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By **P.J. D'Annunzio** | May 04, 2018 at 05:39 PM

The owners of a shopping center where a car crashed into a nail salon and killed a 74-year-old woman have settled the wrongful death lawsuit against them for \$1.65 million, lawyers announced Monday.

Myra Forman was killed March 31, 2015, when a car driven by Jacqueline Gelman smashed through the storefront window of Cindy's Nails at the Bel Air Shopping Center on Bustleton Avenue in Northeast Philadelphia.

Forman's estate sued the owners of the shopping centers and the management company, Saul Management, for not having proper safety measures in place. The estate argued that the defendants should have known to put in bollards and wheel stops in the parking lot, especially since two similar accidents occurred there before Forman was killed.

The settlement was reached during the third day of trial in Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge Sean Kennedy's courtroom.

“Our theme throughout the case was that this type of accident is foreseeable and preventable,” the Formans’ lawyer, Seth Britten of Cooper Schall & Levy, said. “These types of accidents are more common than people think.”

He added, “There were plenty of safety measures our experts testified to that could be very simply installed, but there were not measures taken and ultimately it cost Myra Forman’s life.”

Britten said the emotional impact on the jury of seeing the members of the Forman family testify likely forced the defendants to the negotiating table.

"The whole courtroom was a mess when the family testified. Three daughters, two granddaughters and the husband. It was very emotional. You can tell from the reactions of everyone in the room that it really sunk in," Britten said.

The defendants' attorney, Mary Ellen Conroy of Cipriani & Werner, did not return a call seeking comment.

In their pretrial memorandum, the defendants claimed that since Forman died instantly, the plaintiffs could not make a viable claim for pain and suffering. And since she was 74 years old, there was no loss of income.

Additionally, the defendants shifted blame to the driver who crashed into the building, calling her recollection of events prior to the accident “very sketchy.”

“She recalls pulling into the parking lot and looking for a place to park,” court papers said. “Unfortunately she hits the gas instead of the brake and the car accelerated into Cindy’s nail salon. This was not the first time Ms. Gelman had an accident like this. Several years before she drove into a bank on Bustleton Avenue, not far from this accident.”

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