

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nth. Advocate 10/2/10

Bridge not discussed

How reassuring it is to have the chief executive enter the political arena in order to denigrate ratepayers, such as Mr Slater, who have the temerity to ask questions regarding the way in which council is spending their money.

Like Mr Slater, I regularly attend council meetings. Sadly, until it became a fait accompli, issues relating to "the bridge" were never discussed at any public meeting of council and no relevant information was ever made available to the public. Even council's draft plan provided no information other than to assert that council intended to build such a bridge.

If any issues were discussed at all it was, in a manner typical of this council, behind closed doors. Even when council finally publicly "debated" the bridge, the only coherent reason advanced was that the money was available and we may as well spend it. Cr Cocurullo's suggestion that there may be more effective ways to spend \$34 million was all but ignored.

But how much is available? The funding agency usually funds 62 per cent of such projects. In this case, the project is such a dog that they will fund only 50 per cent, meaning ratepayers need to stump up an extra \$4 million to \$5 million. Where is the best part of \$20 million that ratepayers will contribute coming from? The sale of one of our inner city parks.

And where does this leave the Town Basin roading fiasco that the very same Mr Simpson presided over? Was this not designed to solve the very same problem that he so forcefully asserts we now need a bridge for?

It is probably fitting that council spend a few million to glue some tea tree stakes to the bridge and call it a cultural icon. In that way, long suffering ratepayers can be reminded every day as to just what a farce this whole project is.

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