

TZB-028E

From :Compton Maddux
97 1st Ave.
Nyack, NY 10960
comptonmaddux@optonline.net

Dear Mr. Anderson,

I am baffled and horrified by the appearance of the new guard barrier making its' way across the bridge at the present time. I have been watching as the new barrier gobbles up the dramatic vista that has crowned the beginning and end of my commuting day since i moved to Nyack in 2000. Was any thought given to this issue before applying this poorly engineered and wholly unaesthetique cement barrier. Does anyone else feel this sense of lose and violation? Couldn't a more open and penetrable barrier have been conceived so the view and the access by the eyes to this most glorious view of the Hudson would be preserved?

Not only is the new barrier system unbelievably unimaginative but it is also dysfunctional. I have observed that the precast cement pieces of the roadbed are one with the barrier rail system. They replace the old road way in interlocking sectional grid. The new barrier looks to be about five to six feet tall and is finished with a shiny steel sheath. It is completely impermeable and terminates at the roadway surface with perhaps a six inch space between the barrier wall and the road surface. The old barrier consisted of a rubber coated 1 foot high rail/ snubber fading into a galvanized steel fence whose vertical elements have intervening spaces in between. The snubber acts as physical reminder to the driver that they are to tight on the rail and adjust accordingly. This snubber (lie a rumble strip really) has alerted me to my orientation many times with no apparent damage to my vehicle. It works very well . The galvanized fence also makes driving the span more relaxing by allowing the eye to penetrate the barrier and give the driver a sense of unrestricted space. In addition, the old barrier makes space for tractor trailors and other vehicles with overhangs; i.e. the cab of a typical tractor trailer is thinner than the box it hauls.

In short, here is what is dead wrong about the new barrier-- efficient and strong as it may appear to be. The setback has been reduced and annuled as the solid wall flares inward at the bottom. This effectively diminished the size of the roadbed by at least a foot. Drivers are now driving with their wheel right at the base of the barrier without a warning feature or cue. Truck trailers are even tighter on the barrier. It is far more likely for vehicles to hit the barrier than before and a far greater likelihood of the vehicle being damaged. Form does not follow function, here. It is much more demanding to drive the span with the new barrier just as it is more difficult to drive the Hutch with the passing lane defined by a cement wall rather than a median with a

20

setback The amount of barrier in place at the moment allows any driver to test the two design for themselves.

Certainly the installation of these monumental slabs is a wonder to behold. But one has to wonder about other issues as well. What do these prefab cement slabs weigh and how do they increase the spans overall weight? Does their installation really strengthen the bridge superstructure or is this apparent bolstering offset by the weight of the install? Isn't the bridge already overweighted by the traffic it must bear? Further, how does this girding effect the flexibility of the span. Such a characteristic is a strength rather than a weakness on a bridge of this length. Another issue is wind resistance. On a bridge that constantly displays wind advisories what kind of pressure is being set up by moving away from the porous galvanized fence to the solid five foot cement barrier? A five foot three mile impermeable wall times two...one on each side. Remember that tractor trailers are well above the barrier so they do not benefit from the solid wall in fact the concave exterior surface will create a standing wave that is bound to buffet empty trailers. Next has got to be the issue of heat generated by idling traffic. The old barrier allowed the wind to ventilate the bridge. Imagine 90 degree summer days in your car where the road surface and the barrier are too hot to handle. Couple this with the non dissipation of exhaust gases and you've got a recipe for more overheated vehicles and more exposure to toxic fumes. The bridge becomes more like a tunnel. Let's take a look at snow removal. With the old permeable barrier snow was thrown over the edge of the bridge by plow blades....residual snow could melt on the barrier and drain into the Hudson. Now it would appear that excess snow would have to be carted off the bridge. As for rain there is clearly not enough clearance under the barrier for adequate drainage. Lastly, is the finish of the barrier itself which seems to at this point resemble a DeLorean. When the sun hits it, it is blinding.

Let's take a look at this reality before we are stuck with another ill conceived fix that will create more problems than it solves. After all, whether by bond issues or road taxes this bridge belongs to us. It gives us a view of the river and the Hudson Valley unlike any other. The present barrier and roadbed rehab needs to take a pause and correct its design flaws and take into account that new bridge is less than likely in a receding economy. And by the way was the environmental impact of this project assessed prior to its execution? It is unbelievable that such weak concept could gain the field in this age of engineering miracles.

I anticipate your response.

Very truly yours,

Compton Maddux

02

01