

Regional Prize: North/South America

# North Miami Beach Mixed Use Multi-Family Housing Project

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This site is located on North Miami Beach, across from the North Shore Recreational Park (a wooded park along the beach). It is currently a barren strip of eight blocks serving as unused parking and storage for miscellaneous construction equipment. The adjacent context to the west is primarily two- and three-story apartment housing separated from the site by a one-lane service alley. The program given to this area is mixed-use focussing on multi-family housing. The most important issue to address is the connection between the existing residential area and the proposed housing project through contextual response. The intention of this project is to weave these two areas together and create a singular neighborhood condition by reactivating the existing alley system. To successfully develop this union, certain spatial conditions as well as circulation systems were abstracted from the adjacent context. For example, tight landscaped corridors between buildings, interior courtyards that open up to the alley, and the various ways building edges address the alley are currently restricted and private. However, this project aims ultimately to open up these areas and create more of a public gathering place. Light retail spaces such as boutiques, cafes, and shops are introduced at street level to encourage circulation with public interaction along the alley. Vehicular traffic is discouraged, but not restricted, by placing parking at sublevel, accessed only by east/west

running streets. A system of circulation corridors and courtyards, similar to the adjacent context, organize and enclose the various housing units. These units consist of single room apartments to three- and four-bedroom units. Integration between interior and exterior space of the individual unit is created by visual connection as well as physical occupation of these courtyards and corridors. Ultimately, the combination of retail space, public space, and intimate gathering space organized along the alley and within the two residential areas create an ideal neighborhood environment.

## JURY COMMENTS

The scheme addresses one of the real issues that need to be worked on in American and most European cities - how do you get urbanity and a sense of community in a suburban problem. It gives every block its own resolution - it's not repetitious or formulaic, although it deals with a component level of building that is quite plausible in this context. It also has the capacity to make a neighborhood that stretches several blocks, which I think was the issue.

The presentation is extremely evocative of the central idea behind the scheme, which is this constant layering, both in plan and section, across this relatively sparse two-dimensional field.

