff.

"The ballistics analysis will tell us exactly what happened inside," he said. "It's too early to tell right now."

McGonagle described the shooting victim as "a fine, elderly gentleman" who had lived in Brighton since 1994. Police said he had limited mobility and used a wheelchair to get around.

The shooting triggered a massive police response and forced residents out of their homes in a frightening blur.

"All we know is that someone got shot and we were told to evacuate as quickly as we could," said Ron Harr, a 54-year-old who lives at the Carroll apartments.

Harr and other residents said they did not know who the shooter was or what had caused the violence.

Residents were so hastily evacuated that some did not have time to close their front doors and secure their pets. Others, such as Xinaida Yusmin, had returned home to find their building cordoned off.

"It's terrible," said Yusmin. "I've lived here around 13 years and it's never happened. It's not comfortable now."

Leslie Harris, of Dorchester, said he was driving past the apartments when he heard three or four gunshots. He thought they were fireworks, but a short time later he saw heavily armed officers descend on the complex.

About two dozen people were evacuated from the apartments to a city facility with staff from Boston's elder services agency. The residents were allowed to return in the afternoon, police said.

Residents described the neighborhood as safe and generally quiet, home to college students and a large Orthodox Jewish community. The Carroll complex has a large Russian immigrant population, they said.

Abe Soll, a 25-year-old who lives just off Chestnut Hill Avenue, said police told him to stay inside and lock the doors. "It was a pretty scary scene," he said.

James Orsino, president of the union representing Boston's emergency medical technicians and paramedics, said emergency responders carried the victim out of the building amid gunfire. As an Emergency Medical Services crew was about to leave, a shot was fired. That forced the crew, and the police escorting them, into an apartment, where medics continued to treat the victim.

When the group again tried to leave, they were met with another gunshot, Orsino said. With police forming a circle around the crew as they carried the victim in a metal basket, they rushed out of the building.

"It was courage under fire," he said. "Their concern was the patient the whole time. They decided they weren't going to go back a second time because the guy was definitely going to die.

"They did not retreat. They went forward."

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