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Watertown developments in the search for the Marathon bombing suspects

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Shanti Kapoor describes seeing police and SWAT teams race down Watertown streets toward a nearby boat where Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was caught.

By Jaclyn Reiss and Matt Rocheleau, Globe Correspondents

Near the 7-Eleven in Watertown, as news spread that the suspect was in custody Friday night, applause rang through the intersection.

One Watertown resident, Michel Chalhoub, jumped up, leading the crowd's hesitant jubilation, shouting, "America! America!" He grinned ear to ear and clapped furiously.

"It's a beautiful feeling," Chalhoub, who emigrated from Lebanon to America in 2001, said. "I love this country. The people here are very nice and welcoming. I was very sad about the bombings."

As an ambulance drove by slowly, spectators on the street could see what looked to be the suspect through a window. He was laying down, wearing an oxygen mask, as EMT personnel pumped their hands over his heart in a CPR-like fashion.

Nelcy LaClair, 22, let out a shriek of excitement.

"I'm just so relieved," she said. "Now it feels like Boston again. We're strong. We're one."

"Being in the whole 'lockdown' thing it's a different feeling. It doesn't feel like home. It's almost like a warzone," she added.

As the reality hit the streets - everyone had just seen physical proof - the mood exploded into celebration. Families who lived nearby ventured out into the streets, after hour upon hour of fear, as others cheered for police cars passing through the intersection.

Some police officers drove through the crowd giving thumbs up or waving, while others lit up their tops and pierced the night with playful sirens. One man in a SWAT truck announced over a megaphone that "it was a pleasure" to have worked in Watertown.

LaClair was at her home in Allston getting picked up to go to dinner with her

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aunt Kare Benson, 62, of Charlestown

When they heard the early reports that the second suspect was hiding in a boat surrounded by police, they made a pre-dinner detour to Watertown.

"We saw it on Twitter and couldn't resist," said LaClair.

They stood alongside dozens of reporters, cameramen and spectators at the corner of Bigelow Avenue and Mt. Auburn Street anxiously awaiting updates from others in the crowd and from Twitter.

LaClair clutched her phone, constantly refreshing Twitter and reading key updates aloud to her aunt.

Some shouted that they saw a man who looked like the suspect being resuscitated inside the ambulance.

Benson said she hoped the man will live.

"We want answers," she said.

Earlier in the evening, Brendan Carroll, 34, recalled that he was outside near his Adams Street home Friday evening and heard about 20 gunshots in the distance shortly before 7 p.m.

It was the second time in less than 24 hours Carroll said he heard heavy gunfire near where he lives.

On Thursday night, Carroll said he was outside smoking a cigarette when an SUV came racing down the street with police in pursuit firing dozens of rounds at the vehicle. Carroll said he laid down on the ground.

"They shot up the whole street," he said.

Friday night, about half a dozen locals stood outside Coolidge Variety store in Watertown, taking in the scene of police swarming the area by Andreas house of pizza. Boston and State Police rushed to the scene by car and foot as others strung up caution tape to keep citizens back.

Many local residents said they heard about a minute's worth of rapid fire consecutive gunshots.

"I was standing in front of Nick's, and I heard the gunshots - they sounded like military, you know, automatic," said Mark Ciano, 53. "It sounded real close, but it makes sense if it was a bit down further because of the echo effect."

Jack Madanian, who lives just around the corner from Coolidge Variety, said he was strolling on the street after being locked down all day when he heard the shots.

"I heard maybe 40 or 50 gunshots 10 minutes ago," Madanian said. "It was constant. It didn't sound far from here."

Shanti Kapoor, 21, said she did not hear gunfire Friday evening but came outside to see police and SWAT teams racing down Bigelow Avenue.

Kapoor said she lives in Boston but was staying with friends in Watertown last night. She was among those who heard explosions, gunfire and other chaos Thursday night and spent hours waiting in a basement until law enforcement cleared them to leave this afternoon.

She said the past week has been "scary."

"You'd never think this would happen here," Kapoor said.

Rita Colella, 68, said she was finally allowed to leave her Arlington Street house to walk her three-year-old French bulldog, Spanky, when she saw the commotion near Coolidge Variety store.

She gaped in disbelief at the amount of reporters, police, and neighbors staked out in front of 7-Eleven near Mount Auburn Street.

"This is usually Spanky's route," she said, nodding to the area sectioned off with caution tape, "and he won't do his business unless he can get on his route."

However, Colella said she felt safer amid reports that the second bombing suspect has been found.

"It's just bizarre," she said. "I've lived in Watertown my whole life. This feels

It's just bizarre," she said. "I've lived in Watertown my whole life. This feels like a bad movie or something."

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