



Vigil held against violence in Staten Island

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Mindy Bloom, Eyewitness News

STATEN ISLAND (WABC) -- A vigil against violence was held in Staten Island in an effort to crack down on hate crimes.

Residents joined religious and civic leaders in calling for an end to the recent rash of hate crimes across the borough.

They gathered outside a White Castle restaurant in Stapleton.

It was the scene of an attack on a gay couple back on July 7th.

The beating victims spoke publicly for the first time on Thursday.

"There needs to be more of this, more of a unity of community, people getting together and saying enough is enough, what's wrong is wrong, it doesn't matter what color skin you are, it doesn't matter what ethnicity you are," said Luis Vieira, the victim of a hate crime.

The Guardian Angels and the NYPD have stepped up patrols in Staten Island, hoping to prevent future hate-fueled violence.