Police release video of the shooting of DeAnthony VanAtten in East Lansing, Michigan

Michael Anders
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On May 5, the East Lansing Police Department (ELPD) released the video of a non-fatal police shooting of DeAnthony VanAtten, a 20-year-old black man, in the parking lot of a Meijer grocery store in East Lansing, Michigan, that took place on April 25.

According to an accompanying press release from the ELPD, a 911 caller alleged that he or she saw a black man take a handgun out of a car and put it in his pocket before entering the store.

The press release further states that the two Lansing officers involved in shooting VanAtten have been placed on paid leave. Police said the unnamed officers have been with the ELPD for two or more years.

The video, which was released according to a May 5 deadline set by the city's Oversight Commission, includes footage from the body cameras of four police officers, as well as footage from the Meijer store's security system. Police also released the audio from the 911 dispatcher after the call was received. The dispatcher notes, "He's not threatening anybody with it."

In the store surveillance footage, VanAtten can be seen arriving in a silver SUV. He gets out of the vehicle, runs toward the Meijer supermarket entrance, then returns to his vehicle and then runs back toward the store. Police body camera footage shows two officers walking into the store sometime shortly thereafter. The officers describe seeing someone who they say appears to be running away from them, although this individual is not visibly in the video.

Another officer is waiting in the entryway on the other side of the Meijer, where VanAtten had left the store. As soon as the officer sees VanAtten, who appears to be running, he draws his pistol and screams, "Let me see your f**king hands!" Another officer joins in a foot pursuit outside of the store and shouts, "Get on the f**king ground!" He draws a Taser and screams, "You're gonna get tased! Get on the f**king ground!"

The video shows one officer then pressing himself against a car and firing two rounds. VanAtten is not visible at this point. A second officer's bodycam shows that he shot at VanAtten several times as he ran past, hitting him twice, in the leg and the chest.

As VanAtten rolls around on the ground screaming in agony, the officers continue to shout obscenities at him. One officer charges in and handcuffs him and begins roughly jerking him around, apparently to find where he had been shot. The officers then provide first aid.

At one point during the chase and shooting, a woman got out of the silver SUV in which VanAtten had arrived. She is screaming in horror, alleging that the officers shot him for no reason, and that he did not have a gun. In the video she claims not to know the victim.

The woman gets her baby out of the van, still inside the baby carrier. One officer walks over to the others rendering aid to VanAtten, and another exclaims, "She's got to have that gun." The first officer then advances on the woman once more and orders another officer on scene, "Search her for a gun."

The woman begins backing away from the officers, who have put away their pistols, shouting, "I don't have no gun!" At one point, an officer grabs her arm with the baby carrier in it, and starts rifling through the front pocket of her hoodie. He then pulls the baby carrier away from her, while the other officer holds her arms.

The video also shows the discovery of a pistol VanAtten is alleged to have had, which police say was

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underneath a car two spaces down from the silver SUV. In the surveillance footage, VanAtten can be seen hiding by that car during the foot chase.

The gun is not seen until an officer, for whom no bodycam footage was released, pulled it out from under the car. The police then eject the magazine, apparently to determine if any shots had been fired.

At no point in the video did VanAtten pose a danger to anyone or to the police. If he had a weapon, he did not use it or threaten to use it.

VanAtten was taken to a hospital where he spent almost a week, before being transferred to the Ingham County Jail. He was being held on a probation violation and has since been released.

According to standard procedures, the investigation into the shooting was handed over to the Michigan State Police (MSP). Michigan is an "open carry" state, meaning a person over 18 is allowed to openly carry a legally possessed firearm. The MSP's investigation will then be reviewed by the office of state Attorney General Dana Nessel.

Lieutenant Brian Oleksyk, the MSP's spokesman, said on Wednesday, "This is an active investigation, and our detectives are working diligently taking every measure to ensure all evidence and facts are documented." This is standard language from law enforcement aimed at calming an angry public that is fed up with daily incidents of police brutality and wanton shootings.

Burnette VanAtten, DeAnthony's mother, spoke to WKAR about the shooting. She said, "The only thing he is guilty of is shopping while black. He did not deserve to be shot like an animal. East Lansing police need to be held accountable for their actions … or this will continue to happen." She has further demanded that the officers who shot her son be prosecuted.

Burnette related her son's shooting to the recent shooting death of Patrick Lyoya in Grand Rapids, Michigan. "I thank God my son is still alive because a lot of black men who encounter the police are not—like Patrick." On April 4, Patrick Lyoya was shot in the back of the head by Grand Rapids Officer Christopher Schurr following a scuffle during a traffic stop. This case is also being investigated by the MSP and being referred to the Kent County prosecutor's office.

Public anger and demands for the officers to be charged for shooting VanAtten have also been expressed on Facebook. One reader posted, "This was all SO MUCH BS. Where was the gun when he was running from the cops? He NEVER pointed a gun at anyone and was not an imminent threat to the cops or the public, so WHY WERE SHOTS FIRED? What happened to the shots that missed? They fired a lot of shots at him in a parking lot with people all over, and only 2 of them hit him; it's a miracle nobody else was hit. There's so much wrong with all of this."

Another reader posted, "Even with their shitty attempts at redacting and editing its all too obvious what happened here. And what are they doing shooting into a heavily populated area at someone posing no risk and no evidence of a weapon even though a cop attempted to say he had one? They surprised the poor man trying to walk out the door of a store by screaming at him and treating him like a criminal, and they wonder why he ran? If I were him I would have too, that must have been terrifying. Absolutely disgusting."

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