

People v Villela

2023 NY Slip Op 34891(U)

January 6, 2023

Supreme Court, Westchester County

Docket Number: Ind. No. 22-72351-01

Judge: Robert A. Neary

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**FILED
AND
ENTERED
ON 1-6-2023
WESTCHESTER
COUNTY CLERK**

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

-----X
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

- against -

JOHN VILLELA,

Defendant.

-----X
NEARY, J.

FILED
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TINOTY G. LUNNI
COUNTY CLERK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER
DECISION AND ORDER

Ind. No. 22-72351-01

The defendant, John Villela, has been charged with the crimes of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, Auto Stripping in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree (three counts), Auto Stripping in the Third Degree (three counts) and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fourth Degree. The defendant has made an omnibus motion which consists of a Notice of Motion and an Affirmation and Memorandum of Law in Support thereof. In response, the People have filed an Affirmation in Opposition together with a Memorandum of

Law. Having read all of the submitted papers and reviewed the court file, this Court makes the following determination.

A. MOTION TO INSPECT THE GRAND JURY MINUTES AND DISMISS OR REDUCE THE INDICTMENT FOR INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE PURSUANT TO CPL 210.20(10(B), (1-A) AND 210.30

The defendant's motion to inspect the Grand Jury minutes is granted. Upon an *in camera* inspection of the Grand Jury minutes by Court, the motion to dismiss the indictment or reduce a charged offense in the indictment is denied.

The Court has reviewed the minutes of the proceeding before the Grand Jury. The Grand Jury was properly instructed (see *People v. Calbud*, 49 NY2d 389, 426 NYS2d 389, 402 NE2d 1140 and *People v. Valles*, 62 NY2d 36, 476 NYS2d 50, 464 NE2d 418) and the evidence presented, if accepted as true would be legally sufficient to establish every element of the offenses charged. [See CPL §210.30(2)]. In addition, the minutes reveal that a quorum of the grand jurors was present during the presentation of evidence and at the time the district attorney instructed the Grand Jury on the law, and that it was instructed that only those grand jurors who had heard all the evidence could participate in voting on the matter.

The Court does not find that the release of the Grand Jury minutes or certain portions thereof to the parties was necessary to assist the Court in making this determination.

B. MOTION TO SUPPRESS NOTICED STATEMENTS OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE GRANTING A HUNTLEY HEARING

This branch of the defendant's motion is granted to the extent that a *Huntley* hearing shall be held prior to trial to determine whether any statements allegedly made by the defendant, which have been noticed by the People pursuant to CPL §710.30 (1)(a), were involuntarily made by the defendant within the meaning of CPL §60.45 (see CPL §710.20(3), CPL §710.60[3][b]; *People v. Weaver*, 49 NY2d 1012, 429 NYS2d 399, 406 NE2d 1335), obtained in violation of defendant's Sixth Amendment right to counsel, and/or obtained in violation of the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights (see *Dunaway v. New York*, 442 US 200, 99 S. Ct. 2248, 60 LE2d 824).

C. MOTION TO SUPPRESS EVIDENCE OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE GRANTING A MAPP/DUNAWAY HEARING

This branch of the defendant's motion is granted solely to the extent of conducting a *Mapp* hearing prior to trial to determine the propriety of any search resulting in the seizure of property (see *Mapp v. Ohio*, 367 US 643, 81 S Ct. 1684, 6 LE2d 1081) and whether any evidence was obtained in violation of the defendant's Sixth Amendment right to counsel and/or obtained in violation of the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights. [See *Dunaway v. New York*, 42 US 200, 99 S Ct. 2248, 60LE2d 824].

D. MOTION TO SEVER COUNTS OF THE INDICTMENT RELATIVE TO THE PELHAM MANOR CASE PURSUANT TO CPL SECTION 200.20

The defendant moves to sever the counts related to the June 10, 2022 incident from the remaining counts in the indictment. The Court finds that the counts were properly joined pursuant to CPL §200.20(2)(c) which authorizes joinder of charges that are based upon different criminal transactions when those charges are defined by the same or similar statutory provisions and consequently are the same or similar in law. Moreover “. . . a strong public policy favors joinder, because it expedites the judicial process, reduces court congestion, and avoids the necessity of recalling witnesses” [See *People v. Mahboubian*, 74 NY2d 174, 183].

The Court finds that the charges are properly joined and the defendant has not demonstrated that he would be unfairly prejudiced by a trial on all the joined charges. The defendant’s motion is, therefore, denied.

E. MOTION FOR A SANDOVAL/VENTIMIGLIA HEARING

Immediately prior to commencement of jury selection, the prosecutor shall, upon request of the defendant, notify the defendant of any prior criminal act which the People seek to use in the cross-examination of the defendant as well as all specific instances of the defendant's prior uncharged criminal, vicious or immoral conduct of which the prosecutor has knowledge and which the prosecutor intends to use at trial for the purposes of impeaching the credibility of the defendant. Thereafter, upon the defendant's request, the trial court shall conduct a *Sandoval*

and/or *Ventimiglia* hearing prior to the commencement of trial. [See *People v. Sandoval*, 34 NY2d 371 (1974); *People v. Ventimiglia*, 52 NY2d 350 (1981); *People v. Molineux*, 168 NY 264 (1901)].

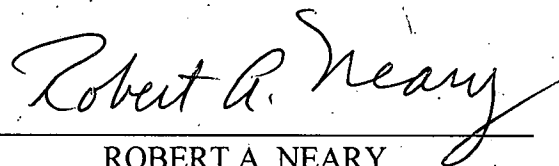
F. MOTION TO RESERVE RIGHT TO MAKE FURTHER MOTIONS PURSUANT TO CPL 255.20(2) AND (3)

Upon a proper showing, the Court will entertain appropriate additional motions based upon grounds of which the defendant could not, with due diligence, have been previously aware, or which, for other good cause, could not reasonably have been raised in this motion.

[See CPL §255.20(3)].

This constitutes the opinion, decision and order of this Court.

Dated: White Plains, New York
January 6, 2023



ROBERT A. NEARY
SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

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Indictment No. 22-72351-01

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