

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Man Arrested at John F. Kennedy Housing Community Pleads Guilty to Possession of a Loaded 9mm Handgun

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ST. CROIX — U.S. Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced today that a St. Croix man pleaded guilty on Friday, February 11 to felon in possession of a firearm.

According to court documents, on September 3, 2020, police officers were patrolling in the John F. Kennedy housing community. As they were approaching building 29, a group of male individuals were sitting in the archway of the building. Jahseen Simmonds, 29, ran up the stairs of the building and into an apartment on the second floor. When police knocked on the apartment door, Simmonds exited the apartment and when he was asked

if he lived in the apartment, he said “no.” Police again knocked on the door and a female resident and a male came to the door, who stated that they did not give permission to Simmonds to enter the apartment.

After receiving consent to search the apartment, the police found a 9mm handgun, with 1 live 9mm round in the chamber and 15 live 9mm rounds in the magazine. There were also 31 live 9mm rounds in the extended magazine. These items were located on the balcony where Simmonds had been. The residents stated that the firearm was not on the balcony before the Simmonds ran into the apartment and that it did not belong to them.

Simmonds had previously been convicted of possession of a firearm while under indictment, a crime punishable for a term exceeding one year and the firearm was shipped in interstate commerce.

Simmonds pleaded guilty to felon in possession of a firearm. He is scheduled to be sentenced on June 15, 2022 and faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The V.I. Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration are investigating the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Rhonda Williams-Henry is prosecuting the case.

This case is part of the Department of Justice’s Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide initiative that brings together federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and community leaders to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in a community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. For more information on the Department of Justice’s Project Safe Neighborhoods, please see: <https://www.justice.gov/psn>.