

Defendant in O'Connell underage sex case pleads not guilty

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The Patriot Ledger

Posted Sep 09, 2011 @ 04:00 PM

Last update Sep 09, 2011 @ 07:39 PM

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DEDHAM — Phyllis Capuano, the 20-year-old alleged co-conspirator in the William O'Connell underage sex case, pleaded not guilty today at her arraignment in Norfolk County Superior Court.

Capuano, wearing a black dress and dark-rimmed glasses, stood quietly, rested her hands on wooden railing in the courtroom and said only, "not guilty," when Judge Thomas F. McGuire, Jr. asked for her plea.

She is charged with one count of statutory rape, two counts of conspiracy to commit statutory rape, one count of aiding and abetting the commission of statutory rape, and one count of committing an unnatural and lascivious act.

Authorities say the charges stem from several interactions with prominent Quincy developer O'Connell had with the alleged victim, who was 14 at the time and is now 15, over a two-year period beginning in 2009.

The girl told state police investigators in a March 30 interview that she had been having a sexual relationship with a "72-year-old white male" and had visited the man's Quincy residence. The girl said she was introduced to the man through Capuano, who also goes by "Kookie," in the spring or summer of 2009.

O'Connell, who is not named in the arrest warrant but was indicted for some of the same alleged offenses as Capuano, will turn 72 next month.

Capuano's cash bail was set at \$7,500, and pretrial conferences were scheduled for Nov. 10 and Feb. 2.

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