The Trolleyville Times

July 2015 *(Updated July 8)*

September)!!!....Models in HO scale of the 1946/1947 KCPS all-electric PCC cars and those which ran later in Phil

Modeling a Classic LRV !

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The SEPTA contract with Nissho-Iwai in the late 1970s produced 112 Single-end vehicles and 29 Double-end vehicles for the City and Red Arrow Divisions of that Philadelphia Transit agency. All 141 of these vehicles are still in service.

Shown above is single-ended Kawasaki car SEPTA 9000 in November 1980 in Darby, PA with PCC 2150 in a photo by Russ Jackson.

Shown above is double-ended Kawasaki car SEPTA 124 at Alden, PA in October 2010 in a photo by Mike Szilagyi.

As we stated last issue, models of the single end version have been available in resin and injection-molded plastic for some Sharp-eyed readers will note models of these cars in all three paint schemes used since 1980 in the next photo taken on one of the modules of the Southern California Traction Club.

It appears that very soon that both versions of the car will be available in HO scale from Island Model Works. As we reported in the last issue, Custom Traxx was able to secure a resin model of the double-end version from Joe Ogden at the 22nd East Penn Meet. This was a "preliminary" version and as such we expected to find some issues with it. We did and passed those findings to IMW during a very professional conversation. The modelers will have a much easier time with the final kit.

We finished the assembly and painting of the double-end kit, and installed a Bowser drive salvaged from a damaged RTR Bowser PCC cars, added some weight and began investigating some suitable pantographs to place on the model. We are asking those of you who have been modeling urban electric railway vehicles using single-arm pantographs to let us know what "brand" and "model number" you are using with both the benefits and drawbacks.

The 22nd East Penn Meet (cont'd)!

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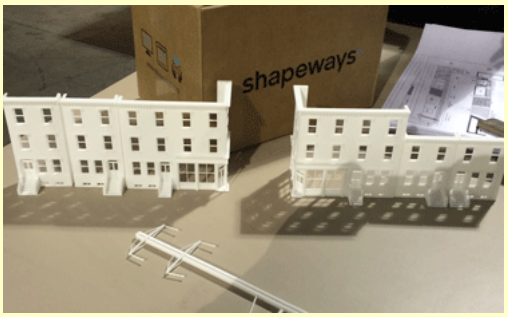
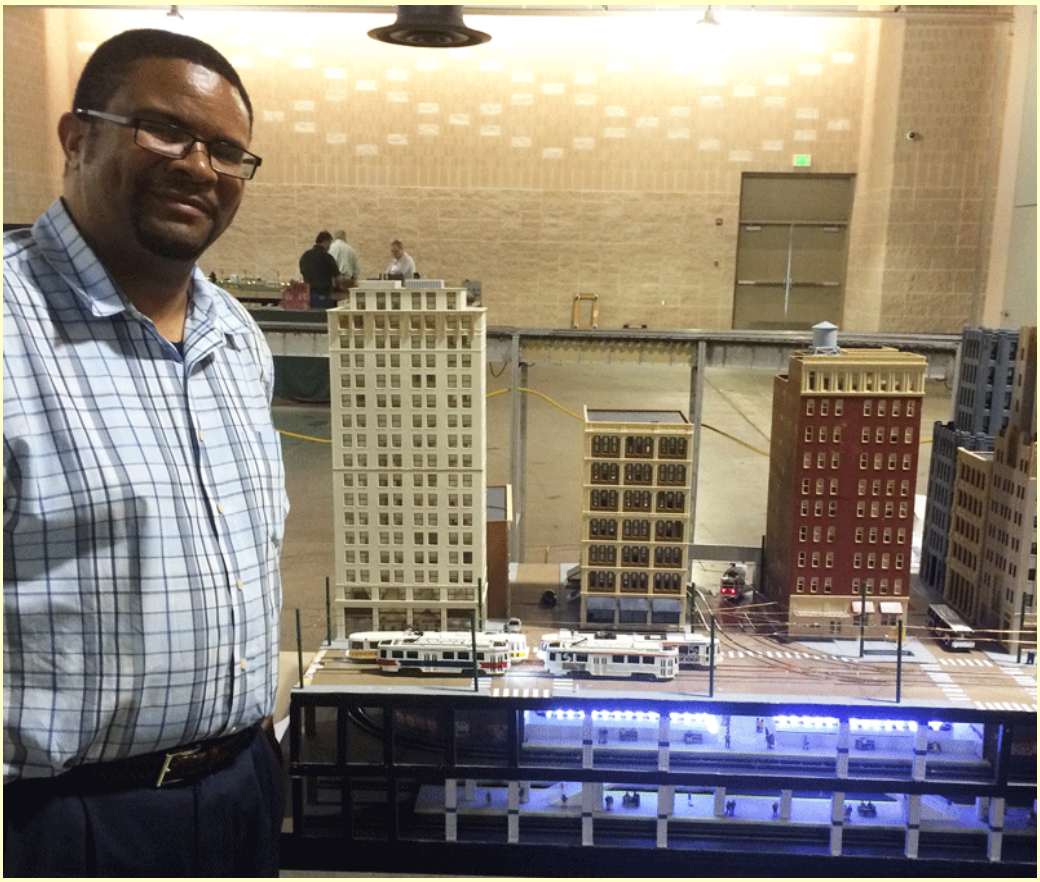
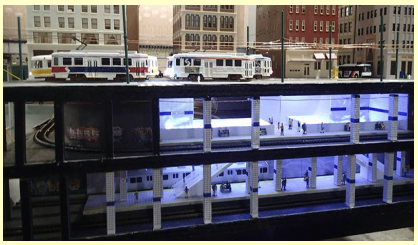
We know that we reported on this wonderful meet last month but there were a few photos that were inadvertently omitted. The first is a 3D printed fender in brass, *shown below left*, that was also displayed by Volkmar Meier. This part looked so good that photographs do not do it justice. Another interesting product that will be marketed soon are Philadelphia style row homes with the corner stores that were omnipresent until the 1950s. We can remember being sent to Mack's Grocery store on the southeast corner of 23rd and Norris (North Philadelphia) to buy various items in the 1950-1953 time frame. The Route 33 trolley was still running southbound on 22nd Street with "Upside-down" Nearside cars (a subject for another article). An example of these structures, being 3D printed by Shapeways is shown *below right*.



Steve Smith also had a great little three level layout operating AHM/IHC/Mehano models of Boeing Standard Light Vehicles and models of SEPTA City Division Kawasaki streetcars, all powered by overhead wire via single arm pantographs. Steve told us that he just might try trolley poles some day. Steve is shown with his operating layout which features models of SEPTA trolleys running in and out of a trolley subway. The layout even simulates the east side of City Hall in the days before 1957 when the trolleys on Market street were abandoned.



Here are some more views of the layout and some plans for future expansion:



Please take note of the two level subway with the streetcar subway on top of the subway complete with the 1960-2000 era "Almond Joys". While there are only two modules currently operational (Modules 1 and 2), there are plans to add 4 more.

Steve and his supporters efforts were recognized at the meet as he was presented with the Outstanding Operating Display Award. He is shown next to his modules along with a close up of the award itself.

The Times learned early last month, that on June 5, 2015, Steve was elected Vice-President of the East Penn Traction Club. Steve is a born and raised Philadelphian who clearly belongs to the next generation of model railroaders/traction enthusiasts. Steve earned a B. S. Degree in Architecture from Temple University in 2000 and since that time has worked for Amtrak where he currently designs stations and other railroad facilities, mostly in the central United States. Also at the June 5th election, Mike Junod, who had served as Vice-President was elected President and Charles Long was re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer. All EPTC officers serve two-year terms so they will hold their positions until June 2017, just after the 23rd East Penn Traction Club Meet.

Good Luck with the trolley poles!

Sacramento Streetcar Revival - Failed Dream?

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by Edward B. Havens

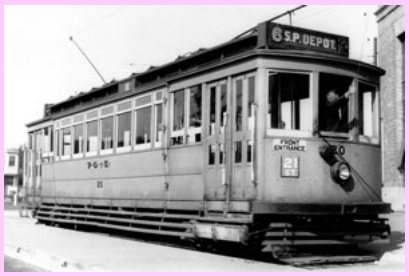
Sacramento, California's capital city, currently has light rail but its chances of building a modern streetcar line appear dim unless supporters can devise an alternate financing plan to pay the local share. A special tax district was to be created along the streetcar route to pay off construction bonds but a two-thirds majority was required for passage. Mail-in ballots were due back June 2. "Only 1,333 people spread across midtown and downtown Sacramento even bothered to vote – with the “no” votes narrowly winning 674 to 656, " The Sacramento Bee wrote, adding that it "was a head-in-the-sand moment that makes the city of Sacramento look small."

Sacramento streetcars vanished 68 years ago. Pacific City Lines [PCL] - a General Motors subsidiary - bought Sacramento's local streetcar system in 1943. PCL was merged in 1948 into National City Lines - the holding company formed in 1938 by General Motors, Firestone Tire, Standard Oil of California and Phillips Petroleum. Sacramento's first generation streetcar network became history in 1947 with total bus substitution.

Sacramento City Lines streetcars were primarily double truck Birneys:

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. used 10 single truck Birneys, built by American Car Co., in Sacramento and the last six were scrapped between 1939 and 1941. Earlier rolling stock used in the city is shown in this downtown photo:

Sacramento City Lines acquired six single truck Birneys from Pacific Electric in 1944 but all were scrapped by 1946. Five were built by American; one by St. Louis Car Co. Pacific Gas & Electric Co. had operated Sacramento's local system since 1906 and made its last purchase of streetcars in 1929, featuring leather seating and treadle operated rear doors. Bus conversion began in the late 1930s. That brought an end to older streetcars:



PG&E streetcars were essential as Sacramento neighborhoods such as Oak Park grew. (PG&E Archive Photo.)

All Sacramento Northern Railway interurban trolley service ended in 1941 although local SN service at Chico -- 81 miles north of Sacramento -- continued until 1947. Chico, which had the last five cent transit fare in the U.S., operated four-wheel Birneys that were scrapped in 1948. The photo below shows a Chico Birney: Caption: Our old friend, Birney 60 stops in front of the Chico depot on the 1947 excursion with sister number 66 just behind.

One Sacramento Northern Birney survives:

The above photo was taken in 2008 at Western Railway Museum, Suisun City, CA .

Sacramento City Lines streetcars were replaced by GM buses with automatic transmissions, a great improvement over the gasoline fueled buses with manual transmissions that replaced trolleys before World War II. Public ownership of the city's transit system took place in 1955. In the early 1980s, Sacramento became the first U.S. city to divert funds intended for freeway construction to rail transit instead, leading to the present day light rail network. Sacramento Regional Transit District [RTD] opened its 18.3-mile starter line March 12, 1987 and it subsequently grew to 38.6 miles.

In February 2012, the city of Sacramento released a planning document calling for streetcar service to link with light rail and make stops every few blocks to help people move around the Center City area without the use of autos. The starter line is to connect with the smaller but independent municipality of West Sacramento on an alignment approved by that city in 2009. The Portland Streetcar in Oregon was envisioned as the model.

Sacramento developed a financial plan to fund construction of the 3.3-mile streetcar line over the Tower Bridge to West Sacramento.

It called for: -- $75 million from the federal government

-- $30 million in tax increment financing [TIF[district funding;

-- $25 million from West Sacramento;

-- $10 million from the state of California;

-- $7 million from the city of Sacramento; and

-- $3 million from the Sacramento County

The key to the failed plan was approval by voters for a special district to capture tax revenues resulting from new economic development along the route. Mail-in voting began in May with the fate of the balloting resting in the hands of just 3,716 eligible voters. But far less participated.

Streetcar advocates, the newspaper wrote, "sent out several fliers touting the streetcar as a way to improve mobility and help boost economic development." For now, it appears to be a failed dream.

We Want to hear About Your Traction Models, Layout or Club (Any Scale)!

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We all know about the aging and shrinking of the hobby. In fact the news can get downright depressing at times. But we also know there are several small traction clubs with just a few people and individual traction layouts hidden away in basements, attics and garages. We are inviting any of you to tell us about what you are doing. The scale makes no difference. This is a forum for electric railway modeling from 1895 single truck cars to modern multi-section Light Rail Vehicles. We realize that we have been primarily an HO scale publication since the founders were HO scale modelers. We want to be open to all scales but we need your help to do that. Send articles to Trolleyville. The more manufacturers know about our numbers, the better our chances of getting new products.

We also recognize that our beloved hobby is shrinking. We are losing our older base of scratchbuilders, kit builders, and painters and are not getting similar numbers of replacements. The list of the departed modelers at the recent East Penn Meet read like a Who's Who of the traction world. We want to make the Trolleyville Times beneficial to all Electric railway modelers and ethical manufacturers of all scales. To do this, we need to hear from you and we need to hear a lot more from you so that our responses can be balanced. So please, send your thoughts to Trolleyville.

Philadelphia's Nearside Cars - A Brief Story!

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Anyone familiar with Philadelphia Trolleys has heard about Nearside Cars. These 1500 cars were the largest purchase of a single car by any transit system to date. After the 1911 consolidation of several smaller trolley lines to form the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company (PRT), the Nearside car was chosen as the standard car of the future. The term "Nearside" meant that the car would stop on the "near side" of the intersection rather than the "far side" (after crossing the intersection). At that time streetcars were almost all two-man, rear entrance, so the motorman stopped that car on the "far side" of an intersection so that the rear doors were in the crosswalk which was usually paved with stone or brick. At that time, the rest of the street may have been dirt, cobblestone or even mud. The Nearside car could be spotted much more easily by the motorman at the "near side" crosswalk.

Nearside cars were ordered by PRT as follows:

1911	J. G. Brill Company	50 cars	6000-6049	Order 17680
1912	J. G. Brill Company	500 cars	6050-6549	Order 18120
1912	J. G. Brill Company	300 cars	6550-6849	Order 18338
1912	J. G. Brill Company	150 cars	6850-6999	Order 18592
1913	J. G. Brill Company	500 cars	7000-7499	Order 18914

Other operators also ordered Nearside cars between 1911 an 1913, including International Railway Company (Buffalo, NY), Chicago City Railways Co, Lincoln Traction Co. (Lincoln, Nebraska) and the West Jersey and Seashore Railroad (Atlantic City, NJ).

Most Nearside cars had a large four leaf door at the front of the car and a small two leaf door at the very end for emergencies only as shown in Exhibits 1 and 2 below. They soon became known as "Muzzle Loaders" and passengers began to become afraid to get too far back into the car as they may have a lot of trouble getting back to the front door to get out at their stop:

Exhibit 1 - Original Nearside car with side destination sign and large route number.

Exhibit 2 - Original Nearside car with emergency rear door.

The large route numbers and side destination sign were changed along with the floor at the front of the cars starting with the second order, (car 6050). Beginning with the fourth order (car 6850), the front platform was strengthened resulting in smaller windows on the side of the front platform opposite the front door.

During the 1920s, PRT converted 1160 of these cars to Peter Witt type cars by cutting a center door in the cars, replacing two windows, and sealing the rear door. All of the cars from 6000 to 6847 were so converted. The remaining 312 unconverted cars were scattered throughout the 6848-7499 series. An example of this modification is shown in Exhibit 3 below. The unconverted cars were all gone by the end of 1936. Some of the converted cars lasted until 1955.

Exhibit 3 - Nearside Center Exit Car 6575 at 11th & Erie.

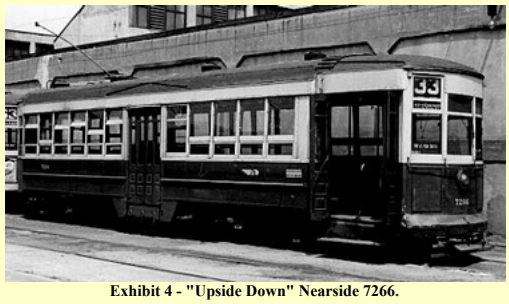

Exhibit 4 - "Upside Down" Nearside 7266.

This brings us to the "Upside Down" Nearside as shown above in Exhibit 4. Clearances were close in Philadelphia, necessitating the use of heavy "chicken wire" type screens on the windows to prevent passengers from hanging arms and heads out of the windows, lest they get lopped off by a passing car or a parked truck. When washing the windows on the cars, these screens or bars had to be removed and then replaced. In the fall of 1952, to save this expense and remove the screens permanently, a fixed window was installed at the bottom. Perhaps this idea originated from the fixed windows on the first 100 all-electric PCC cars delivered in 1947. The original upper sash was still in place attached to the lower sash with in some cases with the original leather hinge. The "Nearside" was a semi-convertible with the barrel shaped interior similar to New Orleans 453. About 40 Nearside cars were given this modification and most of them ran on North Philadelphia routes based at Allegheny car house such as 8, 9, 33, 39 and 48. The last recorded use of a Nearside car in Philadelphia was on September 9, 1955 on South Philadelphia's Route 64. One car, former PRT/PTC instruction car 6618 survives at the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine.

Arnie's Model Trains / Milepost 38 Annual Open House ..... A Real Blast....!

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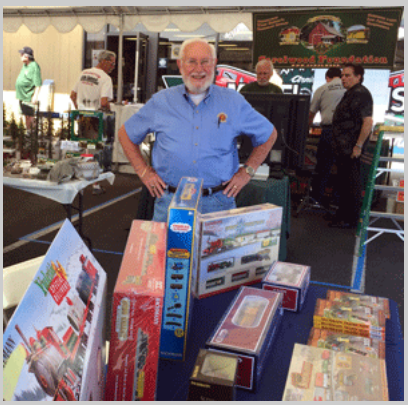
We told you in our May issue and reminded you in our June issue, so if you were in Southern California and missed it, you can not blame us. This gala event, which was planned for months, went off without a hitch. We had been presented with a report on how their last Annual Open House went and just knew what this one would be like. Arnie's had 16 associates in both stores handling the public. We had not seen that many people in a model train store since.....well.....we had never seen that many people in a model train store. With all the bad news concerning hobby shops these days, this story is a pleasure to report and it was even more fun to participate and be a part of it. We had seen the preparations being made when we visited the stores on Thursday, June 18th, so we were ready when we arrived early on Saturday.

We arrived at 7:30 AM and preparations were already underway with tents set up and several modular model railroads setting up.

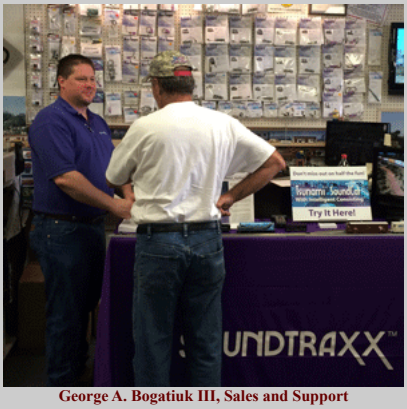
Ten minutes after the event opened, the store was filled with shoppers and a long line formed at the register. We saw a lot of younger customers in the store all day long. Pizza and drinks were provided and there was plenty. Trains were running both inside the store and under the tents for all to enjoy. On top of that there was a 10% discount on everything in the store and higher discounts on some special items. But these were not announced.....You had to be there to get these.

Some major players in the hobby were represented:



Walter "Bud" Reece, Western Regional Sales Manager
Bachmann Industries, Philadelphia, PA.

Craig Walker, Product Development Manager
Athearn Trains, Long Beach, CA.



George A. Bogatiuk III, Sales and Support
Soundtraxx, Durango, CO.

Joe D'Elia. A-Line, Arrow Hobby, [Proto Power West],
Carlsbad, CA.

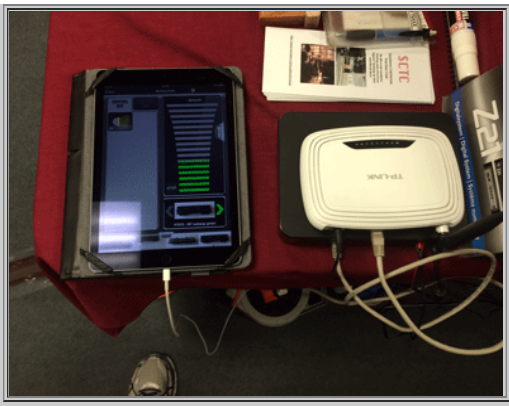
Greg keeps stressing to us that the purpose of the place is fun, fun and more fun! He asked "How can anyone be grouchy running a model train store? This is a family operation, stressing the family model train hobby, which has been almost lost in some circles. Both Greg's mother and sister were on hand promoting the operation.

Greg's Mother, Kathleen, is shown in front of the Custom Traxx display telling us how she kept the books for the store by hand until the store was forced to use computers.

Greg's sister, Arlana, is shown at the refreshment tent helping visitors get their slice of pizza and a soft drink.

One the the major features of the Open House was the Kids Kit Build. This was similar to the "Build-A-Kit" program conducted at selected Great American Train Shows many years ago. Bowser Manufacturing provided freight car kits and seasoned kit builders from some of the local clubs assisted young kids in the assembly of the kits. Greg Arnold referred to the program as "...awesome...". The next two photos show some of the participants in action.

The Custom Traxx display consisted of an operating streetcar and two subway trains. For the first time, the Roco Z21 was used to operate the trains with two iPhones and an iPad used as throttles. In both photos below, the white item is the Z21 WiFi which comes with the unit. It is sitting on top of a black box which is the Z21 Master Control System. In the left photo below, the iPad is controlling the NYCTA R21 subway train. In the right below photo, the iPad is controlling the LAMTA PCC car, Sharp-eyed readers may be able to see actual photos of the controlled cars below the throttle indicator. This is one feature of the Z21.



This was so much fun that before we knew it, it was time to pack up and leave. We will not miss the next one. Suggest that you do the same!

[Editor Comment: I, like a lot of readers, grew up with model railroad hobby shops. They were a great comfort to most of us when we started and actively participated the hobby in our early years. When the long-time owner of Allied Model Trains in Culver City, CA. sold the store in 2007, he was quoted as saying he ..."...did not want to be the old man running the train store...". Many of us had become very comfortable with other "old men" for many years. Some of us remember many enjoyable days in the 1960s at Todd's in Upper Darby, PA watching the Red Arrow trolleys go by; Benner's in Grand Forks, ND, and Litle Giant in Morehead, Minnesota in the 1970s; Gager's in Minneapolis; and most recently All Aboard Model Railroad Emporium in Torrance, CA (1990s). Most of us did not abandon the shops as fast as business conditions forced them to abandon us. We have been visiting Arnie's ever since we were invited to participate in their Open House by Kevin Honda, the store manager. Westminster, CA is at least a forty mile drive on one of the most congested freeways in the United States. There is a special atmosphere at Arnie's which brought back all those good memories, including the fun. We have never seen Greg Arnold, the owner, in anything but a cheerful, fun-loving mood. I hope that when you visit his store, you will experience that too.]

San Francisco News! *(Update July 7!)*

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The Times learned in July 7 that San Francisco plans to inaugurate the E-Embarcadero line on August 1 for weekend service only. This line requires double-end cars as it runs from the Fisherman's Wharf Terminal of the current F-Line, past the Ferry building but continues south on the Embarcadero to the Giants Baseball Park and the Cal Train Station, sharing the same right-of-way with the T-line Breda LRVs. Right now, San Francisco has seven double-end PCC cars (1006 [Muni 1950], 1007 [Phila Suburban Trans'n], 1008 [Muni 1050], 1009 [Dallas Street Railway], 1010 [Muni 1930s], 1011 [Market Street Railway] and 1015 [Illinois Terminal] for base servce plus 1912 Muni Class A car #1, 1914 Muni Class B car 130, 1929 Melbourne Tram 496 and 1923 New Orleans car 952 to augment that fleet. Muni Class B 162 was damaged by a collision with a truck in January 2014 so it is unavailable at this time.

Also work is proceeding on the rebuild of 16 of the 17 PCC cars (1050 to 1063, except 1054 which was wrecked in November 2003), 1007, 1010 and 1015) that opened the original F-line (Castro to the former East Bay Terminal) in September 1995. As of June 3, three cars, all shown below, are at Brookville Equipment Company (BEC) in Pennsylvania for this rebuild:

Car 1051 (ex Phila 2123) at Jones Terminal.

Car 1056 (ex Phila 2113) on Taraval Street.

Car 1060 (ex Phila 2715) on Market Street.

According to the Market Street Railway, the $34.5 million dollar contract covers a complete disassembly of each of the 16 vehicles, rebuilding of each carbody, underfloor, trucks, door systems and passenger area; installation of new Westinghouse-type propulsion system; all new wiring, power supply, lighting and a video surveillance system; and all necessary work that may be discovered during disassembly. The first car is due back from Brookville in October 2016 with the scond three months after that. Cars should arrive back at Muni every 45 days after that. It is expected that the "hanger queens" will be sent first.

The 1056 had been out of service for some time, having a cracked bolster, so it was sent to BEC in October 2014. Both 1051 and 1060 had damage from a car house incident that highlighted the rusted ends of both cars.