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PPG: a Concern for the Future
Cover: A helicopter camera view of downtown Jacksonville, only one of a number of Florida cities exhibiting impressive redevelopment and renewal. See the coverage of Jacksonville and Miami beginning on page 9. Photo courtesy of Communications 21, Jacksonville.

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THE FLORIDA ARCHITECT JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1977 / 5
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Southern Bell
In Florida, there has been legislation passed in recent years which has helped bring about these more realistic plans.

In 1972 the state legislature enacted the Environmental Land and Water Management Act, now Chapter 380, Florida Statutes. This was official recognition that growth and development were of such magnitude that the state should be concerned with certain types of development in order to protect its citizens, as much as possible, from unfavorable consequences of large, ill-planned developments.

A later section of this act established an Environmental Land Management Study Committee. As one of several major recommendations in its final report, the committee felt the state should adopt legislation to insure that local government units would undertake and implement comprehensive planning programs for development within their jurisdictions.

After failing to be passed in 1974, the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Act of 1975 was adopted by the legislature and signed into law by the governor. Where previously legislation authorizing local government units to prepare and implement comprehensive plans was permissive or enabling in character, the 1975 act required that municipalities and counties must prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan by 1 July 1979.

Incentives Needed

While these laws will aid in bringing about realistic, coordinated and comprehensive plans, there remain other legal vehicles which must be enacted in order to provide the proper incentives for private developers to undertake development projects of any magnitude in downtown areas.

These elements, embodied in the proposed Constitutional Amendment Four which was narrowly defeated in the November general elections, contain two essential ingredients: financing techniques and private incentives. Two states, California and Missouri, have enacted such financing and incentive laws, known respectively as the California Plan and the Missouri Plan.

Under the California Plan, a method of tax increment financing, all property assessments within a project area are frozen at the time of adoption of a redevelopment plan by a governing body. Existing tax agencies continue to collect taxes on the basis of the frozen assessment only, while taxes are levied on the total assessments as they increase with development. This increase over the frozen base is remitted to the Redevelopment Authority which uses it to retire bonds sold to fund redevelopment project costs. Upon repayment of such bonds the increased tax revenues can either be distributed to appropriate taxing bodies or utilized to fund other public purposes including subsidies to commercial and residential renewal developments which are in the public interest.

The Missouri Plan is a tax abatement and incentive program. In this situation a private redevelopment corporation, having an interest in a piece of property, would pay general ad valorem taxes at a rate based on the assessment for land only in the year immediately prior to acquisition of the property and for a period of 10 years after the date of acquisition. For the next 15 years the redevelopment corporation would pay general ad valorem taxes at a rate not to exceed 50% of the total assessed valuation of the land and improvements. After 25 years the general ad valorem taxes are assessed at 100% valuation. Such tax relief provides the necessary incentive and capitalization to make redevelopment feasible.

Both these plans have been utilized extensively in the respective states and have been upheld as constitutional under their laws. Without the implementation of such laws in Florida it seems unlikely that large scale private redevelopment projects, especially in the field of housing, will become feasible in downtown core areas. Such needs are to be addressed in the 1977 legislative session as well as by the upcoming Constitutional Revision Committee.

Downtown Development Authorities

There also exists under the laws of Florida enabling legislation providing for the creation of Downtown Development Authorities. Such authorities, acting in the role of catalyst, do much to co-ordinate efforts of public and private agencies in downtown redevelopment.

The power to create such authorities is vested in the governing body of every municipality in the state having a population over 250,000, according to the most recent official census.

The domain of such an authority covers a prescribed downtown district whose boundaries are defined in the municipal ordinance establishing the
Jacksonville

In Jacksonville an Urban Plan Creates a Tight Downtown Core

The urban plan for downtown Jacksonville was prepared for the city in 1971 by RTKL, Inc. of Baltimore. The years since have witnessed the implementation of a number of the proposals and today several aspects of the plan are in the process of updating.

The planning process followed in preparation of the plan, diagrammed in Figure 1, was interesting in that it recognized that an effective planning process must incorporate community participation. To accomplish this, a Committee for the Downtown Plan was formed, which included representatives of the Downtown Development Council, City of Jacksonville and various City Agencies. In addition there were 14 nonvoting advisory members.

Urban Design Principles

Nine basic urban design principles were arrived at to form the basis of the Jacksonville Downtown Plan illustrated here. Taken directly from the RTKL report, these were:

- Establish strong, high intensity activity centers and circulation linkages between these centers to create lines of activity for natural market regenerative forces.
- Establish a pedestrian oriented precinct within the transportation loop street.
- Establish a strong linkage from the CBD core to the St. Johns River.
- Initially structure high intensity land uses and pedestrian activities and circulation channels along a north-south axis defined by Laura and Hogan Streets. In later stages establish a similar structure along an east-west axis defined by Bay Street and the riverfront between the government center and the Laura-Hogan axis.
- Anchor the pedestrian concourse and activity nodes with open space focal points at Hemming Park and Riverfront Park.
- Encourage complementary development of public and private uses along the riverfront.
- Encourage superblock development.
and utilization of air rights to increase the development potential, to provide variety within the existing grid pattern and create dynamic urban spaces within the fabric of building masses.

- Reinforce the existing retail-department store core with the addition of pedestrian amenities and activity generators, linking this core directly to the residential and office activity centers of the CBD.
- Concentrate off-street parking in peripheral structures located within the Transportation Loop Streets and provide direct pedestrian walkways between these storage facilities and intense uses within the CBD core which generate these parking demands.

A keystone to the implementation of this downtown plan as presented in 1971 was to be the formation of a Downtown Development Authority. Such an Authority was created and progress in the intervening years indicates the extent to which this body has been a co-ordinating force and catalyst in a number of extensive projects.

Major Projects

DDA Executive Director Don Ingram listed five major projects which he sees as essential to the future of downtown.

The first of these, a people mover system was not a part of the original plan but was integrated into it in a 1973 proposal. Though Jacksonville was not among the cities recently approved for Federal funding for such a system, construction of this still remains an important objective.

The second is the development of a riverfront complex consisting of an activity center, designed to be a focal point of the entire community as well as the downtown core, and a major convention hotel.

Third is a system of elevated enclosed skywalks connecting all the major points of community activity and employment. Within the core business area these skywalks would tie in with the people mover system at its elevated level.

Housing is integral to the success of any future downtown activity and is the fourth item Don listed. Portions of property in areas to the west of the core have been designated for middle to upper income market-rate housing units, to be developed as soon as incentives and the market exists.

Finally, several projects are planned to upgrade a number of existing streets to boulevards providing increased access along well landscaped traffic arteries.
Jacksonville
These projects are shaping the future Jacksonville in keeping with the Downtown Plan

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
This recently completed 3000 seat Sanctuary creates a lively center of downtown activity. The pedestrian bridge connects to existing facilities.
ARCHITECTS: Willis & Veenstra

INDEPENDENT SQUARE
The State's tallest office structure for Independent Life with its distinctive profile now dominates the city skyline.
ARCHITECTS: Kemp, Bunch & Jackson

SCLI RIVERCENTER
Conceptual studies for this project, proposed by Seaboard Coastline Industries, Inc., have been prepared to include a hotel, office building, specialty retail, recreational and entertainment facilities with multi-level parking.
ARCHITECTS: Kemp, Bunch & Jackson

POLICE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
Now nearing completion, the low profile of this concrete structure contains a series of roof top urban plazas.
ARCHITECT: William Morgan
DOWNTOWN STREETS DESIGN
A program for special lighting and traffic control structures now in place on Main Street, above, and studies for pedestrian oriented mall concepts, below, are ongoing parts of the Downtown Plan.
PLANNERS: Reynolds, Smith and Hills

GENERAL SERVICE CENTER
In the new State Office Building, under construction on the riverfront steps back at each floor, reciting a series of terraces and using platforms.
ARCHITECT: William Morgan

ATLANTIC NATIONAL BANK
The new headquarters building of this bank brings to the downtown core a solid, urbane structure significantly enhancing the environment.
ARCHITECTS: Kemp, Bunch & Jackson

ST. JOHNS PLACE
The schematic layout of a developing 50 acre commercial, retail and recreational center located on the south shore of the St. Johns River, created by Gulf Life Holding Company and Freihauf Corp. The Gulf Life Building, Hilton Hotel and L.B.A.M. already occupy the site and a racquet club will soon be under construction.
In 1972 the firm of Wallace McHarg, Roberts & Todd prepared a downtown urban development and zoning plan for Miami providing guidelines for growth and development for the period 1973-1985. This plan, still in a process of refinement and adoption, was formulated as a basis for new zoning classifications designed to encourage redevelopment projects and especially to permit new in-town residential construction on a large scale. Since that time the same firm has completed a comprehensive plan for the entire city of Miami, coordinating this with the previous downtown plan.

Urban Design Framework

In order to support a coordinated development framework the following urban design principles form the basis for this plan.

DEVELOP AMENITIES AND CATALYSTS: In addition to Bayfront Park and River Walk improvements, the plan proposes a linear park along the F.E.C. railroad, a large-scale residential community north of the Community College and activity.
To guide in implementing these principles, the plan encompasses the following three major elements.

Plan Elements

The first of these elements is land use. This element largely responds to existing conditions of office, retail and hotel uses, all of which will be expanded by new construction or by renovation to existing structures. This element also proposes the possible development of a new in-town community of approximately 7000 mixed income residential units along with required support facilities. Realization of this type project will require public-private co-operation and the attraction of other amenities to urban living.

A second element is that of transportation and parking, transportation being critical for downtown development. Short range proposals deal with the automobile and improvements to street systems and parking facilities. Long range plans involve the locations of mass transit stations and an internal smaller scale people mover system.

The last major element looks at the downtown environment and pedestrian circulation, the human scale of the city. The subtropical climate requires protection from summer heat while fostering vegetative growth producing an attractive environment. This element considers waterfront parks and amenities on Biscayne Bay and the Miami River, downtown urban parks and mini-parks and pedestrian improvements which would include landscaped streets and paths, arcades and elevated pedestrian walkways and plazas.

The total plan, of course, is much more extensive than this brief account. It goes into an implementation program, looks at the regional context, and looks at downtown as it was in 1973 as well as at the future of downtown. It also outlines the process of change, method of analysis and studies a probability growth model. An appendix contains a proposed zoning ordinance for the downtown area which will permit and encourage growth along the guidelines set forth in this plan.

A NEW IN-TOWN RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

A new in-town residential community is proposed for Downtown Miami. Economic forecasts indicate that a large scale, moderate density, mixed income community is possible. The most appropriate location for this development would be north of the Community College to I-195 and to the F.E.C. railroad adjacent to Bicentennial Park. This area presently contains only a very small residential population, suitable for both auto and public transportation. The site is large enough to accommodate a residential community with a population of 7000 as well as retail and other community services. Implementation of this proposal would require public-private cooperation with the City providing land assembly assistance, write-down or other actions.

MIAI RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT

The Miami Riverfront is proposed as a major redevelopment area in the City of Miami. Presently the riverfront is one of the City's most hidden and publicly underutilized resources. It is well suited to redevelopment due to its present underutilization, its amenity value and its proximity to major employment centers. The riverfront is comprised of a variety of uses, ranging from industrial and commercial to residential and recreational. The riverfront area has potential as a tourist and entertainment area as well.

Development objectives promote an active, working river with marine commercial, residential, recreational and tourist/entertainment uses intensified.

TRANSIT STATION AREA DEVELOPMENT

The proposed Mass Rapid Transit system is probably the largest single capital investment which Dade County will undertake in the next ten years. The first phase of the system will run from Biscayne to Hialeah, with more than half of the stations located within the City of Miami. In addition to providing transit service, the proposed system will have a great effect on future development patterns. Each transit station area can be planned in order to achieve preservation or development objectives. Activity nodes are proposed around many transit stations with intensive concentrations of multiple use development, pedestrian activity and lively public uses.
Miami

In Miami a number of large projects will create a renewed downtown environment

REGIONAL SERVICE CENTER
A complex of four interrelated office structures to be built as part of the Government Center. The first ten story building is under construction and will house state offices presently scattered around the county. Other units will be built at approximate 5 year intervals.
ARCHITECTS: Russell-Wooster Associates

MIAH POLICE DEPARTMENT
The first building to be constructed within the area of the proposed Downtown Government Center, this award winning design sets the tone for future buildings.
ARCHITECTS: Pancost Architects
Bouterse Borrelli Albalsa

OMNI INTERNATIONAL CENTER
A $76 million megastructure including shopping, hotel, dining and entertainment facilities is under construction and scheduled for completion in 1977.
ARCHITECTS: Team b
Amisano and Wells, Atlanta

DOWNTOWN GOVERNMENT CENTER
A master plan for a centralized government center to include Miami Police building, city, state and federal government offices, library, art museum, transit stations and parking garages.
ARCHITECTS: Connell Metcalf & Eddy

FLAGLER STATION POST OFFICE
To be built immediately south of the government center, this building is designed with a landscaped entrance plaza to relate to the police station and state office building across the street.
ARCHITECTS: Severud Knight, Boerema Buff
MIAMI RIVER WALK
The first phase of a planned Miami River Walkway beautification project eventually to extend from Dupont Plaza along the north shore of the river to Flagler Street.
PLANNERS: Connell Metcalf & Eddy

MIAMI Dade COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The Downtown Campus of this community college, constructed several years ago, has had a great effect on the urban environment.
ARCHITECTS: Ferendino/Grafton/Spillis/Candela

BICENTENNIAL PARK
Miami's new 33 acre bayfront park located on the old Port of Miami site features fountains, a fishing lagoon, small child play area, walks and open spaces.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Edward D. Stone Jr.

U.S. COURTHOUSE ANNEX
A proposed project to be built adjacent to the old Post Office and Courthouse to house new Federal Court facilities.
ARCHITECTS: Ferendino/Grafton/Spillis/Candela

THE FLORIDA ARCHITECT JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1977
I can’t believe you are really reading this. What could be a more boring subject for us creative people to be devoting some of our precious time to than financial management? It seems like that is always the case—at least, for some of us anyway. “I’m so busy right now doing architecture I just don’t have time to stop and prepare a lot of figures or charts. Anyway, my accountant takes care of all that at the end of the year when he fills out my tax return.” Sad but true. Could this quotation have come from you?

How would you like it, if the next time you were flying somewhere, you overheard the pilot say he didn’t have time to look at all those controls, dials and gauges—he’s too busy flying the airplane? Besides, it’s so overcast he has to constantly stare out to try to find the airport. This is the situation with so many small to medium-sized architectural firms. Sometimes you will hear a remark which goes approximately like this: “We’ve been in practice hump-thump years and we’ve always done all right. Sure, we lose money sometimes, but sometimes we have a little left over and everyone gets a bonus.”

The attitudes reflected above may often be the case. Hopefully, they are not as often as one may think. Financial management will not happen by chance. Financial management is not waiting until pay day and then realizing you have to make a loan to meet the payroll. Have you ever made that trip to your friendly banker on Friday morning to ask for just enough to make the payroll with your tail between your legs, hat in hand and cursing the whole bother of having to deal with money anyway? If you have, you know the feeling well. Often the check that would have covered the loan you had to make comes in Monday’s mail and you kick yourself again. We are basically planners and as planners we are capable of properly planning our financial affairs. In many respects financial planning involves the same steps and thinking processes which we go through when we plan a building.

A positive approach must be taken in controlling the financial portion of one’s practice. As architects, we so often pay little attention to this and consequently fail to realize a proper return on our efforts, or worse, get into financial trouble by just: “Seeing how we came out at the end of the year.” We should be able to control this outcome by making adjustments during the year. Many firms do not know what it cost to do business or whether they lost or made money on a particular job.

I am firmly convinced that the reason most architects are architects is not strictly to make a profit or be financially successful. I believe the most important thing to most architects is the ARCHITECTURE, not the bottom line. It is true that one cannot totally concentrate on design and do good architecture if his financial affairs are not in order.

The basic elements of financial management are rather simple. You need to budget (plan) your operation and then follow-up to see how you actually did compared with your plan. Of course, getting from here to there can be done rather simply or can be as sophisticated as one may like—sophistication meaning less manual operation and greater detail. The basic objective is to be able to control the financial operation of your firm by checking the indicators and seeing when to make adjustments. Back to the pilot analogy—you need to be “instrument-rated” so you can fly in all types of weather.

The hardest part of all is making the commitment to plan and manage the financial operation of your office. Once this is done, the rest will follow with a reasonable amount of effort and within a reasonable amount of time. Please note again—it’s not going to happen all by itself. There are two usual ways of initiating a financial management system. One is to do it yourself and there are plenty of aids to help you. The A.I.A., through several of its publications and seminars, is the best place to start. This approach usually takes the longest, takes the most dedication, and the most money. This approach often results in reinventing many wheels but sometimes results in a deeper understanding.

The quicker and usually cheaper approach is to obtain someone who specializes in this field and get their help. Unfortunately many CPAs do not understand what we do and consequently have a very difficult time helping in many areas. Don’t hire your CPA, just be sure you have him doing the right thing. (After three years of constant struggle our CPA has finally taught me a little about accounting and I think I have taught him a little about the practice of architecture, however, neither of us is sure of this from time to time.)

“A positive approach must be taken in controlling the financial portion of office practice.”

Don W. David, Jr., A.I.A. is Treasurer and Business Manager of Ricks/Kendrick/Stokes/David Architects, Inc. of Fort Walton Beach, Florida. He acts as a financial management consultant to small to medium-sized architectural firms and is a Corporate Member of the Florida Northwest Chapter, A.I.A.
when they get to the point of feeling comfortable looking at all those weird dials and gauges and know what these indicators mean and what should be done based on what they are reading in order to get to the destination. It must be a nice feeling to plan your course, monitor your progress and then break out of the clouds headed right down the runway. One thing I feel for sure — that this isn’t done by intuition or by the “seat-of-your-pants”. The financial management of your firm should not be any different.

Illustrated is the “profit-goal” chart for 1976 for Flyright Architects, Inc., A.I.A. This is one of the indicators they review monthly to be sure they are on course. This chart shows the minimum profit goal on the bottom solid line. Their desired profit goal is the top solid line. The dashed line is their actual progress. (The total of their billings to date). The amount they billed monthly without including any past due accounts receivable is shown across the bottom.

The desired and minimum profit (you know you have to make a profit to stay in business) is taken from their yearly budget and profit plan. To meet expenses which must be paid out of profits, 10% of their total billings must be profit. This establishes their minimum profit goal. Their desired goal is 20%. This is the amount of profit they try to budget on each job. The respective total yearly budgets for minimum and desired profit; therefore, were $300,000, ($25,000, / mo. x 12) and $357,500, ($32,515, / mo. x 12). In April, they assessed their staff which changed the required billings per month to the amounts shown. This also changed their yearly goals to $324,000.

minimum ($25,000/mo. x 4 plus $28,000 / mo. x 8) and $364,500, desired ($28,125, x 4 plus $31,500 /mo. x 8).

You can easily follow their progress through the year. They started off a little rough, but got caught up in March. The trick is to keep the dashed line between the solid lines. They fell behind again until July. Things went well until the bottom must have fallen out in September and October, but then pulled it up to finish with some excess profits at the end of the year — $11,700, to be exact ($335,700, less $324,000).

Now that they have accomplished the terrific feat of coming out on course and clearly seeing the runway, all they have to do is land, i.e., collect what they have earned. The collection of that final profit should not be too difficult if they billed monthly all year like they should and followed up on their past-due accounts.

Flyright Architects, as well as this author’s firm, find this a very useful tool and indicator. It’s easy to understand, construct, update and monitor. It may serve your firm well in the up-coming year.

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practice architecture in Florida if it has first obtained a Certificate of Authorization to do so. At least one of the partners must be a registered architect in Florida and all of the partners must be architects, professional engineers, or landscape architects registered in Florida. (218-7.06). Therefore, a corporation, another partnership, or a professional who is not registered in the State of Florida cannot become a partner in a partnership which is authorized to practice architecture in this state. A partnership name must include the last name of a partner who is a registered architect in Florida and must otherwise be approved by the Board as to its professional dignity, appropriateness, or tendency to deceive and confuse the public. (218.7.10) The Board is presently adopting an amendment to the rule requiring that a partnership name shall not be used or displayed without the word or words "architect", "architecture", or "architectural", clearly indicating that such partnership engages in the practice of architecture. It should be noted that a partnership whose offices are outside of the State of Florida can be a registered architect in Florida as required by the rules. 3. JOINT VENTURE. Joint Ventures or associations between two or more separate and independent architects or firms which have combined to furnish architectural services for a particular project are specifically exempted from the requirement to obtain a Certificate of Authorization for the practice of architecture as a partnership. (218-7.11) Such a Joint Venture must otherwise comply with the Board's rules, however. A Joint Venture may be composed of any combination of individuals, corporations, or partnerships, at least one of which is an architect registered in Florida or a partnership or corporation authorized to practice architecture in Florida. All architectural services offered or rendered by or on behalf of the Joint Venture must be performed by members of the Joint Venture registered or authorized to practice architecture in Florida. Any continued or repeated job seeking or performance by such a Joint Venture beyond "a particular project" will be construed as a partnership requiring a Certificate of Authorization to practice architecture in Florida. 4. LIMITED PARTNERSHIP. A limited partnership in Florida is a partnership formed pursuant to Chapter 620, Part I, Florida Statutes, composed of one or more general partners and one or more limited partners. A limited partnership from another state, territory or country can obtain a permit to transact business in Florida pursuant to Chapter 620, Part II, Florida Statutes. The limited partnership is still required, if ever, for the practice of architecture in Florida. A limited partnership would be required to obtain a Certificate of Authorization to practice architecture as a partnership. At least one of the general partners would be required to be registered to practice architecture in Florida and all of the general and limited partners would be required to be registered to practice architecture, professional engineering, or landscape architecture in Florida. (218-7.06) A limited partnership name must include the last name of at least one partner who is a registered architect in Florida. (218-7.10)

5. PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CORPORATION. Chapter 621, Florida Statutes provides for creation of a professional service corporation. That law requires that all shareholders be registered to practice architecture in Florida. The name of a professional service corporation must contain the last name of one or more of the shareholders and the word "chartered", "professional association", or the abbreviation "P.A." Therefore, a professional service corporation for the practice of architecture could not include as stockholders professional engineers or landscape architects. Such an organization would otherwise be required to meet the requirements of the State Board of Architecture and obtain a Certificate of Authorization to practice architecture as if it were a corporation.

6. CORPORATION. A general corporation may be organized in Florida pursuant to Chapter 608, Florida Statutes, or a corporation incorporated in any other state, territory, or country may obtain a permit to transact business in the State of Florida pursuant to Chapter 613, Florida Statutes. Any such corporation may offer or engage in the practice of architecture in Florida upon receipt of a certificate of authorization from the Florida State Board of Architecture. To qualify for a certificate, one or more of the principal officers and all personnel of such corporation who may act in its behalf as architects in Florida must be registered architects in Florida. The corporation must disclose the Continued, Page 22
The frantic revival of the Style Moderne—Art Deco and Streamlined—has been with us for more than fifteen years. Mercifully what began as campy nostalgia has metamorphosed into a serious study. Books and articles on these modernistic styles which grew up between the two world wars (1920-1940) abound. Generally the reevaluation that follows this attention poignantly points out what has been lost in the interval of neglect. Fortunately for us in Miami, this is not the case. The southern—most tip Miami Beach—known as South Beach—remains much the same today as it did in the 1930's when the area was first developed. Since the 1950's, the building boom of the Beach has moved geographically north, beginning where South Beach ends. Hence, South Beach is something of a rarity as it is a relatively unaltered community from one period in time. The concrete constructions; hotels, apartment houses, theaters and commercial buildings are intricately fine examples of modernistic design. South Beach is painted in bright sun-drenched resort colors: white, green, orange and a whole array of pastels. The façades sport decorative motifs which have now become well known icons for the spirit of their day: rounded corners, zig-zag step backs, sunbursts and geometric floral patterns.

Miami Beach is a relative youngster as U.S. cities go. It was incorporated as a city in 1915. The first developers, Carl Fisher, J.N. Lummus and John Collins envisioned the paradise island as an Atlantic City of the south. The original scheme was to sell plots of land for private residences. Luxury hotels like Fisher's Nautilus or Flamingo were built only on the bay side of the island, thereby leaving the ocean frontage free for bathing and recreation. The hurricane of 1926 and the great depression was to change all of this.

Before the crash, Miami Beach had been sparsely inhabited as a relatively exclusive domain of the well-to-do crowd. In the 1920's there were no more than a hand full of hotels for less than 30,000 winter tourists.

Fisher spent lavishly on his structures. The construction cost alone for his Flamingo was over one million dollars. But the indulgent, reckless days of the jazzy 20’s gave way to a more down to earth, sensible economy of the 30’s. The subdued decade of the recovery produced for South Beach and its newly arrived middle-class society simpler, less costly buildings. It was well in keeping with the subtle pace of the swing era.

Recovery from the crash came to South Beach around 1933-5, and with it came a fevered pitch of speculation and building. By 1937 there were 176 hotels on South Beach and just three short years later there were 276 hotels for over 300,000 visitors. Regrettably there was little guidance for urban or environmental planning. The first of any type of zoning ordinance came in 1933 but it was minimal at best. The law only demanded a 5' set-back for buildings. Ocean frontage became free booty and the result, as we can see today, produced a serious cluttering with little more than 10' separation between structures. The major concentration of public buildings—hotels and apartment houses—line Collins Avenue and Ocean Drive from First Street to several blocks north of Lincoln Road.

In keeping with the age and cost limitations, the constructions and layouts of the buildings on South Beach were functional and to the point, rather than innovative or inventive. Generally the materials used in construction were concrete block and stucco keeping rent down to $5-7 a day per room. Most hotels had adequate though not lavish lobbies. Central corridors ran the length of the building with rooms, or the even more popular pullman flats, which ran laterally off the hallway. The majority of the hotels and apartment houses were modest in size, three or four stories, with a few rising seven stories or more (the 1933 zoning law set a height limit at 160'). It was the façades in almost every case which received the lion's share of attention and that which we today find so appealing.

The architectural style of South Beach was clearly a part of a widespread national movement. The Style Moderne is an umbrella term of which Art Deco (1920's) and Streamlined (1930's) were subdivisions. The Streamlined, unlike Deco, did not have lavish over-decorations, extravagant colorism or rampant eclecticism. The word Streamlined was borrowed from the sciences of...
Miami Beach Moderne

The Tudor Hotel
L. Murray Dixon, 1939
In typical Streamlined fashion, this structure wraps around the corner of the Avenue. The Buck Rodgers's rocket needle soars high above the building, giving an illusion of verticality to anotherwise horizontal structure.

Palmer House
L. Murray Dixon, 1939
One of several hotels by Dixon along Collins Avenue, this hotel is painted in a creamy beige and accented with green details. Popular motifs of the period are the stripes, modified zigurate finial, and sunbursts along the upper edge of the building.

The Carlyle Hotel
Kiehnell and Elliot, 1941
The organic feeling ever present in the Streamlined style is well illustrated here. The flat facade undulates and wraps around the entire structure, creating an effect of continuous motion. The horizontality of the extending window ledges is balanced by the pronounced, tripartite facade which reaches up in a strong vertical thrust above the body of the building.

The Century Hotel
Henry Hohauser, 1939
A maritime theme is used on this small scale, two-storied building. The "ship's mast" is a striped pole symmetrically placed in the center of the facade. The "portholes" are opened on the guard rail in the front porch but decoratively filled in on the upper portion of the hotel. Note the three little stripes on the upper corners of the building. What we might call "racing stripes" today were a very popular motif in the 1930s and can be spotted on many hotels on South Beach.
hydro and aero-dynamics implying speed, efficiency and functionalism. As the facades on South Beach demonstrate, this style was characterized by reductive design, light smooth surfaces, rounded edges and spare, geometric patterns. The Tudor Hotel bends gracefully around the corner of 11th Street and Collins as does the Essex Hotel on 10th Street and Collins. The sides of the Carlyle wrap around to the front of the hotel creating a counterpoise to the emphatically stated horizontal and vertical facade. In each case, the rounded contours achieve an effect of unbroken continuous motion.

The Streamlined style of the 1930's was unashamedly optimistic about the future and it hitched itself to the machine as the ultimate symbol of progress and change. Motifs which suggested movement and dynamism became the talismanic stamp of the age. The Tudor Hotel's finial is finished off with a Buck Rodgers' rocket needle—curiously like that on the top of the Empire State Building. The Century Hotel sports a nautical look replete with a ship's mast and port-holes. Machine made materials; chrome, bakelite, vitrolite and plastics became universally employed as symbols of the new era. Interiors of many hotels which have escaped extensive renovation still exemplify the love which embraced these shimmering, reflective materials. Large plate glass windows etched in Floridiana—palm trees and flamingos—can still be found on the Shepley, Breakwater, Senator and Primrose Hotels.

The Style Moderne grew up simultaneously with the better known International Style or Bauhaus. In theory and philosophy they both drew from many of the same ideas: to develop a style which was up to date with the 20th century, to be reflective of the machine age and above all to be functional. But the similarity ends here. The International Style was ruthlessly severe, adamantly austere, and strictly denied all ornamentation. The Style Moderne, on the other hand, clung to the human touch and scale. It excelled in decorative details and coloristic motifs. This style may just be our last link with our romantic past. One of the more appealing aspects of the Style Moderne was its sheer versatility. It adapted itself to chic, rich materials just as readily as it could be scaled down to inexpensive, mass produced products. The style was as well suited to automobiles and airplanes as it was to toasters and ladies compacts. In architecture, one finds the style applied to projects grand and small; from skyscrapers to the modest offerings on South Beach. All are equally satisfying. The designers and architects who lent their hand to the definition of the style ranged from internationally known personalities to those of local reputation.

Regrettably, little is known about the architects of the South Beach area. Several names do stand out. L. Murray Dixon, AIA., Henry Hohauser, AIA., and Albert Anis were local residents of South Beach and were frequent contributors as architects. Hohauser had an active firm. Between 1936 and 1940, he designed more than a dozen structures which are still standing today; the Century Hotel, The Essex Hotel, The New Yorker Hotel, the Greystone Hotel, the Shepley Hotel and Hoffman's Cafeteria, to name just a few. Dixon was equally as prolific. From 1939-1940, he produced the Tiffany Hotel, the Tudor Hotel, the Senator Hotel, the McAlpin Hotel, the Kent Hotel, the Ritz Plaza Hotel, and others.

Due to length and space, this article has been limited to mostly the hotels on South Beach. But the area is equally rich in other types of buildings which well exemplify the style of the 1930's. The commercial edifices along Lincoln Road were designed and put up during this period—Burdine's opened in 1937. The U.S. Post Office on Washington Avenue opened in 1939 and has recently been reproduced in at least one major publication and called by that author a fine example of the "Depression Modern" style.

One thing remains clear, the architecture of South Beach was well in step with the rest of the country. The city may have a short history but it soon caught up in population as well as style. It is true that much that was built in this area was never meant to be grand or elegant design. Unfortunately many buildings have fallen on hard times. Years of neglect are seen by the peeling paint and the decaying stucco. The wheels of urban renewal are spinning. Preservation is a costly and complicated issue, not to be dealt with lightly. Regrettably, much is deemed expendable by the want of assessment. Certainly South Beach is worthy of closer inspection, further research and fuller recognition.
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Letter
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An architect friend gave me his copy of Volume 26, Number 6, November/ December, 1976, "The Florida Architect". The cover is a beautiful picture of our home, The Grove. Could you send me six copies of this issue. I know our children would like to have one.
Sincerely,
LeRoy Collins
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