

March 19, 2012

Greetings:

Attached is a PDF which contains photos of the rail span component of the Johnson Street Bridge (JSB).

My working life was in a naval shipyard where all manner of equipment was taken apart, cleaned, examined, replaced or repaired if necessary, and either plated or primed-and-painted, either before or after re-assembly.

The process was not much different to that which could have been used to restore the Johnson Street rail bridge, had there not been such determination to be rid of it.

A worthy undertaking would be to examine the rail span, as it stands in the yard at Point Hope, so as to determine if it might be possible to repair it, as outlined above, and - far more important - to determine, by that, if a repair could be undertaken on the current road bridge. In the attached photos, one can see that the bridge is of riveted construction; one example of a nice, clean, dismantling is seen in the lower left photo. This whole bridge could, still, be taken apart and restored.!

The question of the carrying capacity of the proposed bridge has not been determined. In fact, questions to that end were not answered in City Hall chambers last Thursday. One contention is that the bridge must be capable of carrying heavy earth-moving equipment (post-earthquake rubble-clearing equipment). A bridge with such a capability would, in our thinking, be certainly be capable of carrying a modern Diesel Motor Unit (DMU), such as might be used on the E&N, and could easily handle a modern streetcar, such as is proposed for an Esquimalt to U-Vic line ... with routing across the JSB!

Another factor is the question of approaches to the bridge. For example; fill in San Francisco, that had been in place for over 100 years, shifted during the earthquake of the '90s and ruptured gas lines which in turn fueled the disastrous fires. Approaches - of new fill - to a new JSB will need to be guaranteed stable if the that bridge is to be useable in a post-earthquake environment.

The City has altered many of its streets for traffic-calming purposes yet, in the case of the JSB, plans show that a superb calming method for an approach to a bridge - an "S" curve - has been discarded.!! Indeed, the proposed roadway appears to invite an *accelerated* approach to the bridge. <https://victoria.civicweb.net/Documents/DocumentList.aspx?ID=1001>

These thoughts are based on a wish to see a wiser use of taxpayer money. A bridge is not like a microwave oven or similar toss-and-replace items. Such wasteful thinking must not be allowed in this major project! Neither should it be found in other projects, such as the Pool and Firehall. This is a time to Save; to Fix, Mend and Brace. We'd bet that the Feds would applaud and support such innovation from a city that is willing to tighten its belt and, at the same time, provide work for its own citizens.

Sincerely,

Dick Faulks
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