

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, APPELLATE DIVISION,
SECOND DEPARTMENT

Henry v. Khan

Henry, 2026 NY Slip Op 01946 (Supreme Court of the State of New York Appellate Division Second Department 2026) · No. 2024-03654 · Decided April 1, 2026

SUMMARY

The Appellate Division, Second Department, affirmed an order granting Ehsan Khan summary judgment in an action to quiet title based on adverse possession. The court held that the complaint and proposed amended complaint failed to allege possession under a claim of right, and that the proposed amendments were patently devoid of merit. The matter was remitted for entry of a judgment declaring that the plaintiffs did not acquire title by adverse possession.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Division, Second Department
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Francesca E. Connolly, J.P.; Paul Wooten, J.; Helen Voutsinas, J.; James P. McCormack, J.
JURISDICTION	New York Appellate Division, Second Department
DECIDED	April 1, 2026
DOCKET	2024-03654
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiffs in an RPAPL article 15 action to quiet title appealed from an order granting defendant Ehsan Khan's cross-motion for summary judgment, effectively declaring that plaintiffs did not acquire title by adverse possession, and denying plaintiffs' motion for leave to amend the complaint.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is reviewed under the applicable no-triable-issue standard; denial of leave to amend is reviewed for provident exercise of discretion, and amendment may be denied when the proposed pleading is patently devoid of merit.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published New York Appellate Division decision
PARTIES	Alex Henry, et al. v. Ehsan Khan

TOPICS

adverse possession

quiet title

summary judgment

motion to amend

declaratory judgment

PRACTICE AREAS

real estate

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiffs adequately alleged possession under a claim of right sufficient to support an adverse-possession claim.
2. Whether summary judgment was properly granted to Khan dismissing the complaint and effectively declaring that plaintiffs did not acquire title by adverse possession.
3. Whether the Supreme Court properly denied plaintiffs' motion for leave to amend the complaint where the proposed amendments were patently devoid of merit.

HOLDINGS

1. The complaint failed to allege that plaintiffs possessed the property under a claim of right, and the proposed amended complaint pleaded facts that negated that element.
2. The Supreme Court properly granted Khan's cross-motion for summary judgment dismissing the complaint insofar as asserted against him and effectively declaring that plaintiffs did not acquire title to the property by adverse possession.
3. The Supreme Court providently exercised its discretion in denying plaintiffs' motion for leave to amend because the proposed amendments were patently devoid of merit.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"To establish a claim of adverse possession, the occupation of the property must be (1) hostile and under a claim of right (i.e., a reasonable basis for the belief that the subject property belongs to a particular party), (2) actual, (3) open and notorious, (4) exclusive, and (5) continuous for the statutory period" ([*1])

"'Claim of right' is now defined as 'a reasonable basis for the belief that the property belongs to the adverse possessor or property owner, as the case may be'" ([*2])

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

In 2020, Ehsan Khan acquired title to real property in Staten Island. In October 2023, plaintiffs brought an RPAPL article 15 quiet-title action alleging that they owned the property through adverse possession. The proposed amended complaint alleged facts that negated possession under a claim of right, and therefore failed to establish a necessary element of adverse possession.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiffs commenced an action to quiet title in October 2023, claiming ownership by adverse possession. They moved to consolidate the action with an eviction proceeding, but the motion was denied without prejudice to

renewal after proper service. After service was effectuated, Khan cross-moved for summary judgment and plaintiffs moved for leave to amend. The Supreme Court, Richmond County, granted Khan's cross-motion and denied leave to amend; the Appellate Division affirmed insofar as appealed from and remitted for entry of a declaratory judgment.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

Remitted to the Supreme Court, Richmond County, for entry of a judgment, inter alia, declaring that plaintiffs did not acquire title to the property by adverse possession.

CASES CITED

- 169 MLS Realty Corp. v One 69 Skill Corp., 197 AD3d 1079, 1081
- Buckheit v Aiken, 232 AD3d 842, 843
- Estate of Becker v Murtagh, 19 NY3d 75, 81 n 4
- Perillo v Charles, 237 AD3d 984
- Deutsche Bank Natl. Trust Co. v Nachimovsky, 188 AD3d 811, 811-812
- Park Slope Auto Ctr., Inc. v Papa, 190 AD3d 754, 757
- Lanza v Wagner, 11 NY2d 317
- Singh v T-Mobile, 232 AD3d 662, 667
- Precious Care Mgt., LLC v Monsey Care, LLC, 221 AD3d 922, 924

OPINION

PER CURIAM.

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v Ehsan Khan, respondent, et al., defendants.

Supreme Court of the State of New York, Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department

Decided on April 1, 2026

2024-03654, (Index No. 151995/23)

Francesca E. Connolly, J.P.

Paul Wooten

Helen Voutsinas

James P. McCormack, JJ.

Napoletano Law, Brooklyn, NY (Domenick Napoletano of counsel), for appellants.

Robert Melamed, Brooklyn, NY (Mark A. Longo of counsel), for respondent.

DECISION & ORDER

In an action pursuant to RPAPL article 15 to quiet title to real property, the plaintiffs appeal from an order of the Supreme Court, Richmond County (Ronald Castorina, Jr., J.), dated February 6, 2024.

The order, insofar as appealed from, granted the cross-motion of the defendant Ehsan Khan for summary judgment dismissing the complaint insofar as asserted against him and, in effect, declaring that the plaintiffs did not acquire title to the subject property by adverse possession, and denied the plaintiffs' motion for leave to amend the complaint.

ORDERED that the order is affirmed insofar as appealed from, with costs, and the matter is remitted to the Supreme Court, Richmond County, for the entry of a judgment, inter alia, declaring that the plaintiffs did not acquire title to the subject property by adverse possession.

In 2020, the defendant Ehsan Khan (hereinafter the defendant) acquired title to real property located in Staten Island.

In October 2023, the plaintiffs commenced this action pursuant to RPAPL article 15 to quiet title to the property against, among others, the defendant, alleging that the plaintiffs were the owners of the property by adverse possession.

The plaintiffs moved to consolidate the action with an eviction proceeding that the defendant had commenced in July 2023 in the Civil Court against two nonparties to this action and John and Jane Does.

In an order dated November 20, 2023, the motion was denied without prejudice to renew upon proper service of the summons and complaint in this action. Thereafter, the plaintiffs effectuated service of the summons and complaint upon the defendant, among others.

The defendant cross-moved for summary judgment dismissing the complaint insofar as asserted against him and, in effect, declaring that the plaintiffs did not acquire title to the subject property by adverse possession.

The plaintiffs moved for leave to amend the complaint.

In an order dated February 6, 2024, the Supreme Court, inter alia, granted the defendant's cross-motion and denied the plaintiffs' motion for leave to amend the complaint.

The plaintiff appeals.

"To establish a claim of adverse possession, the occupation of the property must be (1) hostile and under a claim of right (i.e., a reasonable basis for the belief that the subject property belongs to a particular party), (2) actual, (3) open and notorious, (4) exclusive, and (5) continuous for the statutory period" (*169 MLS Realty Corp. v One 69 Skill Corp.*),

197 AD3d 1079, 1081 [internal quotation marks omitted]; *see* RPAPL 501; *Buckheit v Aiken*, 232 AD3d 842, 843).

"In 2008, the adverse possession statute (RPAPL art 5) was amended in its entirety (L 2008, ch 269) to, among other things, discourage people from claiming adverse possession over real property they know belongs to another with superior ownership rights" (*Estate of Becker v Murtagh*, 19 NY3d 75, 81 n 4). "Claim of right" is now defined as "a reasonable basis for the belief that the property belongs to the adverse possessor or property owner, as the case may be" (RPAPL 501[3]).

As the Supreme Court properly determined, the complaint failed to allege that the plaintiffs' possession of the property was under a claim of right.

The plaintiffs' proposed amended complaint pleaded facts that negated that element, prima facie rebutting the element of possession under a claim of right necessary for a determination of adverse possession (*see* RPAPL 501[3]; *Perillo v Charles*, 237 AD3d 984; *Deutsche Bank Natl. Trust Co. v Nachimovsky*, 188 AD3d 811, 811-812).

Under these circumstances, the court properly granted the defendant's cross-motion for summary judgment dismissing the complaint insofar as asserted against him and, in effect, declaring that the plaintiffs did not acquire title to the subject property by adverse possession (*see Park Slope Auto Ctr., Inc. v Papa*, 190 AD3d 754, 757).

We remit the matter to the Supreme Court, Richmond County, for the entry of a judgment, inter alia, declaring that the plaintiffs did not acquire title to the property by adverse possession (*see Lanza v Wagner*, 11 NY2d 317; *Park Slope Auto Ctr., Inc. v Papa*, 190 AD3d at 757).

In light of the above, the Supreme Court providently exercised its discretion in denying the plaintiffs' motion for leave to amend the complaint, as the proposed amendments were patently devoid of merit (*see Singh v T-Mobile*, 232 AD3d 662, 667; *Precious Care Mgt., LLC v Monsey Care, LLC*, 221 AD3d 922, 924).

The plaintiffs' remaining contention is without merit.

CONNOLLY, J.P., WOOTEN, VOUTSINAS and MCCORMACK, JJ., concur.

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