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Tinted Windshield Stop in Sunny Isle Results in Discovery of Ghost Gun, Marijuana, and Suspect's Arrest

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Mugshot of Raydell Swanston. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — A man who was stopped for vehicular infractions must now answer to felony charges after packaged marijuana and a “ghost” gun were reportedly found in his possession.

According to court documents, on Sunday, officers patrolling the Sunny Isle area spotted a black BMW SUV driving with its windshield completely tinted and no license plates, neither front nor back. After conducting a traffic stop on the vehicle, police made contact with Raydell Swanston, the driver and the SUV’s only occupant.

After examining the license and registration information he handed over, officers asked whether he had any marijuana in the vehicle, or whether he had been smoking marijuana. Swanston reportedly said no to both questions, despite the grocery bag police say was in clear view on the front passenger seat, filled with vials and sandwich bags containing a green leafy substance.

Further searching by officers reportedly yielded a black backpack, also on the front passenger seat. Inside was a tan handgun. Swanston reportedly admitted to not having a license for the weapon, after which he was arrested.

Forensic investigators discovered that the gun, which had no identification or serial markings, was loaded with a 15-round magazine. It was also reportedly fitted with a chip that enables full automatic fire, enabling the discharge of all 15 rounds with one squeeze of the trigger.

Tests on the 73.5 grams of plant material returned positive results for marijuana.

Swanston was ultimately charged with unauthorized possession of a firearm, unauthorized possession of a machine gun, possession of ammunition, possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute, possession of drug paraphernalia, failure to display a license plate, and violation of vehicle tinting regulations.

In court on Monday, Magistrate Ernest Morris found probable cause to uphold all the charges against Swanston. The initial \$50,000 bail was modified to require \$10,000 in cash with the remainder as an unsecured bond before the defendant could be released from custody. The next court appearance for Mr. Swanston was on October 23.