



AGENDA ITEM MEMORADUM

Town Manager

Connie Hoffmann *CH*

Department

Department Director

COMMISSION MEETING DATE (*) - 7:00 PM	Deadline to Town Clerk
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oct 11, 2011	Sept 30th
<input type="checkbox"/> Oct 25, 2011	Oct 14th
<input type="checkbox"/> Nov 8, 2011	Oct 28 th
<input type="checkbox"/> Nov 29, 2011	Nov 10 th
<input type="checkbox"/> Dec 13, 2011	Dec 2 nd

*Subject to Change

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Reports | <input type="checkbox"/> Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Quasi-Judicial | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Old Business | <input type="checkbox"/> New Business |

**FY2012 DESIGNATED HIGH PRIORITY ITEM –
PRIORITY TOPIC- EAST COMMERCIAL BLVD STREETSCAPE
PROJECT**

SUBJECT TITLE: COMMISSION DIRECTION ON THE SCOPE & DESIGN CONCEPT FOR THE EAST COMMERCIAL BOUELVARD STREETSCAPE PROJECT

EXPLANATION: Staff is seeking the Commission's direction on two aspects of this project before bringing back to you a design work order for it:

- 1) The physical scope of the project.
- 2) A modification to the University of Miami suggestions for the block east of El Mar.

Physical Scope of the Project

In this year's CIP, we provided funding for the design of, and to start construction on, the two easternmost blocks of Commercial Boulevard. However, in speaking with our Traffic Engineer we have learned that both FDOT and the County's Traffic Engineering Division will have to approve the design of this project because the project is adjacent to a state roadway. Therefore, staff feels it makes sense to expand the project to include the A1A intersection and Commercial Boulevard west to Bougainville Drive. Under the State CCNA statute, projects designed under continuing contracts should not exceed \$2 million in construction costs. Using the University of Miami's cost estimates and adding Chen's estimate of Phase II of the downtown core drainage project, we can bring the expanded project in under \$2 million. Expanding the project will also satisfy the Commission's desire to not "piecemeal" projects and result in a much more cohesive look for the downtown.

The block between A1A and Bougainville Drive is scheduled in the Five Year CIP to be designed in FY13 and built in FY14, so it is a matter of moving those funds forward. (Funds are currently available to cover the expense.)

Modification to the University of Miami Suggestions for the Block East of El Mar

One of the reasons we proceeded with the University of Miami design workshop was to have preliminary conceptual designs that we could give to the firm(s) contracted to do the actual design of the various projects. After the University of Miami presented their recommendations, the Commission never had a session in which you discussed the University's conceptual design suggestions and "blessed" them although the general impression has been that you wish to move forward with them.

In the case of the East Commercial Streetscape concept, there has been a good deal of discussion and public support for removing the center landscaped medians and moving the landscape materials to widened sidewalks.



Unless the Commission directs otherwise, the designers would be informed that is the route we wish to take. Removing public parking spaces on the easternmost block of Commercial, and removing parking or switching to parallel parking spaces on the block between AIA and El Mar is feasible if we increase the number of spaces at the A1A lot by redesigning it. It is recommended that the designers give us several parking alternatives to consider before we get to the schematic design stage of the project.

The design will have to address valet parking operations, as valet parking will likely become more desirable when the number of on-street parking spaces is reduced. We are assuming the design will also have to provide suitable space for cars to drop off beach visitors and their gear somewhere on El Mar Drive near Commercial Boulevard.

The University of Miami suggested we limit vehicular traffic east of El Mar to inbound traffic accessing the Pier and Aruba Beach Café, with the assumption that traffic could exit through their parking lots and the alleys, or perhaps be limited to valet parking only. Every urban designer I have discussed the two easternmost blocks of Commercial with has talked about the desirability of limiting or even eliminating vehicular traffic in order to create a spectacular public place in that block. They also feel that the businesses would thrive from being on that public space. But some of our businesses feel differently. Aruba Beach Café has expressed strong disagreement with the University of Miami's proposal and wants two way access to be maintained on Commercial Boulevard. The alleyway north of Aruba and the Village Grille is narrower than the one south of the Pier and is used by sanitation trucks to access Aruba's and the Village Grille's dumpsters. We concur that having patrons of Aruba exit through that alleyway could be problematic. Also, without going to the expense of locating a guard service to stop access, there is a strong likelihood that some drivers will ignore the signage and drive onto the easternmost block, but not want to go Aruba or the Pier, and would have to cross either the Pier's or Aruba's private parking lots to exit if we allowed only inbound traffic. One solution would be to create a valet-only drop off area on El Mar near the block, but Aruba is opposed to that idea and feels that the ability of patrons to drive right to their doorstep is crucial to their business.

Given that the Commission wants to move this project forward, an option is to advise the project designers that they are to generally follow the University of Miami design concept but with a modification – maintain two way access on Commercial east of El Mar, but design it in such a way as to maximize pedestrian amenities, create a feeling of a great public space, and function well for special events.

EXPECTED OUTCOME: Commission guidance on the physical scope of the project and on conceptual design issues.

EXHIBITS: Excerpts from the University of Miami Workshop Report

Reviewed by Town Attorney

Yes No

Town Manager Initials CA



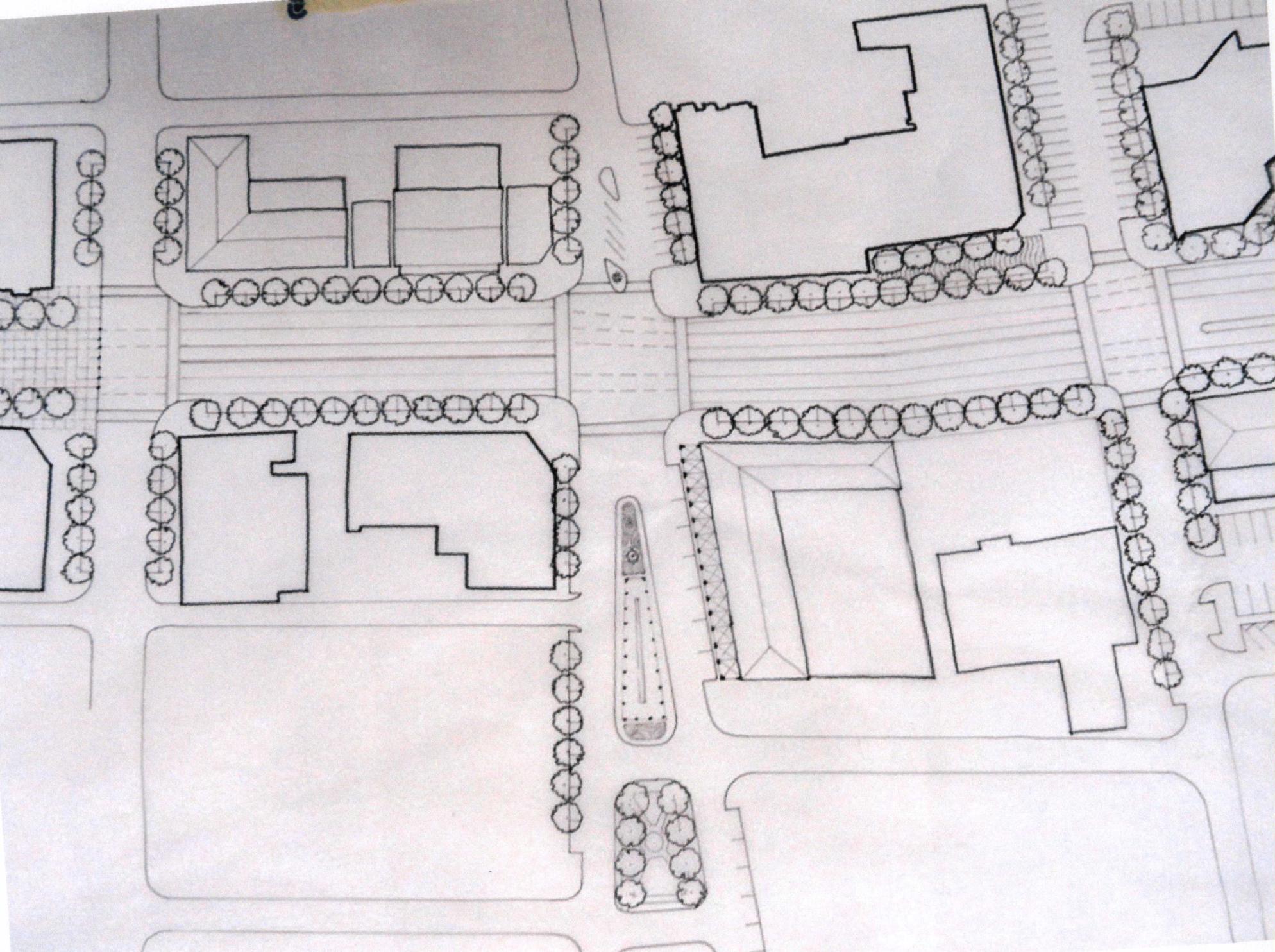
Example of a curb-less, “shared street” design

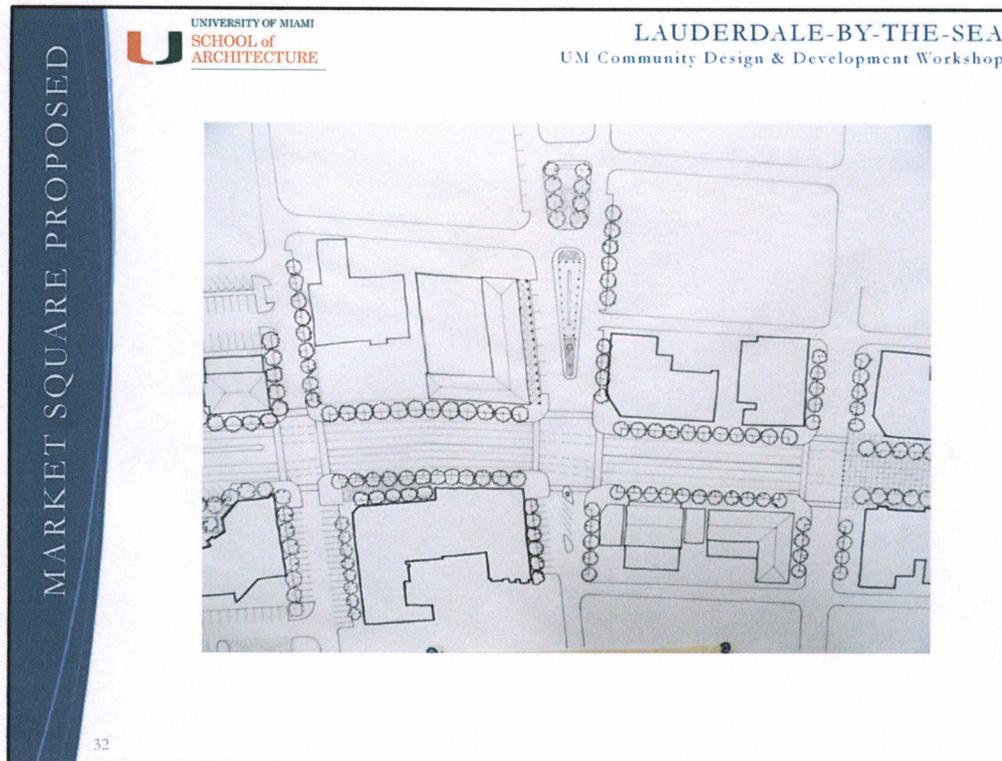
(photorealistic rendering of proposal for “Restaurant Row” in Coral Gables by C3TS)





[Aerial View of Market Square District of Commercial Boulevard showing existing central median; inadequately sized, un-shaded sidewalks; existing parking on the hiatus between Bougainvillea Drive and Poinciana Street; and existing gas station at critical juncture of Commercial Boulevard and A1A]



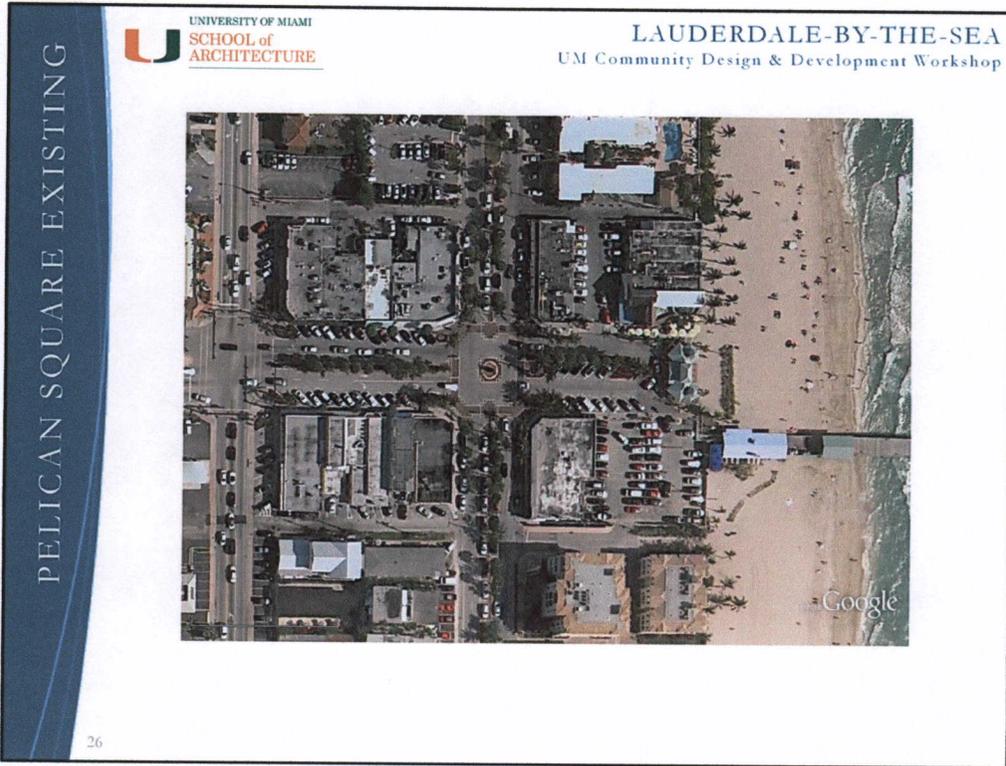


[Proposed Plan for Market Square District of Commercial Boulevard showing central median removed; new on-street parking; sidewalks increased to 10'-width with planters; new open air market/covered parking on the hiatus between Bougainvillea Drive and Poinciana Street; and a new Welcome/Visitor Center at the corner of Commercial Boulevard and A1A]

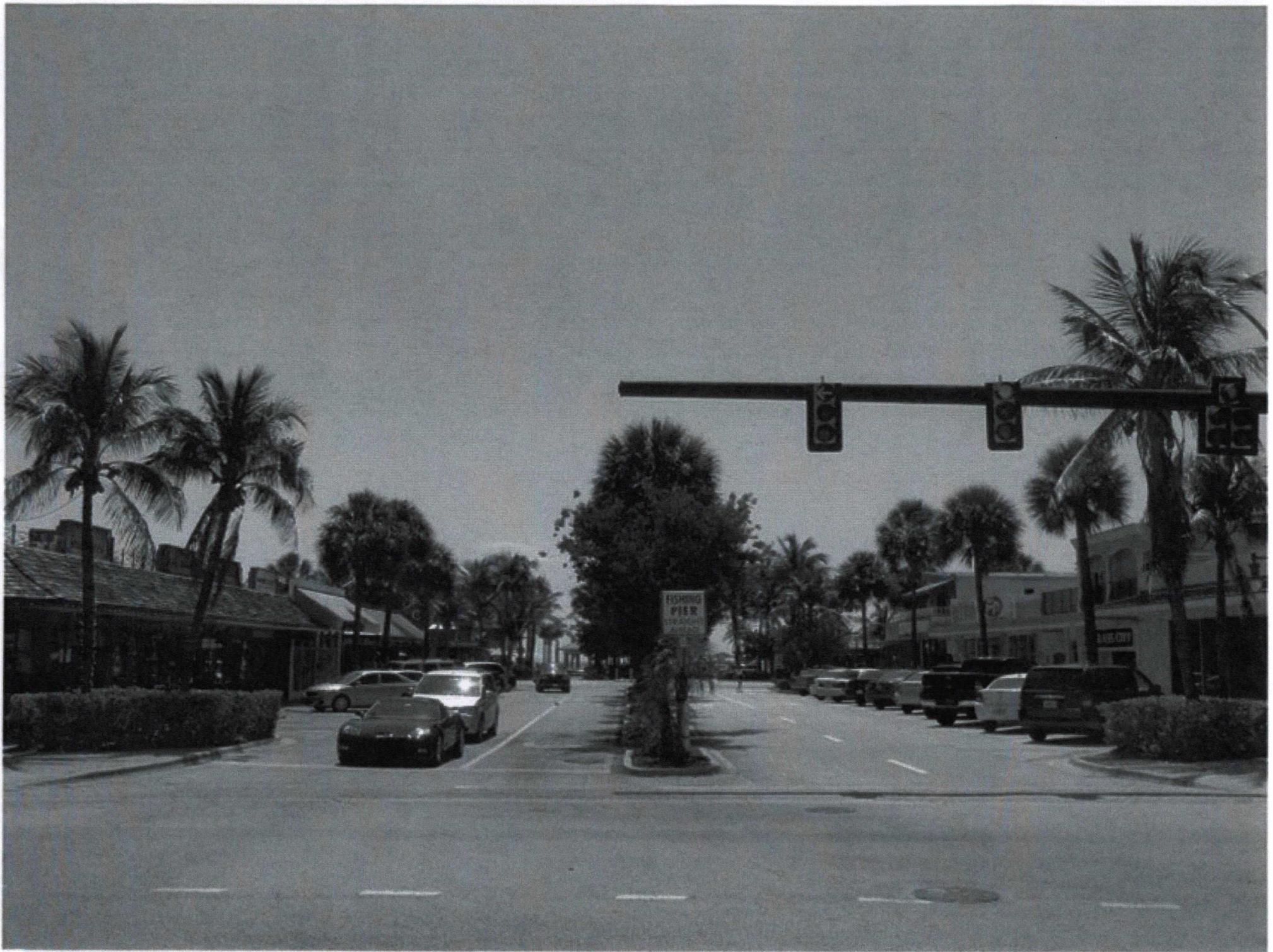
The two blocks in between A1A and Seagrape Drive make up a transitional zone which signals to the pedestrian that they are leaving the downtown beach area and entering the more suburban, automobile-oriented district of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea. Existing conditions cause people to abruptly stop walking west on Commercial Boulevard as the sidewalk narrows and the street becomes more hostile to pedestrians and walk back towards the beach. This proposal seeks to unify the two areas of Commercial Boulevard and to give an identity to these blocks.

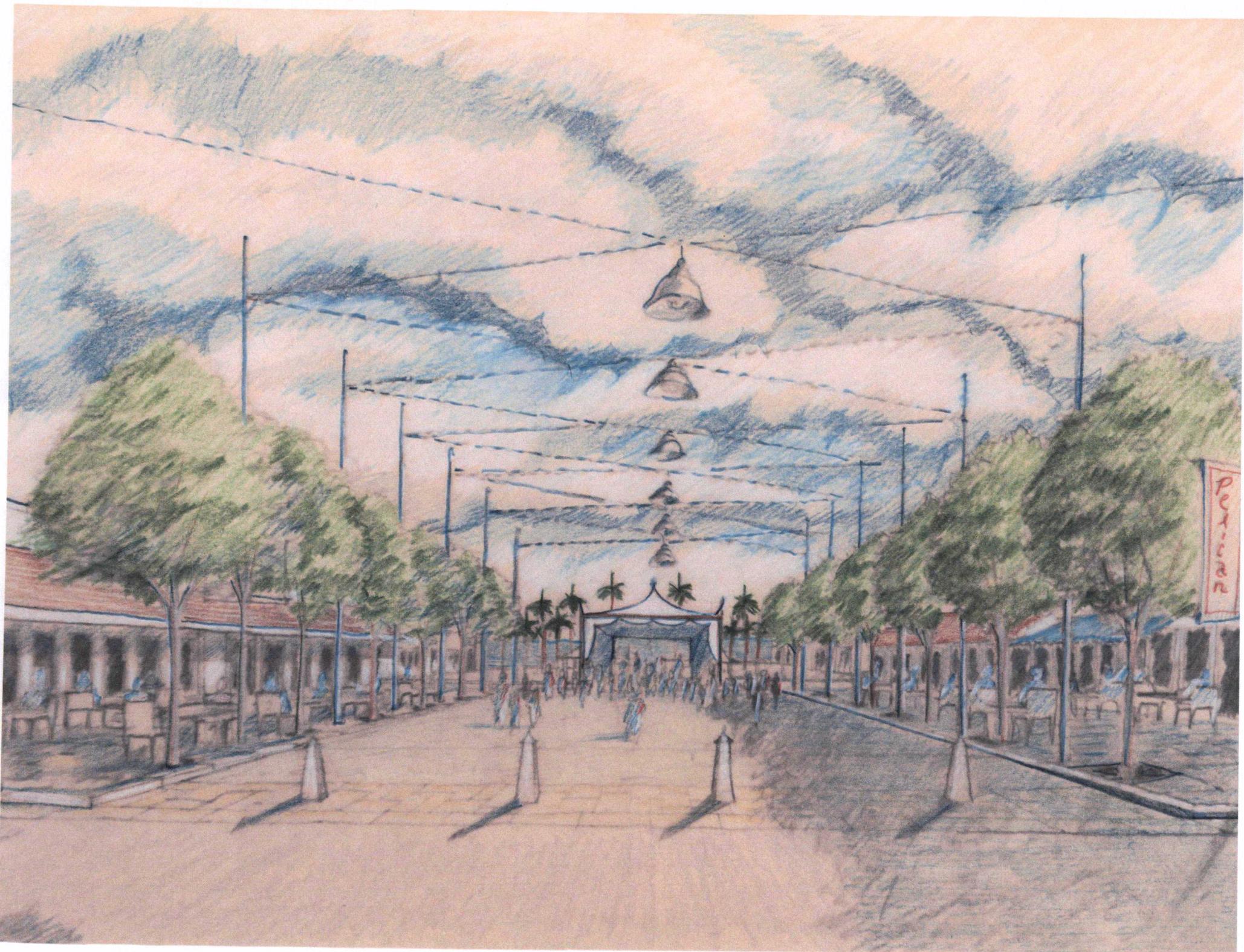
The center median will be removed in order to extend the vista out to the ocean as well as to accommodate on-street parking on both sides of the road, buffering the pedestrian from vehicular traffic. The sidewalks will increase to a width of 10 ft and shade trees are added. An open-air market building is envisioned on the strip of parking between Bougainvillea Dr and Poinciana St, which takes advantage of the interesting geometry that currently exists. This would be a great place for farmer's markets, and it could be used as covered parking when such events are not taking place to benefit the church and nearby businesses. Over time the plan envisions the gas station relocated and replaced by a building with a tower element framing the street, holding this important corner of A1A and Commercial Blvd. This is an ideal spot for the Welcome/Visitor Center. ~Alicia Rabadan





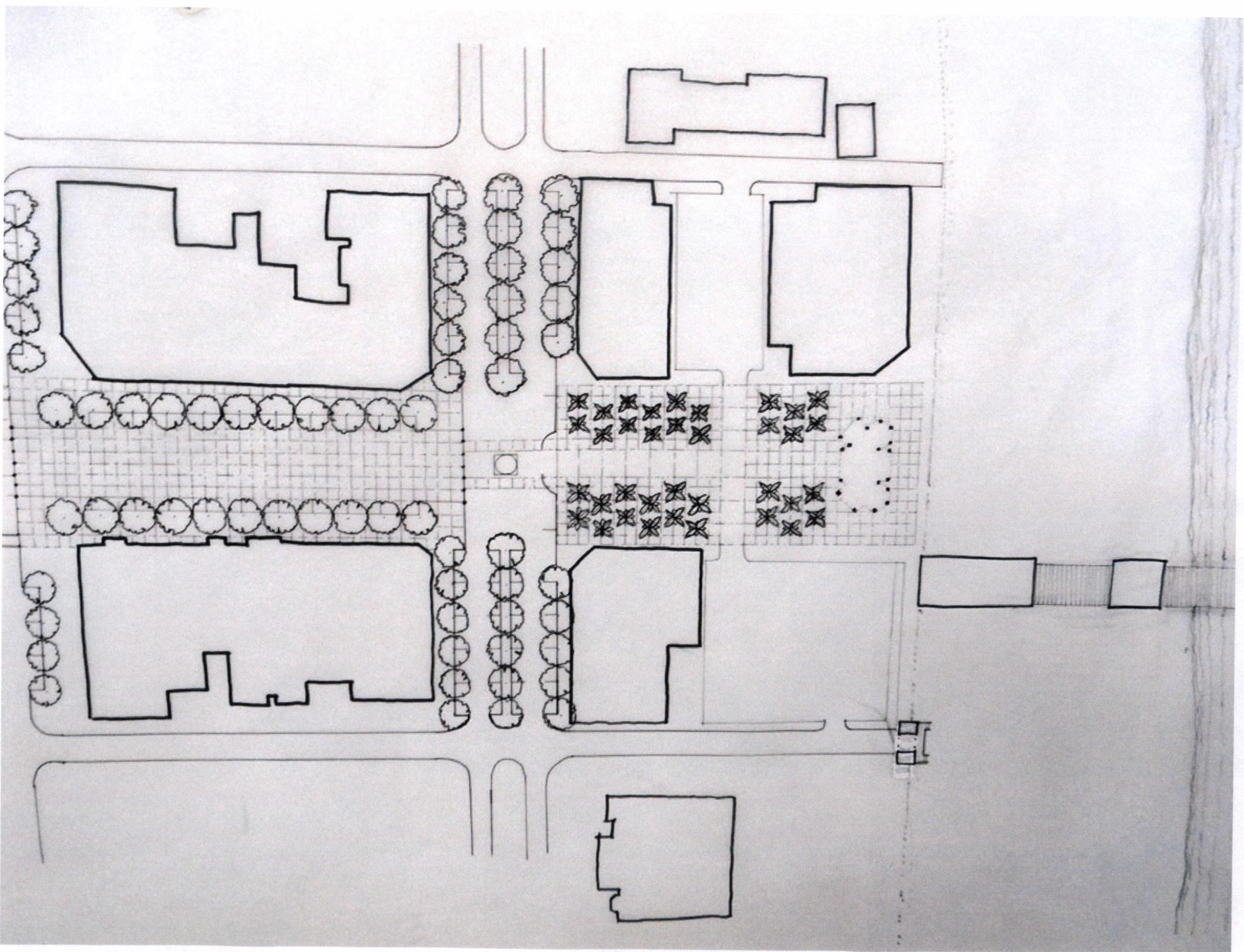
[Aerial View of Pelican Square District of Commercial Boulevard showing existing central median; inadequately sized, unshaded sidewalks; existing angled parking]

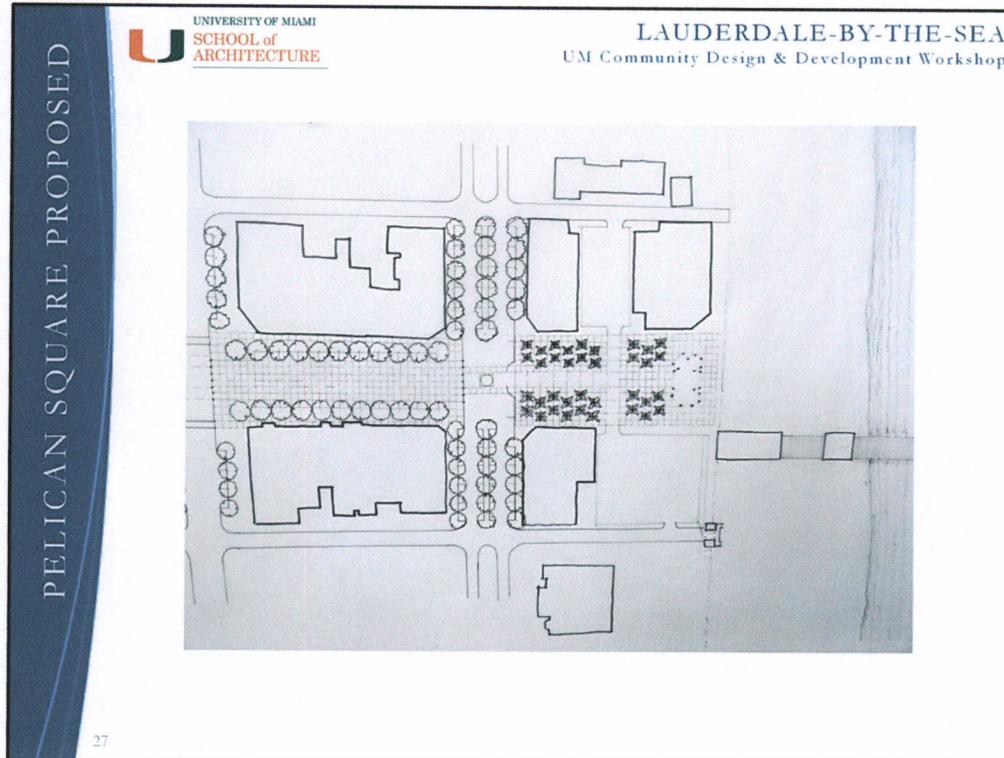






[View of Pelican Square Proposal looking East down Commercial Boulevard from A1A showing central medians removed; new operable bollards; curbsless sidewalks with planters, lighting, and outdoor seating; street re-paved with permeable pavers and strings of overhead lights enhancing the nighttime ambience]





[Proposed Plan for Pelican Square District of Commercial Boulevard showing all central medians removed to open ocean vista; vehicular access permanently blocked east of El Mar Boulevard; new operable bollards can be used to temporarily block vehicular traffic east of A1A during special events; streets repaved with an attractive permeable paver system; parking west of El Mar reconfigured from angled to parallel; curb-less sidewalks increased to 10'-width with Date Palm planters, lighting, and outdoor seating]

The proposal for Pelican Square, the most urban portion of Commercial Boulevard, removes the center medians and opens up the beautiful vista out to the ocean. East of El Mar Drive, the parking spaces will be eliminated, the street paved with a permeable paver system, planted with Date Palms and adorned with outdoor seating areas. Vehicular access will be limited to only entering the Aruba's lot or the beach parking lot in front of the Beach Café; cars must exit directly from these lots. This will alleviate much of the congestion and allow pedestrians to roam freely. Between A1A and El Mar, the small median will be removed and the street will become a curb-less, flexible space, paved with a permeable paver system and allowing for the "Main Street" feel and character of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea to be extended up until A1A.

The parking will be converted from angled parking to parallel parking in order for the sidewalk/pedestrian area to increase. A series of bollards, that are either removable or can be lowered into the ground, can be placed at the eastern portion of the Commercial and A1A intersection in order to help block off traffic on Friday and Saturday nights when concerts or other events are taking place. During the day, however, the space will continue to operate as it currently does, with two lanes of traffic and two turn lanes. Lighting fixtures can also be added to add to the outdoor ambience, possibly with string of lights creating a canopy similar to Larimer Square in Denver. ~Alicia Rabadan