

New details emerge in Ahmaud Arbery killing

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New details and background in the February 23 murder of Ahmaud Arbery in Brunswick, Georgia are surfacing on a daily basis. The owner of the property which Arbery entered on the day he was killed has explained that Arbery and Travis McMichael, who shot the victim twice in the chest, had a similar confrontation nearly two weeks earlier, on February 11.

On the day that Arbery was shot and killed he was recorded on a surveillance camera looking at a home under construction in the neighborhood. The McMichaels, who chased Arbery in their pickup truck and shot him three times, told police responders that they were following a “burglary suspect,” and had “solid firsthand probable cause” to perform a citizen’s arrest.

The evidence that they claimed showed Arbery as a burglar suspect was the surveillance footage recorded at this nearby property, which is owned by Larry English.

English has a motion detector set up that pings his phone whenever the surveillance system detects movement. He told reporters that he had never shared his surveillance video with the McMichaels, whom he did not know.

On February 11, English, who lives 90 miles away from his property, was alerted by his surveillance system of an intruder, now identified as Arbery, and asked a neighbor, Diego Perez, if he recognized the person. Perez later that evening armed himself and walked up the road, where he encountered Travis McMichael already on the scene in his pickup truck. Neither Perez nor English have made it clear how Travis was alerted to this incident.

“Travis saw him in the yard, and Travis stopped,” Perez told reporters. “He confronted [the man] halfway into the yard. He said [the man] reached for his waistband, and Travis got spooked and went down the road.” Travis then apparently left and came back with his father, Greg McMichael, after calling the Glynn

County Police Department.

The police report from that evening states that English had an “ongoing issue with an unknown black male continually trespassing on the property.” When the police spoke to English directly, he told them that he believed the man had not taken anything and was only trespassing. Elizabeth Graddy, an attorney who represents English, has stated that the latter has never used the word “burglary” to describe any of the incidents with Arbery, since nothing has ever been stolen from the property.

Attorneys for Arbery’s family say that the surveillance video taken on February 23 shows that Arbery was not doing anything wrong, as he did not cause any kind of property damage and left of his own accord. Graddy told reporters that even if there was a robbery the English family “would not have wanted a vigilante response.”

Videos and descriptions of Arbery, who at that time was not known to residents, were circulating on a neighborhood Facebook page and on the social application Nextdoor. Perez has stated that he did not see Arbery again until February 23, when he was bleeding from gunshot wounds in the middle of a nearby road. Perez is listed on the police report as a witness to the killing.

English has since publicly released surveillance videos from his property, and these show that multiple people, not just Arbery, trespassed at the home under construction. Between October 25 and February 23, according to Graddy, 11 surveillance clips recorded on different dates show multiple sets of intruders. These include a man and a woman, two small children, and another unidentified male.

In recent days, another video has emerged that shows a November 2017 police stop involving Arbery, where an officer attempted and failed to shoot him in the chest with a taser. The video shows that Arbery was sitting in

his car in a public park when a police officer pulled up behind him and asked him to get out of his vehicle and explain what he was doing before checking him for weapons.

The video then shows a second police officer arriving on the scene and Arbery refusing to allow the officers to search his car. A panicked Arbery then reached for his car door, and the second officer, who was pointing a taser at the young man's chest, pulled the trigger. The taser audibly fired but failed to strike Arbery, after which the officer demanded that Arbery lie down on the ground.

This is one of many incidents involving Arbery and local law enforcement officers that has emerged over the past two weeks. The WSWS reported last week that at least one of those incidents involved Greg McMichael, who was a former police officer and retired investigator in the local prosecutor's office.

Attorneys Franklin and Laura Hogue, who will represent Greg McMichael in the upcoming trial, held a press conference in Macon, Georgia on Friday, at which they stated that there is more than one video of the February 23 shooting. "There are a number of photographs, there are a number of records. All of those will have to be assimilated, and importantly, time-lined, so that every single second, our hope is, will put together the truth of what happened on the 23rd [of February]."

At this time, no additional information has emerged on what these images show or who recorded them. McMichael's attorneys also did not explain what discrepancies exist between these images and the video released to the public in early May. "We believe strongly that we will not try this case in the media. ... The facts that matter will come out in the courtroom, where they need to come out, where they can be cross-examined and evaluated by a jury."

The Hagues also revealed that Travis McMichael will have a different legal strategy and team. "Our client has not been charged the same as his son. He's been charged as a party to the crime."



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