

Circuit Court for Washington County  
Case No. 21-K-04-034142

UNREPORTED  
IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS  
OF MARYLAND

No. 2541

September Term, 2019

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AZANIAH BLANKUMSEE

v.

STATE OF MARYLAND

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Graeff,  
Arthur,  
Moylan, Charles E., Jr.  
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

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PER CURIAM

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Filed: February 4, 2021

\*This is an unreported opinion, and it may not be cited in any paper, brief, motion, or other document filed in this Court or any other Maryland Court as either precedent within the rule of stare decisis or as persuasive authority. Md. Rule 1-104.

In 2004, Azaniah Blankumsee, appellant, was convicted by a jury in the Circuit Court for Washington County of armed robbery of Andrew Snyder; felony murder of Jonathan Dennis; attempted second-degree murder of Jonathan Dennis; first-degree assault on Johnathan Dennis; plus twenty-four other crimes, including attempted second-degree murder of several other persons, and use of a handgun in the commission of a crime of violence. On direct appeal, we reversed his felony murder conviction, affirmed his remaining convictions, and remanded to the circuit court for re-sentencing. *See Blankumsee v. State*, No. 2841, Sept. Term, 2004 (filed August 8, 2006). Mr. Blankumsee was eventually resentenced to a total of 45 years’ incarceration.

In January 2020, Mr. Blankumsee filed a “Motion to Sever,” wherein he claimed that his charges arose from three separate incidents and therefore, they should be severed into “3 new trials.” The court denied the motion without a hearing. On appeal, he claims that the court erred in denying the motion. We disagree and shall affirm.

As an initial matter, it is not entirely clear what type of post-trial motion Mr. Blankumsee was attempting to file.<sup>1</sup> But in any event, we note that his defense counsel filed a motion to sever prior to trial, which the trial court denied. And Mr. Blankumsee did not contend on direct appeal that the court had abused its discretion in denying the motion.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, he does not contend that the failure to sever his charges rendered his sentence inherently illegal or that it demonstrated that he was actually innocent of the charged crimes.

Therefore, appellant’s severance claim is barred by the law of the case doctrine.<sup>2</sup> *See Holloway v. State*, 232 Md. App. 272, 285 (2017) (Under the law of the case doctrine, “[n]either questions that were decided nor questions that could have been raised and decided on appeal can be relitigated.” (quotation omitted)).

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT  
COURT FOR WASHINGTON  
COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS  
TO BE PAID BY APPELLANT.**

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<sup>2</sup> To the extent appellant is claiming that his appellate counsel was ineffective in failing to raise the issue on direct appeal, that issue would have to be raised in a post-conviction petition.