

NEWS

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Third West New York Property Owner Charged in Ongoing Bribery Investigation

(More)

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TRENTON – In one of a series of convictions and charges against property owners in West New York, Anthony Lam, 51, of Nutley, pleaded guilty today to attempting to bribe West New York public officials to obtain official action with respect to an apartment building that Lam owned on 62nd Street in West New York, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., announced.

During a plea hearing before U.S. District Judge Garrett E. Brown, Jr., Lam admitted that, on May 30, 2007, he paid \$5,000 in cash to a witness who was cooperating with the government and who had purported to have contacts with West New York officials. Lam admitted that the cash was intended to bribe public officials whom Lam believed would issue a Certificate of Occupancy despite improper handicapped access and leakage in the basement of the building.

Lam is the third West New York property owner to be charged in an investigation which is ongoing. On March 11, Meyer Mussafi, 69, of West New York, admitted that he paid \$500 to the West New York Construction Code Official on April 1, 2008, to obtain unspecified future favors in connection with two buildings Mussafi owned on 55th Street in West New York. Another West New York building owner, Herman Friedman, 48, of Union City, was indicted on Feb. 24, 2009, in connection with bribing the same official in connection with a building on 56th Street in West New York.

Lam pleaded guilty to one count of attempted bribery which carries a maximum statutory prison term of 10 years and a fine of \$250,000.

Judge Brown scheduled sentencing for Aug. 3. Lam is free on a \$50,000 unsecured bond.

Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., credited Special Agents of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bradley A. Harsch and Brian Howe of the Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Randolph D. Norris, Esq., Stockton, N.J.

