

Falls man is indicted on murder charges in shooting death of teen in Jordan Gardens

LOCKPORT — A Falls man, already facing robbery and weapons possession charges, has been indicted by a Niagara County grand jury in connection with the murder of a 16-year-old teen.

The indictment charges Gabriel Behrens, 21, with two counts of second-degree murder in the death of Elijah Lopez in Jordan Gardens on the night of Feb. 20. Behrens pleaded not guilty to the counts before Niagara County Court Judge Caroline Wojtaszek during an arraignment Tuesday afternoon and was ordered held without bail on the murder charges.

He's been jailed since his arrest on Feb. 26 on charges of second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and first-degree robbery after a raid at his apartment in the 1000 block of Ferry Avenue.

Lopez, 16, died from a gunshot wound to his chest following a melee in Jordan Gardens.

Falls Police patrol officers had responded to the housing development for a report of "shots fired" and found Lopez lying on the grass in front of a townhome there. Falls firefighters and EMTs performed CPR on him before he was taken by ambulance to Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center.

He was pronounced dead at the medical center a short time later.

Criminal Investigation Division detectives said at the time that they were investigating a report that Lopez and other teens may have been involved in a fight before the shooting. Investigators later confirmed that there had been "a disturbance among a bunch of young people that led up to (the shooting)."

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, Falls Police Crime Scene Unit investigators were observed collecting evidence in and around the area where Lopez's body was found. Law enforcement sources said detectives canvassed Jordan Gardens in a search for both witnesses and security or surveillance camera video that may have captured the shooting.

The Gazette later learned that investigators found a video recording, believed to have been shot on a cell phone before the shooting, that appeared to show a woman in Jordan

Gardens carrying what looked like a rifle or shotgun. Neither police nor prosecutors have commented on the recording or what other evidence has been gathered.

Law enforcement has not yet released any additional information on the weapons and robbery charges that Behrens faces.