Man used stun gun on real estate agent during open house: Police

A man was arrested after shooting a female real estate agent with a stun gun during an open house in an attempt to sexually assault her, Illinois police say.

The agent, whose name is being kept private by the police, was showing an open house in the Chicago suburb of Tinley Park on Sunday afternoon. According to local prosecutors, Stanley Keller, 50, came in, took some brochures and asked to see the upstairs bedrooms and, later, the garage and basement. As she was showing him the rooms, the agent felt something vibrate behind her and then poke her in the back.

After struggling against Keller, the agent ran out of the house and shouted for someone to call the police.

According to local news outlets, officers arrived to find Keller standing by his vehicle with an open but unused condom on him and a stun gun by the side of the car. Tinley Park Police Chief Matthew Walsh said the evidence showed that Keller had been planning to sexually assault the agent, who has been startled but uninjured in the incident.

Keller has since been charged with one felony count each of attempted aggravated criminal sexual assault, aggravated battery and possession of a weapon by a felon due to a past conviction for armed robbery in 1991.

At a Monday hearing, the assistant public defender tried to argue that Keller carried the stun gun for protection and that the agent backed into it on her own. But Judge John Mahoney set Keller's bail at $1 million. He is up for a bond review on April 15 and a court hearing on May 6.

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Over the past few years, the safety risks real estate agents take while on the job have been the subject of discussion, and experts advise hosting open houses with the help of a colleague, scanning attendees for verbal and non-verbal body cues and always having a safety alarm close by on one's phone.

"We're just one tragedy away from agents getting worried about their safety again," Philip Faranda, president of the Beverly Carter Foundation, a safety advocacy group so named for a slain Arkansas Realtor who was murdered while showing a remote home, told Inman last fall.

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