

JUSTICE: Reason for delay not disclosed

Sentencing proceeds in 2002 Hwy. 48 fatality

A sentencing date for a Toronto man convicted in the fatal hit-and-run of a Whitchurch-Stouffville youth is expected to be set next month.

The case of Omar Sharef Hassan, convicted of failing to remain at the scene of a collision that killed 16-year-old Matthew Bobbett Aug. 25, 2002, will return to the Newmarket courthouse Jan. 6, court records state.

Sentencing hearings were delayed in late November after Mr. Hassan's lawyer Charn Gill asked Justice Edwin Minden to remove him from the case.

While the reasons for the request have not been disclosed, Justice Minden told the court the content of a pre-sentence report called into question if Mr. Hassan should be represented by a different lawyer.

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Matthew was killed after being hit by a car as he walked with friends along Hwy. 48 near St.

John's Sideroad.

He was struck by a Ford Mustang and died a short time later.

Despite evidence at the scene, which included two crucial DNA samples found on broken glass from the car's windshield, police were unable to identify the driver, Ontario Provincial Police said.

While Mr. Hassan was driving the car every day, he wasn't

listed on the ownership because he couldn't afford to insure the Mustang, OPP Insp. Scott Naylor said.

Mr. Hassan and a friend agreed he would drive the car, but the friend would pay the insurance, with the promise of reimbursement by Mr. Hassan, Insp. Naylor said.

The car was reported stolen after the crash, he added.

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