

Video: “I thought we mattered.” Schlossberg: “I can’t unhear his voice.”

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [George Floyd killing, Police](#) July 13, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts responding to the George Floyd killing* 

from Daniel Patrick Sheehan, “Video of Allentown police officer kneeling on man’s neck: Woman who took it says she was shocked, and George Floyd’s attorney weighs in.” Morning Call, July 12, 2020.

The woman who shot a video outside St. Luke’s Hospital-Sacred Heart in Allentown, Pa., that shows a police officer putting his knee on a man’s head and neck during an arrest said the man was screaming “Mira, mira!” — Spanish for ‘Look, look!’”

“That means he knew what was going on and he was screaming for someone like me to see,” said the woman, an Allentown resident who doesn’t want her name made public and uses a pseudonym on Facebook.

Assistant Chief Bill Lake said the incident came under immediate review, in keeping with the department’s use-of-force policy.

“As soon as this came to light, we got the ball rolling,” he said. Lehigh County District Attorney Jim Martin said his office will review Allentown’s conclusions, adding he can’t comment on the case until that process is done.

The video, less than 30 seconds long, shows one of the officers putting his shoulder and elbow on the man’s back before pressing his knee on his head and neck.

The video is already garnering national attention — including from attorney Benjamin Crump, who represents Floyd’s family.

Mayor Ray O’Connell and Allentown police Chief Glenn Granitz Jr. showed up to the protest to answer questions. O’Connell called the video

“disturbing,” but said, “I think we need to gather all the facts and information before we go forward.”

Granitz added that he couldn’t say when the investigation would be finished. “I don’t have a 24-hour, 48-hour time table for you,” he said.

Through its Facebook page, the local Black Lives Matter group said it is awaiting official statements from the city before deciding what to do next.

Meanwhile, the group has issued **six demands**: that the body camera footage of the arrest be released; that all officers involved be suspended pending an external investigation; that the mayor, police chief and city council president make a public statement; that the man’s name and medical condition be released; that a criminal justice review board be put in place to oversee Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton; and that Allentown reallocate funds from the police department “into the community.”

On Twitter, Allentown Councilman Joshua Siegel, who was at the protest, said he was “disgusted and outraged” and made similar demands, including the officers’ suspension and the release of names and body camera footage.

Siegel’s council colleague, Ce-Ce Gerlach, who also attended the protest, posted a video to Facebook in which she said she felt “raw” over the incident.

“That’s why I went down [to the protest] last night,” she said. “Not as a City Council member but as a resident that wants to see justice here in Allentown.”

Democratic U.S. Rep. Susan Wild [issued a statement](#) Sunday calling the video “sickening” and “yet another instance of unwarranted force against a Black man.” She pointed to the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

recently passed by the House, which would prohibit the use of this kind of force across the country, among other reforms.

“We cannot continue to allow the lethal combination of systemic racism and excessive use of force to rot our system of justice,” she wrote.

Also on Twitter, state Rep. Mike Schlossberg, who represents Allentown, said he was horrified when he saw the video and stressed the importance of a thorough investigation.

“The protestors last night were chanting ‘Black Lives Matter’ for a reason,” he wrote. “You’d have to be heartless to not hear the pain and anger in their voices, or the trauma in the voice of the man in the video saying, ‘I thought we mattered.’ I can’t unhear his voice.”