



For months we have been soliciting submissions for our Build in the Bay competition, to come up with ideas for a patch of Biscayne Bay that was staked out in 1925 and never developed. We did so with reservations. Would planners and architects respond with schemes to put up a new high-rise city in the bay? Would we get planned communities, complete with Mizner-revival architecture, a bell tower and a town green?



The Biscayne Bay Water Walk offered floating panels in the bay, anchored to existing piers. At night the piers would light up. George W. Sweeney, an architect in New York, is a graduate of the Columbia University School of Architecture. His proposal, he said, "could be identified with Miami, a unique experience." The company Web site is www.gws-architect.com.

WATER WALK

The entry, deemed "super cool" by the jury, was by George W. Sweeney, center, of New York, and his team, Jonathan Rushmore, left, and Joseph Vidich.

Well, yes, we got one submission a judge likened to the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco, and we got a skyscraper city that another judged deemed "Dubai"; someone designed a mortuary island; and one entrant proposed a separate country in the bay called Atlantis, and included a passport, postcards, a model and a national anthem. Now that's ambition.

Our three top ideas, which we are publishing here, took a gentler approach. They lie close to (or even below) the surface of the bay; they offer new recreational opportunities for the people of Miami Beach, which owns the property; and we could see them being built, although perhaps in a reduced form.

Our judges for Competition No. 2, Build in the Bay, were the architect Max Strang from Coconut Grove; Jeremy Calleros Gauger, a young architect with Arquitectonica Geo, the firm's new landscaping division; Robert Wennett, a developer who is behind the

Herzog & de Meuron parking garage (and much more) on Lincoln Road; Ricardo Dunin, the president of the Flagler Group, which is developing the Boulevard, a new condo in Miami by the architect Bernard Zyscovich, with interiors by Alison Spear; and Randall Robinson, a city planner and member of the City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board. He is the co-author of MiMo: Miami Modernism Revealed.



There were 14 submissions, most from the United States. Max Strang said that he was drawn to solutions that did not, as he put it, “sell out the bay.” His top vote, and the unanimous choice of all of the judges, was the Biscayne Bay Water Walk by George W. Sweeney Architect, based in New York. Sweeney and his team proposed anchoring an underwater floating walkway onto the existing piers, offering visitors a chance to walk around the bay, a solution Strang called “mysterious.” “I love that it’s ankle-deep water,” said Gauger. At night, the collars around the piers would light up like lanterns. This submission, and one other, took into account the difference between low and high tides.

Robert Wennett said the Biscayne Bay Water Walk “reminds me of the High Line” in New York City. “It engages nature, and allows people to really go out there.” It offered, he said, “a new perspective on the bay.” Dunin concurred about the Water Walk. “It’s super cool,” he said, “as cool as it gets, and it’s doable.”



Randall Robinson praised the Water Walk as well as “the lightest” proposal and also liked the second winner, PalmOasis, by a young Miami architectural practice, NC-Office, led by Nikolay Nedev and his wife, Elizabeth Cardona. PalmOasis offered a plan to create 4,000 stepped planters, each one holding a palm tree. The serried ranks of planters would stand on the bottom (about six to 10 feet deep); rising and falling tides would reveal more or less of the planters. The plan called for mediation walks, kayaking and canoeing between the planters, swimming pools, greenswards and stations for barbecuing as a way of activating an unused part of Biscayne Bay. “This is a beautiful image, I think,” Robinson said. “The essence of the palm trees and the water.” The plan was hailed as an idea that could become iconic for Miami Beach. “I love this one,” Gauger said. “And it’s realistic. It could be done.”

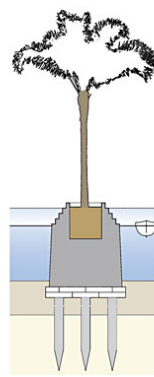
PALMOASIS

Nikolay Nedev was born in Bulgaria; his wife, Elizabeth Cardona, was born in Miami. They both got their architecture degrees at the University of Miami and studied urban planning at Harvard. Their firm, NC-Office, has been open in Miami for one year and has one commercial and several residential projects. “We do everything from doorknobs to cities,” he said. Nedev and his wife both teach at Florida International University in Miami. Their Web site is www.nc-office.com.

ON A ROLL

The Miami practice of NC-Office recently won another competition, this one by the Boston Society of Architects. The PalmOasis team, from left: Nikolay Nedev, Elizabeth Cardona, Cristina Canton and Peter Nedev





PALMOASIS

The Miami team NC-Office suggested 4,000 planters in the bay, with room for canoeing, kayaking and doing a labyrinth or two.

Robinson also praised the pod-design of Pelican Island by a team of architects who work at the Miami firm of Nichols, Brosch, Wurst, Wolfe & Associates, led by Igor Reyes and Jose Lobo. The plan involved low-lying pods, some anchored on the bottom of the bay, that would house recreation fields, a museum, solar reflector pods and support services, all connected by organically shaped walkways. "It had the solar generators and the fresh water plant," Randall said, "a responsible thing to be doing and it's beautiful to look at."



PELICAN ISLAND

Architects from the Miami firm of Nichols, Brosch, Wurst, Wolfe & Associates proposed a multiuse, ecologically responsible project. The team included (from left, above) Jose L. Lobo, from El Salvador; Javier Froimzon, from Costa Rica; Timothy C. McCabe, from New York; Scott D. Kitchen, from New York; and Igor Reyes from Miami. Reyes, a team leader, got his architecture degree from Florida A&M in Tallahassee; the other team leader, Lobo, studied architecture at FIU and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Nichols, Brosch, Wurst, Wolfe & Associates designs many of the large new buildings in South Florida, including Met 2, the Fontainebleau and the Eden Roc. Reyes said he was glad they entered the competition: "I finally found out what those piers were about."

The developer Ricardo Dunin liked some of the highly conceptual proposals in a booklet called Antipodes by Allied Operations, a team in New York led by Sangmok Kim, Si-yeon Min and Yoon Kyung Park. The ideas included a tensile structure to shade boats and a racetrack for dolphins. But Dunin thought it was unfair for one team to offer 10 ideas. "Then everyone should get 10 ideas," he said.



PELICAN ISLAND

A proposal for a series of pods, some anchored to the bottom:it made room for recreation, education, solar generation and desalinization.

Dunin felt that the Atlantis submission, a proposal by Master Sgt. Albert C. Greig, Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field (Florida) Air Force Base, to create a new country, deserved recognition for its presentation. "Look, he did an anthem," Dunin said. Gauger also appreciated the work that went into the Atlantis submission. "It's an incredible effort," he said.



DOLPHIN RACES

One of 10 conceptual ideas offered by Allied

Operations of New York.

discussions with regard to Pelican Island in the recent past," he said. "I have not heard anything that would indicate that there is any action that is going to be taken on Pelican Island."

Jeremy Calleros Gauger was impressed with the plan by an engineer, Eddy Cavina, of Ravenna, Italy, to create a giant floating Electric Carpet in the bay that would generate electricity from the action of ocean waves. But Gauger noted that the carpet was printed with the Coca Cola logo. "I wish there weren't ads," he said. Dunin countered, "I'm sure you could sell that."

George Gonzalez, the city manager for Miami Beach, said the three plans for the Pelican Island site looked interesting, but... . "There haven't been any