

TRI-STATE AREA

Second N.Y. Developer Pleads Guilty to Voter-Fraud Charges

Shalom Lamm says he conspired to corrupt the electoral process, admitting to falsely registering voters to advance a real-estate project



Developer Shalom Lamm and Kenneth Nakdimen were indicted last year on charges that they sought to take over the government of Bloomingburg, N.Y., to further their real-estate development.

PHOTO: ROY GUMPEL FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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[An upstate New York developer pleaded guilty Tuesday to conspiracy to corrupt the electoral process, admitting to falsely registering voters to advance a real-estate project.

Shalom Lamm, 57 years old, and an associate were indicted last year on accusations that they sought to take over the government of Bloomingburg, N.Y., to further their real-estate development. Federal prosecutors said they bribed voters in anticipation of making hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr. Lamm is scheduled to be sentenced in September in federal district court in White Plains. His co-defendant, Kenneth Nakdimen, pleaded guilty last month to the same charge and is expected to be sentenced in September as well.

In a written statement, Manhattan U.S. Acting U.S. Attorney Joon Kim said Mr. Lamm sought to corrupt the democratic process. “The integrity of our electoral process must be inviolate at every level; our democracy depends on it,” Mr. Kim said.

An attorney for Mr. Lamm declined to comment. Previously, an attorney for Mr. Nakdimen said: “We are looking forward to a complete presentation of all of the facts surrounding the election in question.”

Messrs. Lamm and Nakdimen planned to build a 396-unit townhouse development in Bloomingburg, a village in the town of Mamakating in the Catskills. When the project ran into local opposition, the developers conspired to falsely register voters to help elect public officials who would support their housing development, prosecutors said.

The developers tried to conceal the residence of the voters by producing sham backdated leases, prosecutors said. They left toothbrushes and toothpaste in unoccupied apartments to make it appear as though they were occupied, prosecutors contend.

The duo also had long-running disputes with the town of Mamakating concerning the development. They had maintained that the town’s opposition to the real-estate project was rooted in anti-Semitism, which the town has denied.

In 2016, the town and the village settled a religious-discrimination lawsuit with Mr. Lamm and others for \$2.9 million, without admitting to wrongdoing.

“This is the first step in vindication for the entire community that has fought so hard to expose the efforts of Lamm, Nakdimen,” said Mamakating Supervisor William Herrmann of Tuesday’s guilty plea.

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