

## **Family of Maurice Granton Jr., shot dead by CPD, - Chicago Sun-Times (IL) - July 30, 2018**

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The family of an apparently unarmed man who was shot and killed by Chicago police filed a wrongful death lawsuit Monday, a week after police bodycam video of shooting was released.

**Maurice Granton Jr.**, 24, was fatally shot as he tried to jump a fence in a vacant lot on June 6 during a foot chase with Chicago police in the Bronzeville neighborhood. The video appears to show Granton grabbing the fence with both hands, without a gun.

The lawsuit alleges Granton didn't pose an imminent threat to police despite the Chicago Police Department stating an "armed confrontation" led to the shooting.

"What we don't know is when and where and with whom the armed confrontation took place," said Antonio Romanucci, a lawyer for the family, at a news conference Monday.

Four, possibly five shots are heard on video recordings, Romanucci said.

"There is the question of the first shot fired and where it came from whose gun it was from," Romanucci said, adding that information gleaned from police reports indicates Granton fired a gun at officers but provides no other details.

Romanucci said the city shared all video of the shooting but hasn't given other details, like where spent bullet shells were found at the shooting scene.

"It's what we cannot see on video that the city will not tell us. Had better training been in place, Maurice would still be here today," he said.

A police spokesman didn't immediately return a message Monday seeking clarification on if Granton fired at police.

The lawsuit comes on heels of the release of a proposed consent decree to move forward with police reforms under the supervision of a federal judge.

"This agreement was too late for Maurice," Romanucci said.

Video taken from an officer's body camera shows that as Granton was jumping onto a wrought iron fence, officer Sheldon Thrasher — who is African American — opened fire.

Moments earlier, Granton had ditched the pursuit of another officer by jumping a different fence, body camera video shows.

As Granton reached the vacant lot, the officer “waited for Maurice in what appears to be an ambush,” Romanucci said.

Granton, shot three three times in the back, collapsed.

After he's shot, Granton can be seen writhing on the ground, bleeding for several minutes as officers swarm the area without giving him aid. Within minutes, dozens of onlookers gather and begin yelling at police.

An officer instructs several of his colleagues to guard a pistol in the vacant lot, laying several yards away from where Granton was when he was shot, video shows.

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability, which is charged with investigating police shootings, released video of the shooting July 25 — several days before the 60 day deadline in which it was required to do so.

It was not the only visual evidence released.

Shortly after the shooting the CPD released a video claiming it showed Granton with a gun, as well as photo of a gun allegedly recovered from Granton at the scene “in response to claims that offender was unarmed and the weapon was planted by CPD officers,” police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said at the time.

Romanucci said the move was an unfair and incomplete portrayal of the shooting that was tailor-made by police to fit their version of events, and that it hurt Granton’s family.

“They can control the narrative that they want to shape public opinion to make this look like this is about something that it’s not when it’s really about transparency and getting to the truth and finding out what happened,” Romanucci said.

Officers were on a narcotics mission about 8:15 p.m. on June 6 when, officials said, Granton pulled a gun on tactical officers who were trying to stop him. One officer opened fire during the “armed encounter,” according to a statement police released shortly after the shooting.

Granton, a father of two girls, previously had been convicted of robbery and theft, court records show.

Granton’s father, **Maurice Granton Sr.**, said Monday that lawsuit wasn’t about money.

“This is about justice for my son, and all the other people’s sons who go through this,” he said.

Thrasher was placed on desk duty for 30 days after the shooting. He’s now back on patrol. COPA is still investigating.

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