



NYPD Won't Comment On Mysteriously Delayed Investigation Into Cyclist's Death

The brother of a Bronx cyclist who was fatally doored in April says the NYPD has completely dropped the ball on the investigation into his brother's death. On the afternoon of April 14th, Joseph Nelson, 54, was doored while biking by a busy intersection near Bronx Community College. He was found by EMTs face up and unconscious at the scene, and pronounced dead at St. Barnabas Hospital soon after.

But the department's Accident Investigation Squad did not launch an investigation until over a month later. "I got one initial call," John Nelson, Joseph's brother, [tells DNAinfo](#). "Aside from that, I got no information, no assistance, nothing at all from the Police Department. I know the police are not miracle workers, but this happened in broad daylight. **They treated him as though he never existed. But he was somebody. He was a person.**"

The NYPD's Accident Investigation Squad has been widely condemned this year in the wake of an [explosive City Council hearing](#) that revealed the squad's laughably limited staff and inadequate methodology. During that hearing, it came to light that AIS only initiates an investigation if the victim is dead or seems likely to die. That [policy is questionable in and of itself](#), but in this case the cyclist was pronounced dead hours after the accident. Yet an AIS officer tells DNAinfo the 52nd Precinct did not notify AIS of the crash until May 18th, over a month later. The deplorable situation is similar to the case of Clara Heyworth, whose husband is now suing the NYPD for failing to conduct an adequate investigation into her death.

In 2011 [Heyworth was killed](#) crossing Vanderbilt Avenue in Fort Greene by a motorist driving with a learner's permit prohibiting him from driving without supervision. AIS dropped the investigation an hour after Heyworth was run over—investigators claim the hospital told them she was not likely to die. As a result, they didn't even go to the crash scene until days later, and by then crucial evidence was long gone. This week, for the first time, John Nelson was able to reach someone at AIS who informed him that no evidence had turned up and the case would be closed by the end of the month.

Nelson's attorney [Daniel Flanzig](#), who also sent private investigators to the scene four days after the accident in a fruitless attempt to find any evidence, [tells DNAinfo](#), "The lack of an early investigation absolutely destroyed their right to have justice." We asked the NYPD press office and NYPD spokesman Paul Browne why the AIS investigation was so significantly delayed in this case, and received no reply. We'll update if hell ever freezes over.