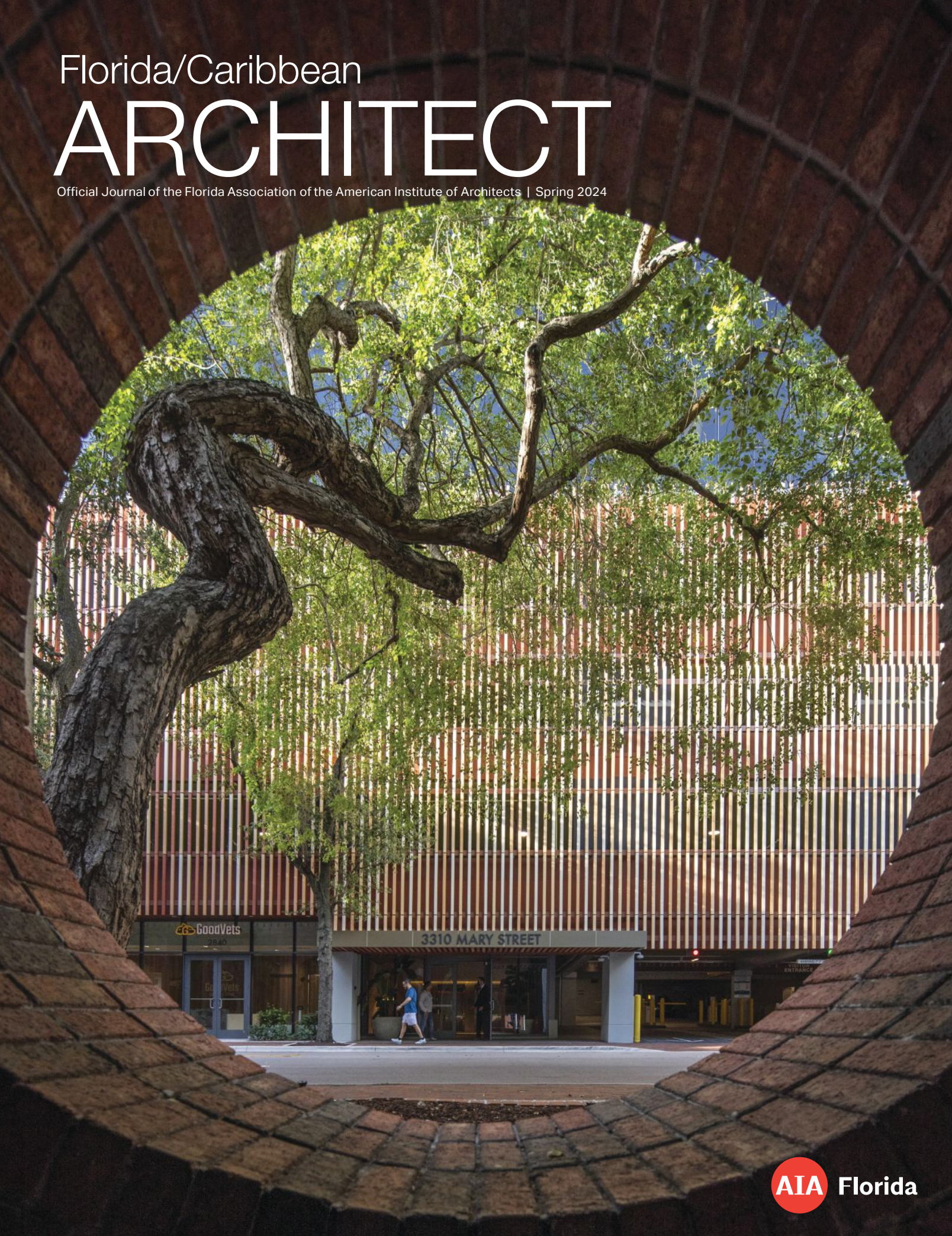


Florida/Caribbean ARCHITECT

Official Journal of the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects | Spring 2024



Architects of the Featured Projects



Everald Colas, AIA, is an award-winning Haitian American architect, educator and storyteller and the founder of Storyn Studio for Architecture. He has led internationally acclaimed projects and specializes in projects that require a sensitive approach to integrating mixed-use buildings in a historical context. Colas holds both a Master of Architecture and a Master of Science in Architectural Pedagogy from the University of Florida.



Jacqueline Gonzalez Touzet, AIA, and Carlos Prio-Touzet, AIA, are principals at Touzet Studio, an award-winning architecture firm based in Coral Gables that is dedicated to finding elegant and sustainable solutions that withstand the test of time and effects of climate challenges. Gonzalez Touzet is a champion for preparing the community for coastal resilience and designing a livable and sustainable future. Prio-Touzet has gained a reputation in the South Florida architectural community for thoughtful and carefully crafted design solutions. Both have designed award winning projects in the U.S., Asia and Europe.



Larry Beame, AIA, established his own practice in Miami in the mid-1980s, and has been a leader in the design of vibrant, award-winning commercial and mixed-use developments throughout South Florida, the Caribbean and Latin America. Beame's practice joined RSP Architects in 2018, combining his local knowledge with the resources of a national practice.



Matthew Finn, AIA, is passionate about how the built environment influences human health. As a social entrepreneur and architect, Finn founded Cognitive Design in 2016 and Principles in 2023, design and consulting firms that fuse architecture and health. Finn is known for asking the right questions and for maintaining continuity of thought from concept through design, documentation and construction.



Darin Reynolds, AIA, is a partner at COOKFOX Architects and a registered architect in New York with over 25 years of experience. Reynolds has led a diverse range of projects from adaptive-reuse workplaces and high-end residential towers to urban affordable and supportive housing. All of his projects are unified by a commitment to sustainable, high-performance design, a topic that he speaks about regularly at national conferences.



Jonathan Rae, AIA, oversees operations for HOK in Florida. He manages the Tampa and Miami offices and serves as principal-in-charge on select projects. With 30 years of project management/leadership experience, Jonathan has a proven track record of meeting high expectations, successfully delivering large and complex projects on schedule and within budget. He understands the importance of balancing quality and budget while leading the team with a client centered, collaborative approach.



Kurt Dannwolf, AIA, is the founder and creative visionary of ODP Architecture and Design. Since its inception, he has stayed involved in all aspects of design while growing the company into one of the top mid-size firms. His holistic approach to orchestrating good design practice allows for innovative forms and spaces that speak to all.

This issue features projects that epitomize transformation. Whether it's how an interior is transformed to better serve customers or a building renovated to create an efficient workspace, architects create the spaces where we live, work, play and experience our lives.



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6 President's Perspective

10 Legislative Update

FEATURES

14 The Salty Charlotte
The Salty Krog
STORYN Studio for
Architecture
St. Petersburg, Florida

19 Mary Street
Touzet Studio | Coral Gables,
Florida | RSP Architects
Miami, Florida

23 Clarity Fitness
The Warehouse
Cognitive Design
Molino, Florida

28 Thousand & One
COOKFOX Architects
New York, New York | HOK
Tampa, Florida
Cora
COOKFOX Architects
New York, New York | ODP
Architecture & Design
Hollywood, Florida

33 On the Boards

35 Advertisers' Index

On the cover: A view of the Mary Street and Oak Avenue corner. Touzet Studio and RSP Architects. Photo credit: Robin Hill.

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President's Perspective

Rhonda Hammond, AIA

It is very fitting that the theme for the spring edition of the magazine is transformation. There is no more of a transformative time in nature than the transformation from winter to spring and there may not be a more transformative profession than that of an architect.

"...we, as critical thinkers, are specifically trained to be problem-solvers."

As architects, transformation is the throughline in all we do. Regardless of budget, timeline or constraints, at the heart of what we do is transformation. Ideas into drawings, ordinary into extraordinary, cities into communities, communities into integral parts of their surroundings. We renovate, we restore, we rebuild, we transform.

We've done this through recessions and through pandemics, highlighting the resilience of our profession to push forward. Transformation is the process that takes spaces and turns them into the places where we live, work and play.

Through the efforts of our association, engaging with students, exposing them to the practicum of architecture, we witness their transformation into thoughtful practitioners and future leaders of the profession. This is never more evident than when we gather at the Capitol for Legislative Day. In January, architect and associate members and students gathered at the Florida Capitol to serve as the voice of our profession.

Throughout the years we have shown up to remind our legislators why architecture matters and the value an architect brings to our communities as guardians of the health, safety and welfare of buildings, public spaces and beyond. This year we were successful in adding an amendment

to SB 382 by Sen. Hooper and its companion HB 497 by Rep. Melo. The bill exempts professionals regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) licensed 10 years with no complaints against their license from continuing education requirements. AIA Florida worked with the sponsors to amend the bill to not apply to architects as the profession is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of the public and should remain current with the latest in codes and building technology. We must continue to push forward in our dedication to advocacy, demonstrating through actions how we, as critical thinkers, are specifically trained to be problem-solvers.

The theme of Live, Work, Play: Why Architecture Matters will be the focus during our 2024 convention at The Breakers Palm Beach. The convention will contain a multitude of educational and networking opportunities carefully curated by our Convention Committee. This year's kickoff speaker is Paul Goldberger, Pulitzer Prize winner, former architecture critic for The New Yorker and the author of "Why Architecture Matters." In addition to our sessions and tours, we will feature our trade show and conclude our convention with our annual design and honor awards to remind ourselves why celebrating architecture matters. I hope you will join us in Palm Beach.

Legislative Update

Becky Magdaleno, CAE, Hon. AIA



The Florida Legislature once again set about its business of conducting a 60-day session. At only two weeks into the process, more than 160 architects, AIA members and students converged on the Capitol to be the voice of architecture. Posters and talking points in hand, your colleagues made an impact, in what can sometimes be an irrational process, advocating for the profession. Several bills directly impacting the profession of architecture were considered this session.

an endorsement procedure already in statute not being affected; as filed, the bill did apply to architecture. It would allow licensees from other states who have been licensed for five years to become licensed in Florida even if they did not meet the education requirements licensees living in Florida must.

AIA Florida's lobbying team continued to work with the bill sponsor to show that the current endorsement process works as evidenced by more than half of the state's licensees living outside of Florida.



AIA Florida Northwest members and students with Sen. Broxson.

SB 656 by Sen. DiCeglie (R - Indian Rocks Beach) and HB 149 by Rep. Alvarez (R - Riverview) addressed continuing contracts for design professionals and their compliance with the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA). When originally filed, both bills increased the threshold for continuing contracts to comply with CCNA from \$4 million to \$10 million.

With only a few weeks to go in session, the language from HB 1381 was amended to HB 1273 by Rep. Plasencia (R - Orlando). Her bill also included language for licensees to appeal to the DBPR secretary should the regulatory board not grant licensure by endorsement. If the secretary granted that licensure, the standard would be set for that state moving forward. AIA Florida staff and lobbying team voiced their concern about the potential to set a standard for licensure for those coming from out of state that was not equivalent to those living in Florida. During the final week of session, AIA Florida's lobbying team crafted language amenable to the sponsor, leaving the architecture practice act's endorsement process intact. The legislature adopted the bill and SB 1600 will head to the Governor for his signature.



AIA Palm Beach members and students with Sen. Berman.

AIA Florida leadership and lobbying team met with bill sponsors and other interested parties to voice our concern about more than doubling the threshold that was last raised in 2020 from \$2 million to \$4 million. Although construction costs have increased since 2020, applying all cost indices, a \$4 million project in 2020 would be a little more than \$5 million now.

After negotiation, both bills were amended to a lower amount of \$7.5 million for continuing contracts to comply with CCNA. More importantly, future increases are now tied to the Consumer Price Index, preventing any large jumps and instead implementing small annual incremental increases. The legislation was adopted and will make its way to the Governor.

SB 382 by Sen. Hooper (R - Clearwater) and HB 497 by Rep. Melo (R - Naples) dictated that for any profession regulated by DPBR, no continuing education would be required after 10 years of licensure. AIA Florida's lobbying team spoke with both bill sponsors to talk with them about the importance of architects continuing to be educated as the Florida Building Code is updated every three years and building technology is constantly changing. Both sponsors were amiable and amended the bills to remove architecture from the continuing education exemption. SB 382 was passed during the last week of session. It will now go to the Governor who has also received a letter from



AIA Florida Southwest members and students with Rep. Rommel.

SB 1600 by Sen. Collins (R - Tampa) and HB 1381 by Rep. Alvarez (R - Riverview) established licensure by endorsement for all professions regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DPBR) for licensees coming from other states. Although early indications ahead of session pointed to professions like architecture with

AIA Florida leadership encouraging him to sign the legislation.

The legislature brought back a bill that caused much controversy late in the 2023 session. SB 1526 by Sen. Avila (R - Miami Springs) and HB 1647 by Rep. Roach (R - North Fort Myers) allow for the demolition of structures within the coastal construction control line if they do not meet the base flood elevation requirements for new construction issued by the National Flood Insurance Program. Answering some of the objections voiced, exemptions are provided for buildings individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, single-family homes and contributing structures in a historic district named to the National Register of Historic Places before January 1, 2000. This exemption would protect Miami's Art Deco District. Exemptions for municipalities on barrier islands with a population of less than 10,000 are also exempt removing locations like Palm Beach from this legislation. The legislation was adopted during the last week of session and has been signed into law by the Governor.

SB 1166 by Sen. DiCeglie (R - Indian Rocks Beach) and HB 1183 by Rep. Barnaby (R-Deltona) were also a repeat from the 2023 session. These bills would have created a state tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic structures. The bills were again unsuccessful, dying in the process.

SB 298 by Sen. Polsky (D - Boca Raton) and HB 1079 by Rep. McFarland (R - Sarasota) would have provided funding for saltwater intrusion vulnerability assessments and would have not allowed coastal counties or municipalities to provide exceptions to coastal construction without written authorization from the Department of Environmental Protection. The legislation died in the process.

SB 1766 by Sen. Rodriguez (R - Miami) and HB 740 by Rep. Basabe (R - Miami Beach) would have established a voluntary freeboard height to address flood mitigation. It also required the Florida Building Commission to develop minimum freeboard requirements and review these requirements every five years. The freeboard would not be used in the calculation for the maximum height allowable. These bills also died.

SB 7002 was a committee bill brought forward by the Education Pre-K-12 committee. The bill

deregulates school districts finance, budgets and facilities administration. The original version of the bill added language requiring the Florida College System and state university boards of trustees to use an architect. Some interpretation of this insertion and it not specifically calling out school districts could have been a potential attempt to remove the necessity for architects for K-12 construction. However, had the new language been adopted and interpretation above stood, Chapter 481 would still dictate the requirement for an architect. The potentially problematic language was removed prior to the adoption of the bill.

The 2025 session will begin in March and AIA Florida's lobbying team will be ready again to serve Florida's architects. AIA Florida will continue to be the voice of architecture before the Florida Legislature.

Photo credit: Silver Digital Media.



AIA Tampa Bay members and students with Rep. Cross.



AIA Fort Lauderdale members and students with Sen. Osgood.



AIA Miami members and students with Rep. Borrero.



Attendees at the morning briefing.



AIA Tallahassee members and students with Rep. Tant.



AIA Jacksonville members and students gather in House offices.



AIA Orlando members and students outside the House Chamber.



AIA Florida Gulf Coast members with Rep. Tommy Gregory.

Mary Street

Miami, Florida

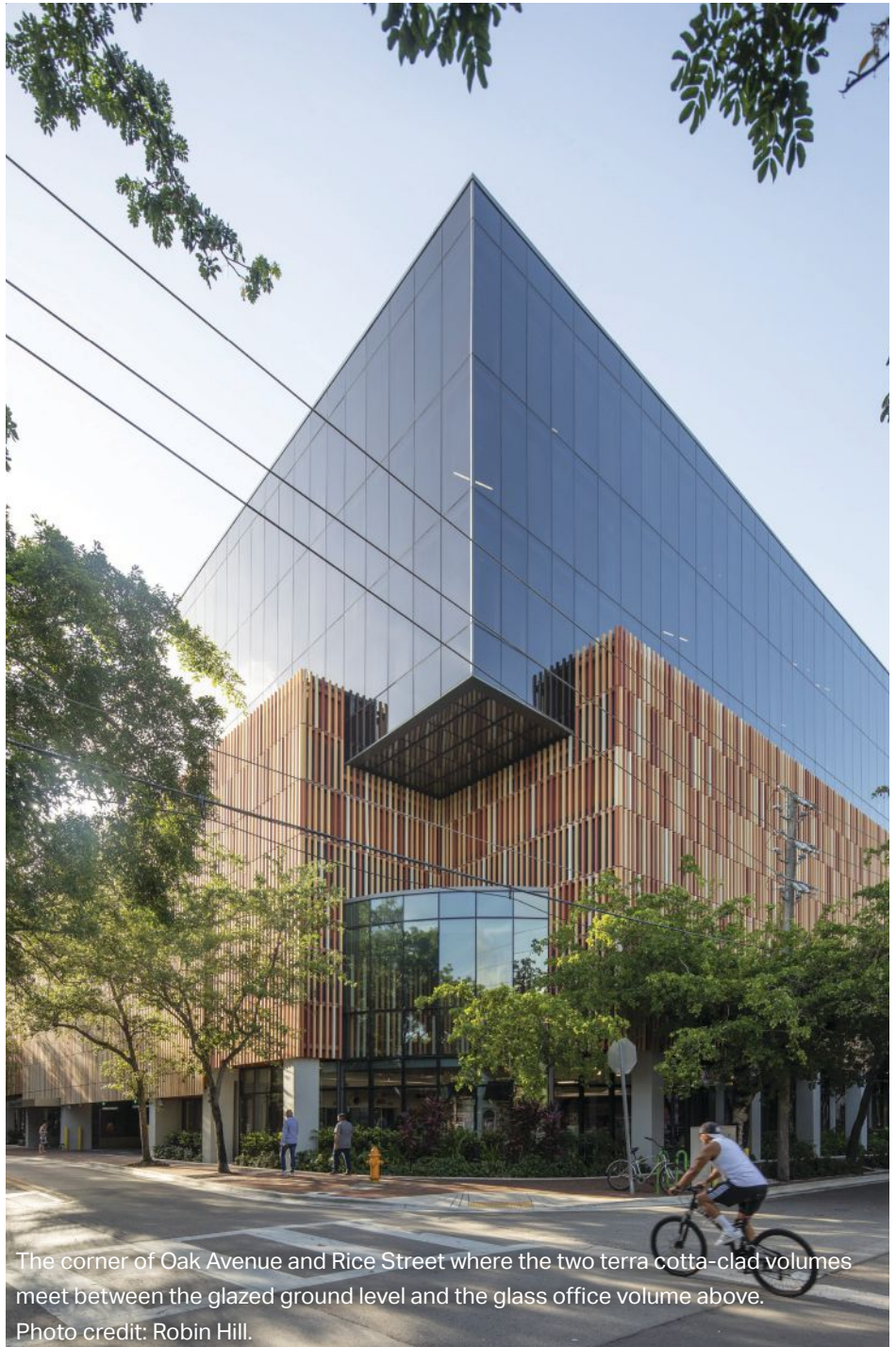
Touzet Studio | Coral Gables, Florida

RSP Architects | Miami, Florida

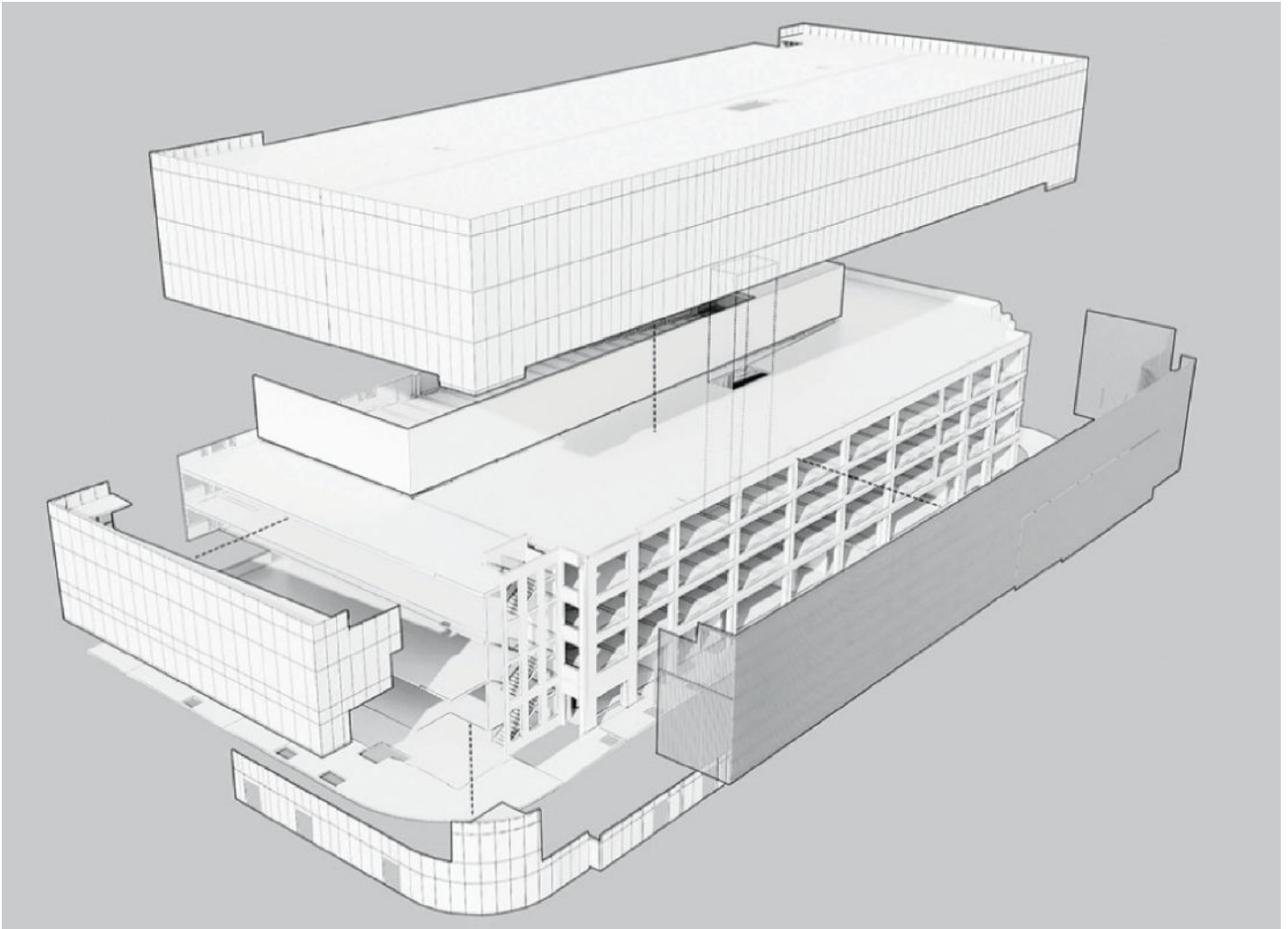
A series of judicious excisions, a comprehensive recladding and a few glassy additions have transformed a dated 1980s parking garage into an eye-catching mixed-use complex in Miami's Coconut Grove neighborhood. The adaptive reuse project, designed by Touzet Studio with Larry Beame, AIA, of RSP Architects as the architect of record, retained the parking component while rejuvenating the building's ground-floor retail spaces and adding two and a half floors of class-A office space above the garage. With the encouragement of the client, Terra Group, the vast majority of the existing concrete structure was preserved.

"We felt that one of the great things about this project was the opportunity to create a brand-new mixed-use building without having to do it from the ground-up," said Carlos Prio-Touzet, AIA, founding principal of Touzet Studio. "The carbon footprint would be so much smaller. The site presented some interesting zoning challenges, but our biggest challenge was how to add interest now that it would not be perceived as a parking garage but as an office building."

The conceptual design began with the excisions, which were varied but targeted. Redundant masonry along the ground floor, for instance, was removed to make the retail spaces more visible to passersby while admitting more daylight to their interiors. Infill panels lining the north side of the garage were eliminated in favor of a terra cotta screen. The building's postmodern rooftop pavilions were removed to make way for the upper-level office addition.



The corner of Oak Avenue and Rice Street where the two terra cotta-clad volumes meet between the glazed ground level and the glass office volume above.
Photo credit: Robin Hill.



The exploded building diagram displays how the program and functions are expressed in the building's massing. A glass-lined ground-level volume houses the retail space, office lobby, garage entry and services spaces. This volume extends to the second level at the two main street corners. A smaller glass volume extends from above the ground level on one side and is "wedged" between the volume at the base and the main office volume above. This two-story volume houses a private office suite and serves as the main façade on Mary Street. The parking use is contained within two separate terra cotta-clad volumes that are also wedged between the ground-level glass volume and the office volume above.

The most significant element to be demolished was a 20-foot-deep bay along the east side of the structure. This allowed for the addition of a shallow, secondary office space that projects over a landscaped band between the ground-level retail and the sidewalk. The parking spaces that were eliminated on what was once the roof level, along with the parking areas that were converted to office space, were replaced through the use of double-decker car lifts.

The new terra cotta screen not only shields the garage from pedestrian views but also defines a low-rise block

that relates to the predominant scale of neighboring buildings to the north of the site. The choice of terra cotta alludes to the fact that the building sits atop a ridge of coral rock. The architects specified terra cotta bars, or "baguettes," in a range of colors evoking those of the seashells that are often embedded in such rock. Finding the right color patterns proved challenging, however. After an algorithm failed to produce satisfactory results, the design team ended up determining the color mix by hand.

The architects then adjusted the dimensions and spacing of the baguettes

to achieve the optimal balance between aesthetics and cost. They settled on three-inch-by-three-inch hollow tubes, with threaded steel rods inside that attach to a steel armature. While the screen allows breezes to enter the garage freely, it appears opaque when viewed from an angle. A slightly projecting panel of terra cotta baguettes, with a subtly contrasting color mix, marks the main pedestrian and vehicular entrances to the building along Oak Avenue.

In contrast to the apparent solidity of the terra cotta screen, the taut glass curtain walls of the office additions

often blend in with the sky by day and glow from within at night. The visual lightness of the rooftop addition expresses the actual lightness of its structure — steel framing with concrete-and-metal-deck floors — which minimizes the additional loads on the original concrete columns below. Thanks in part to the site’s relatively high natural elevation, upper-level offices enjoy views of a nearby park and Biscayne Bay beyond.

The apparent simplicity of the building’s massing belies several geometrical tricks that enliven the composition. The rooftop addition, for instance, is not a perfect rectangle in plan but an irregular quadrilateral with only one 90-degree corner (at the southwest). “It was the result of a setback requirement,” explained Prio-Touzet. “There was a possibility of getting a variance, but to me there seemed something nice about twisting that box a little, which allowed the volumes to read more clearly. Ultimately, we decided, ‘Let’s not ask for a waiver. Let’s change the geometry.’”

The relationship between the glass volumes and the (nearly) solid terra cotta volume also defies expectations. Where notches at the northwest and northeast corners of the garage reveal the bottom of the rooftop addition, the reflectivity of the glass on the upper volume creates the impression that the terra cotta screen continues inside the glass box, which it does not. Meanwhile, curving glass-clad forms round off the corners at ground level, leaving an unexpected gap between the office block hovering above and the retail below.

“The glass volume doesn’t give way to the solid, but vice versa, which is unusual,” said Prio-Touzet. “We also recognized that there was something perverse about creating a void between the office and retail on every corner where you expect something to be happening. We loved the idea that there are aspects of this building that fool the eye.”

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