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D.A. BROWN: UNLICENSED WOODSIDE REAL ESTATE BROKER
CHARGED IN \$600,000 REAL ESTATE SCAM

District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that an unlicensed Woodside real estate broker has been charged with defrauding three real estate investors out of more than \$600,000 in cash and property which she allegedly used, in part, to pay personal expenses.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendant is accused of preying on members of her own ethnic community in Queens over the last three years to unjustly enrich herself. Instead of helping her victims achieve the American Dream of owning their own homes, she allegedly plunged them into a financial nightmare by defrauding them of large sums of money and, in one case, a house worth more than half a million dollars which she surreptitiously purchased for ten dollars.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Sayeda Moin, 44, of 32 Myles Avenue in Levittown, Long Island. Moin, who is also known as Sayeda Sufia Akhter and who formerly maintained an office at 42-20 53rd Road in Woodside, was arraigned last night before Queens Criminal Court Judge Alex Zigman on a criminal complaint charging her with second- and third-degree grand larceny, second-degree forgery, second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument, first-degree falsifying business records and first-degree scheme to defraud. Judge Zigman set bail at \$50,000 and ordered the defendant to return to court tomorrow, March 23, 2007. If convicted, she faces up to fifteen years in prison.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal complaint, the defendant was retained to locate an investment property for Mr. Kazi Shamsuddin – which she did at 117 South Franklin Avenue in Hempstead. The defendant allegedly advised Mr. Shamsuddin that he would be required to make a \$10,000 deposit toward the purchase of the property. The defendant allegedly requested that Mr. Shamsuddin sign a blank check as she did not know who the attorneys would be but that she would complete the check once she obtained the names. On November 5, 2004, Mr. Shamsuddin allegedly gave the defendant a blank check for \$10,000, and five days later, gave her \$5,000 in cash for lawyer’s fees. Both the check and cash were allegedly deposited into the defendant’s personal bank account. When Mr. Shamsuddin tried to contact the defendant after having not received a contract from her nor hearing about a scheduled closing, he was allegedly told by her to never call her again.

The complaint further alleges that when Ms. Khudeza Begum negotiated to purchase a house, located at 40-21 67th Street in Woodside, through the defendant she was advised to make out two deposit checks – one for \$15,000 and another for \$20,000 – to Frank Zabrozky as attorney. Doing as instructed, Ms. Begum allegedly handed over the \$35,000 in checks to the defendant on December 9, 2005, and a closing on the property was held on March 21, 2006. However, a review of the closing documents revealed that the \$35,000 Ms. Begum had allegedly given the defendant was not applied toward the purchase price nor had the defendant returned the money to her. In addition, it is alleged that Frank Zabrozky neither is an attorney nor had he ever represented himself as being one. According to the complaint, Mr. Zabrozky claimed that he has known the defendant for approximately three years and that he had deposited the two checks in his account and gave the defendant \$35,000 in cash.

In addition, the complaint charges that the defendant told Ms. Begum that she would obtain a purchaser for the house Ms. Begum was selling at 89-16 129th Street. Unbeknownst to Mr. Begum and without her permission, at the closing of the 129th Street house on September 2, 2005, it is alleged that a check was made out to the defendant for \$37,000 and then deposited into her personal bank account

Finally, the complaint alleges that the defendant helped Mr. Mohammed Haque purchase a home at 32 Myles Avenue in Levittown, Long Island, for \$520,000. At the closing held on November 8, 2005, Mr. Haque was directed to sign all the closing and mortgage documents conveying the house to him. Sometime after the closing, Mr. Haque allegedly rented the house to the defendant with the understanding that she would use the rent money to pay the mortgage as he would be out of the country for several months. The defendant allegedly did not make any payments and the mortgage subsequently went into default. When Mr. Haque confronted the defendant about the mortgage being in default, she allegedly sold the property without Mr. Haque's permission. A review of the November 2005 closing documents revealed that among the papers interposed with the mortgage documents was a deed dated the same day as the closing conveying title to the house from Mr. Haque to the defendant for ten dollars.

District Attorney Brown asks that anyone who believes that he or she may have been a victim of the defendant's alleged scheme to contact his Economic Crimes Bureau at 718-286-6673.

The investigation was conducted by Detective David Gilbert, of the District Attorney's NYPD Detective Squad, under the supervision of Captain John M. Zanfardino.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Mariana Zelig, of the District Attorney's Economic Crimes Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, and Christina Hanophy, Deputy Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Assistant District Attorney Linda M. Cantoni, Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely accusations and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: E-version of this press release posted at www.queensda.org.