

NewsRoom

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Section: News

Second lawsuit sparked by Rosebank blaze

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A second lawsuit has been filed stemming from a devastating late-spring fire that tore through two Rosebank multi-family residences, critically injuring three people and sending occupants scrambling for their lives.

Hassan Almas, 46, suffered "life-threatening and life-changing injuries" in the June 5 blaze on Chestnut Avenue that displaced five families, said his lawyer **Bruce Baron** of Brooklyn.

Baron declined to elaborate on his client's injuries, citing the pending litigation.

"He awaits his day in court," said the lawyer.

Owner, contractor sued

Almas and his wife, Noura Almas, have sued the building owner, 203 Chestnut Realty Corp., and a contractor, Delco Painting Corp.

The couple's civil complaint alleges 203 Chestnut Realty had retained Delco to repair and replace electrical wiring in the building sometime before the fire.

A Delco principal previously told the Advance the company did not perform any electrical work at the premises.

Attempts to obtain a phone listing for 203 Chestnut Realty were unsuccessful.

The suit, filed in state Supreme Court, St. George, seeks unspecified monetary damages.

Baron also represents Kimberly Rivera and Olvin Oliveras, who likewise allege injuries stemming from the massive blaze. The couple was forced to throw their two children out a second-floor window to safety.

They sued the defendants in July.

The Almases lived at 203-205 Chestnut as did Ms. Rivera and Oliveras.

The Almases lived on the second floor, said their civil complaint.

According to Advance reports, the five-alarm fire broke out at 1:15 a.m. and quickly tore through two multi-family residential buildings at 201 and 203-205 Chestnut Ave., plus the Staten Island Machine Shop located in the rear.

The fire also caught the back deck of 207 Chestnut and almost went inside the house.

The blaze spread so quickly that at its height, Ms. Rivera's young children, Mia and Joey, had to be dropped out of a window and into the arms of neighbors.

Ms. Rivera was unconscious when firefighters carried her from the burning home to safety.

More than 30 injured

The conflagration raged for more than seven hours until it was placed under control at 8:46 a.m., a Fire Department spokesman said.

In all, 34 people, including 23 firefighters, were injured. More than 200 firefighters responded.

The injuries ranged from minor to serious, but none were considered life-threatening, said Frank Dwyer, an FDNY spokesman.

Dwyer said faulty electrical wiring caused the fire.

In addition, no working smoke alarms were found in the house, he said.

Baron, the lawyer, said the blaze started in a first-floor apartment at the building where his clients lived and quickly spread upstairs to their apartments.

The attorney said the apartment where the blaze ignited had been undergoing renovations "for quite some time" prior to the incident.

A source with knowledge of the incident said Almas succeeded in shepherding his entire family - his wife and three young children, including a newborn - to safety.

Afterward Almas dashed back inside the burning building to ensure that other occupants got out, the source said.

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