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roundup

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Grand jury won't indict man who shot at robber

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The man who fired four shots at a fleeing robbery suspect won't be indicted.

A Nelson County grand jury on Wednesday returned a "no true bill," meaning there was insufficient evidence to believe he committed a crime.

Capt. Kevin Thompson, assistant chief of the Bardstown Police Department, said Friday prosecutors presented the surveillance video to the jury, and the jurors apparently believed the man's actions were justified.

The suspect was unarmed, but the shooter believed the suspect had a gun and was a threat.

"It's what he perceives as occurring," Thompson said, referencing the statute.

Under KRS 503, if a person believes that he or another person is in imminent danger of death, serious physical injury, kidnapping or rape, he can use deadly force to protect himself or the other person.

Det. Chris Smith, who handled the shooting incident in the Dec. 7 robbery investigation, said Ledrick Edwards, 39, of Bardstown, was not armed when he held up the WesBanco branch at 315 N. Third St. However, the man who shot at Edwards thought he was armed and felt threatened, so he discharged his weapon.

Police have not named the shooter.

According to reports by police and the prosecutor, the man's wife was inside the bank when the robbery occurred, and he was outside with their little girl, who was in the vehicle. When Edwards exited the bank, he ran toward them, and the man got the gun from the vehicle and fired. Edwards then dropped the money and ran.

The suspect later had someone pick him up and take him to his mother's house, where he was arrested.

Edwards had apparently ridden a bicycle, which was lying by the back door when city police and sheriff's deputies arrived on the scene that morning.

Edwards was charged with second-degree robbery.

At the time of the incident, he had been out on parole since October on a 20-year sentence for the robbery of the Springfield State Bank on Bardstown Road in Washington County in November 2008.

Commonwealth's Attorney Terry Geoghegan said he and law enforcement officers are concerned that such incidents are happening often in an urban setting.

"We certainly all feel very fortunate nobody was injured on either side, and I think that was a factor in the grand jury's decision," he said.



KACIE GOODE/The Kentucky Standard

Ground is broken Wednesday morning for a new Holiday Inn Express and Suites, an 80-room hotel to be built on Morton Avenue in Bardstown.

Bardstown breaks ground on new hotel

Officials say development will aid overnight tourism

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Wednesday morning's ground breaking for Holiday Inn Express and Suites on Morton Avenue was years in the making and the result of discussions and collaboration between the owner, Dr. Manoj Patel, and city and county officials.

The 80-room hotel was originally announced in August 2016, and its desire has only increased with recent growth in the distillery and manufacturing industries locally, which has brought an increase in tourism traffic and business executives.

"This gives us the opportunity to make Bardstown the hub of bourbon country..."

- MIKE MANGEOT, TOURISM DIRECTOR

"I decided to make this investment not only because it was my father's dream to build a beautiful hotel in Bardstown, but because there's been such an impedance of growth due to lack of upscale lodging," Patel, a local doctor and president of Jay Hospitality Group, said. He came to the area in the 1980s, and his family also owns America's Inn on New Haven Road.

Local officials agree the lodging is



KACIE GOODE/The Kentucky Standard

Dr. Manoj Patel, president of Jay Hospitality Group and owner of the new Holiday Inn Express and Suites, speaks at the hotel's ground breaking on Morton Avenue Wednesday morning.

crucial in accommodating more overnight visitors year-round, and especially during events such as the Kentucky Bourbon Festival.

"Bardstown, right now, is really a day stop for a lot of folks," Tourism Director Mike Mangeot said. "This gives us the opportunity to make Bardstown the hub of bourbon country."

In the next couple of years, he said, there will be nine distilleries within about 20 miles.

"Nowhere else on Earth can you see that at this level and this authenticity," he said.

Among the amenities, the new hotel will feature king and queen suites, a pool, fitness center, conference hall and out-

door patio. Patel also said special concierge services catered toward international clients are being discussed.

Construction on the hotel is expected to start within the coming weeks as final permits are completed. Patel's goal is to have the hotel, which he anticipates will generate 25-35 new jobs, finished by the fall.

In addition to Holiday Inn Express and Suites, the city also recently approved a 92-room Fairfield Inn, which will also be located on Morton Avenue. Two other hotels, a La Quinta Inn off John Rowan Boulevard and a Sleep Inn Mainstay on Parkway Drive, have applied to build but have not yet been approved because they exceeded height requirements.

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