

Former councilwoman cleared of assault charge Wednesday, February 12, 2003

Rebecca Orenstein, 60, of the unit block of Pennsylvania Avenue, had been charged in October with second-degree assault after a Westminster City police officer claimed she threw metallic confetti in his face during the McDaniel College Homecoming Parade. In his report, the officer claimed Orenstein approached him with a look of anger on her face, and violently threw the confetti in his face.

The charges were dropped in front of District Court Judge Sue-Ellen Hantman, a visiting judge from Howard County.

The Howard County State's Attorney's Office handled the case, according to Carroll County State's Attorney Jerry Barnes.

He and Orenstein both served on the Lower Pennsylvania Avenue Committee, and he said he asked another office to handle the case to avoid any appearance of impropriety or bias.

He said he was told this morning that the Howard County office felt there wasn't enough evidence to go forward with the case, and that prosecutors were going to drop the charges.

*- Jamie Kelly*