

Interview with Maurice Finegold

Kathy Hersh: Today is March 21st, 2018. My name is Kathy Hersh. I'm interviewing Maurice. Maurice?

Maurice Finegold: Maurice.

Interviewer: Maurice.

Finegold: Maurice.

Interviewer: Maurice 'Mo' Finegold for the Miami Beach Visual Memoirs project. We are here in the Art Deco Welcome Center. Welcome and thank you very much for giving us your time.

Finegold: Thank you.

Interviewer: Could you please tell us exactly how you're connected to this place?

Finegold: How I got here.

Interviewer: How did you get here?

Finegold: I practice architecture in Boston. In the '70s, there was a decade of real change in how people were viewing the existing built environment. It was a sea change from urban renewal, which everyone had come to understand as a removal rather than, so we say, fixing the fabric of the environment as well as allowing new construction.

We had been doing that for a decade in Boston and in other cities, studying individual buildings and groups of buildings. We had had really great success because they were the seminal works in what we call the adaptive use movement that is taking an existing building and changing its use. Obviously renovating vernacular buildings, but also because of the adaptive use movement, it led to historic preservation.



Certain buildings like Old City Hall, Boston, which was destined to be torn down, we adapted that into a multi-use facility. We restored Mechanics Hall in Worcester. It led also, because of the post-war flight to the suburbs when new development needed to be constructed, the interstate highway system and the necessary regional shopping centers that went with all of that, the downtowns of many cities and towns were quiet.

In the decade of the '70s people began to think about, "How can we revitalize our cities?" The success in the Bicentennial in Boston in 1976, which brought throngs, hundreds of thousands of people on four different occasions into downtown Boston, people found it saying, "It's fun to be here". Nothing happened. There wasn't any problem. There were no physical issues and no violence. It was all an exciting time to be in the city.

It spread around, and we found ourselves studying groups of buildings in Newburyport, Massachusetts, in Paterson, New Jersey, in Lowell, Massachusetts and many other communities all around. We were receiving national recognition for essentially founding the adaptive use movement in the eastern part of the country.

That led us to receive somehow, and I don't know the source of the request for proposal, the RFP it's called, for the work here. We sent in our credentials, and we were interviewed. We came here for an interview, and we won the project.

We didn't quite know what it was, except that we knew that there was a large block of Art Deco buildings. There was an aging Jewish community that appeared to be at risk, and there were crèches for development because the buildings were underutilized. Developers were threatening the elderly community by saying there was 'salt' in the concrete, meaning it was going to rust and fall apart, and the pipes were rotting. It was scaring the community, and they were ready to vacate.

Along came Barbara Capitman, as you know, who had the



heroine of all this and who had listed this district on the international register of historic places. They needed to have a plan how to proceed to go forward. What we developed was what we call, and I have this book here, the Miami Beach Art Deco District Preservation and Development Plan knowing that the only way to success for preservation was also to allow new attitudes to be integrated.

It was interesting at that time. The first time we came here to begin our work, we set foot on Ocean Drive and there was no one there. It was a hot, sultry day. We were thirsty, and we finally found one place, I think between Fifth and Sixth on Ocean Drive. There was a small variety store where we could get a cold drink.

Now, of course, you can't walk down Ocean Drive because of the excitement and enthusiasm of people moving up and down and eating everywhere, but that's what we found. We found people sitting on the porches observing the street. There was a very low volume of movement.

We saw that there was an incredible sense of continuity among the buildings. We realized we were dealing with a square mile with approximately 1,200 buildings, a mixture of Art Deco style, Mediterranean style and some other non-contributory buildings.

Together they formed this cohesive community because of the common heights, the common materials, the play of light and shadow and all those things that Barbara saw for the reason that there be a historic district.

We began from ground zero. That's how we got here. We were selected, and we formed a team. We had a social scientist from MIT, Sandra Hollow, who was to help with understanding the aging community, whether it was being renewed or whether it was an end game. We had an economic consultant from [Phonetic] [07:15] Hemasya George. We had a local architect, Bob Chisholm, who still practices in Miami Beach.



Interviewer: His name again?

Finegold: Bob Chisholm. Robert Chisholm, C-H-I-S-H-O-L-M. He was helpful in doing some of the local work like measuring and getting local cost estimates. I'll tell you what we were doing in a moment. Then we had an attorney who helped us, which was Joe Fleming, who helped write the guidelines, the preservation guidelines, which eventually became part of the ordinance.

We began by examining the buildings. We had to prove to the community that the buildings were worthwhile and could be reused and recycled not only architecturally within the context of what the visual history was, but that they could be reused for profit, that the cost of renovation was not excessive and they could be remodeled for profit.

Interviewer: You said you had to prove to the community.

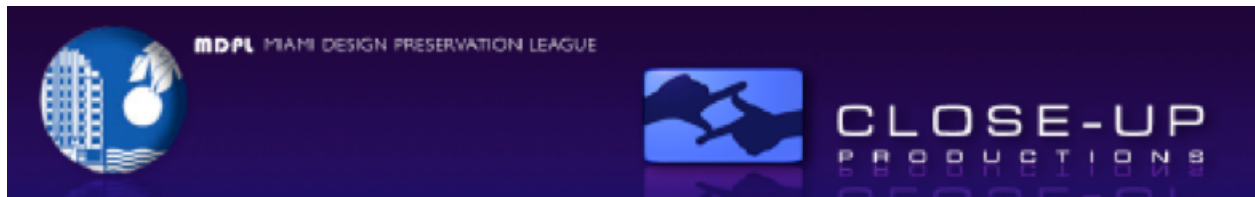
Finegold: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you mean to the commissioners, the powers that be, to the community at large or to developers?

Finegold: I think it's embedded in the plan. We had to prove. The community to who we were addressing this was all of those people. I think without that demonstration of feasibility, they wouldn't have been able to have this success.

We looked at the district, which as you know is in several parts. We have the low-rise hotel district along Ocean Avenue. We have the mid-rise hotels farther north. We have the housing to the west of Washington Avenue. Then we have the commercial strips of Washington Avenue, Espanola Way and Lincoln Road. We looked at all of those individually.

We did prototypical analysis by measuring and redesigning examples of the low-rise hotels, the mid-rise hotels and the housing. We looked at them in several different ways, made estimates with and without support systems, that is for



profit or with subsidies. That was a time, of course, when the Department of Housing and Urban Development offered tax credits, what was called section eight subsidies, as an incentive to restore existing historic structures.

We did those pro formas. We did the designs that showed us how a small hotel with small rooms could have larger rooms if there needed to be, or they could stay as small rooms. Sometimes we added adjacent buildings to the other to create a critical mass. The mid-rise hotels, we did the same thing and then the housing similarly.

All of those proved that these buildings could be renovated, reused in various forms and that the real estate pro forma showed that you could make a profit. We also had determined, of course, that there was not salt in the concrete and that the renovations with the usual condo had to be done to an older structure.

These were concrete buildings. The stucco surfaces had to be repaired. The Art Deco aspects or the Mediterranean aspects had to be refurbished or interpreted. We had all these parts. We looked at the commercial strips, and we made suggestions on Washington Avenue, which had already had some work done. We talked to Linda Polanski, the wonderful woman who was somehow spearheading the revitalization of Espanola Way.

We looked at the impossible issues at Lincoln Road, which was basically that the idea of having an east-west access highway and having it being an exciting shopping area was counterintuitive. It was too wide for that to really work. We see now that it's finally been evolved into a very pleasant commercial strip. People are using the—

Interviewer: At the time of your report, you didn't show Lincoln Mall as...

Finegold: No, no. it was shuttered. It was mostly empty. It was quite a failure. One of the things we had proposed because at that time South Beach, that is south of Fifth Street, was to be this concept of Venice in South Beach.



The transportation concept was that people would come across the McArthur Bridge, park at a large parking structure, leave their car and either get in a gondola or something into the canals and a tram system could come up through the Art Deco district. The idea of cars congesting the streets was to be quite diminished. The people would move about in a tram.

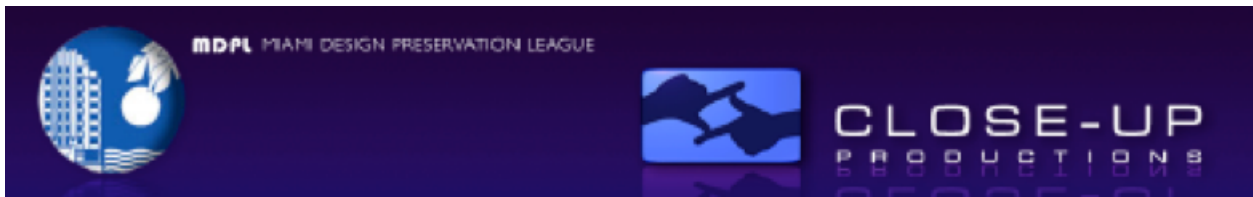
What's happened, of course, is we made this plan, including the concept that the critical mass just between Lincoln Road and Espanola Way needed to have some urban marketplace, some gathering because the urban marketplaces were quite in vogue at this time of creating excitement in quiet cities.

We suggested the critical grouping of buildings between Espanola Way and Lincoln Road, including the Art Deco structures. It was to be restaurants and movie theaters and shopping and really that kind of in-town shopping area. It turns out, of course, that it wasn't necessary because the community has revitalized in a most amazing way.

When we think of time past, time present and time future, which is the way we structured this report in relation to an older version of how people viewed this time, what we found what was a quiet community. We found a way to revitalize the buildings. We determined that the snowbirds, that is the people who came from New York to vacation in Miami Beach, shortly after the Depression, that stream of people was diminishing and they were going elsewhere.

This elderly community needed support systems. We designated areas where there could be housing for the elderly with good, strong community support. It's in this document. It was presented in the January of '81 as a very comprehensive look at the whole area.

Not only did we develop design guidelines for how buildings could be renovated, we had obviously proven, as I mentioned, that they could be renovated for profit. We were thinking about how to deal with the elderly community and



how to address the incoming population of basically Latino people who were mostly coming from Cuba at that time.

The plan suggested landscape developments along certain ways. What we see in the present is that it's been extraordinarily successful. The place is alive and well. It's bright and white and lively. The buildings are filled. The renovations continue. The variety of foods in the restaurant compared with 20 years ago is extraordinarily expanded, representing the multiculturalism that has attracted people from all over the world.

Of course, with it goes the pressures for new development and, of course, the parking. What I see in the contemporary issue, should we say time present looking to the future, we need to be thinking much more, especially in this environment, about energy conservation. Yes, there is a lot of work done about resiliency, about how to keep the ocean off the streets. That's been beautifully done. I hope that it does the job.

Interviewer: You mean the pump system and the raising of streets?

Finegold: The breakwater and the walkway. It's all walking up and down this boardwalk and so forth along this wonderful Brazilian landscape. It's abutting it and the rise of the land. I think it's beautiful. I don't know what else is being contemplated as we look at the forecast for how much the sea's going to rise.

While the continued emphasis on resiliency is important, it also is significant that we address energy conservation. I am astounded by what I see as a lack of energy conservation and renewable resources in the new buildings. There is no hydro power. There is no wind power. There is no solar power being captured, all of which are available within arm's reach.

That really puzzles me because we believe, in my firm, that that kind of sustainability is the moral imperative of our time as well as the resiliency, the effect of the climate



change. I think that needs to be addressed as we go forward.

One can see there are successes. As I judge the new parts and the restored parts, some of the new parts are terrific and some of them aren't so great. I'm sure another person might have a different view, but my view is I know what's a sensitive addition and what's not. I understand how some of the buildings have been joined, how they've been added to to help make it even a greater success as more and more people are coming.

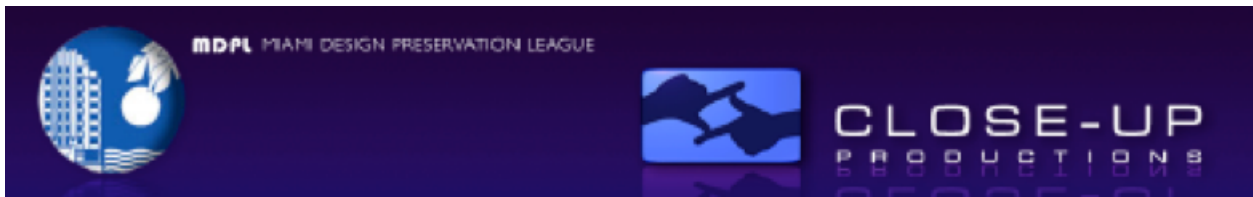
I think the new concert hall and the park in front of it adjacent to the theater and the convention center is wonderful. We were there last night. What a wonderful venue for the community to come together. I see that Washington Avenue needs still a lot of revitalization.

Interviewer: There's a project going on just down the street, Russell Galbut and Saul Gross. You're probably aware of that project. Did you see [Crosstalk] [20:33] that almost two blocks, it feels like, blocked off and they're keeping the façade?

Finegold: No. Well, it just needs what is the critical mass that's going to help those commercial ventures be viable with enough people to want to go there and use them. Right now it doesn't feel terribly inviting as we walk along it. Sure, in some parts it's better than others, but whether the different attitude about the traffic has to be addressed or more street furniture, more trees. Make it feel like it's part of the rest of the community. I suppose it's getting there.

Originally, a few years ago when I was here, Collins Avenue looked like it was the forgotten avenue as well, but right now it's quite vibrant. The energy has moved from Ocean Drive inward. That's very exciting. All in all, it seems to me we made the blueprint for great success. We showed in the plan what needed to be done and how to do it so that the people in the community knew what they had to do.

I think that's the great achievement. They keep talking



about it. Every time I come back, a group of people gets together to celebrate it as we did this past Sunday. It's remarkable the stories that they tell each about preservation or development.

As one gentleman said, instead of calling it the preservation and development plan, maybe now we should call it the development and preservation plan. I said it didn't matter to me which way you put it as long as the size of the type is the same for each of the titles.

Interviewer: How long did it take you to come up with this plan?

Finegold: I guess we worked on it about nine months. I don't know exactly when we were retained, but I know it was published in January of '81. I think we worked on it about nine months, determining, figuring out what there was, what the issues were, how do you dress a whole square mile of buildings?

Then it became clear and obvious that they were in certain districts. You could look at them as those districts as different segments of the plan and bring order to the process. At that time, of course, Fifth Street or Sixth Street was the end of the district. It had not extended south or north.

Diane Camber, who was a local resident who became director of the Bass Museum for many years, was one of the committee, worked with Barbara as the deputy chair. She mapped the entire district, which was to determine which of those 1,200 buildings was either Art Deco or Mediterranean or non-contributory.

That was a very helpful device because being from Boston, we weren't here for large blocks of time. We came to make reports and look around and study, but we had our experts helping us. It took nine months.

Interviewer: Was there any kind of blowback at the time, any special interests that were trying to get into the writing of this that



you can tell about now?

Finegold: No, no. No, there are two things that come to mind. Nobody was influencing the plan, as in what we were saying or doing. We were reporting. We were working with what was there. We were not in opposition, except two things I would comment on.

One is the New Yorker Hotel. The model sits over there. The New Yorker Hotel was very much in existence at that time. I remember the hotel because my parents used to stay in it when they came. I'm a native of Providence, Rhode Island, but when they came south to Miami Beach to vacation, they stayed in the New Yorker, sent a postcard.

We knew that it was under pressure for demolition. We weren't quite sure why that one versus the others or the mid-rise ones. We knew that it was one of the beauties of that mid-rise hotel district. We met with the developers. There were two of them, one fellow named Resnick. I don't remember the other gentleman's name.

They said, "What do you want?" I said, "We understand you were thinking of demolishing the hotel. We're demonstrating that all of these buildings can be saved with remodeling. We'd like you to wait while we did a specific study of the New Yorker for you". They said they'd think about it and then tore it down that weekend.

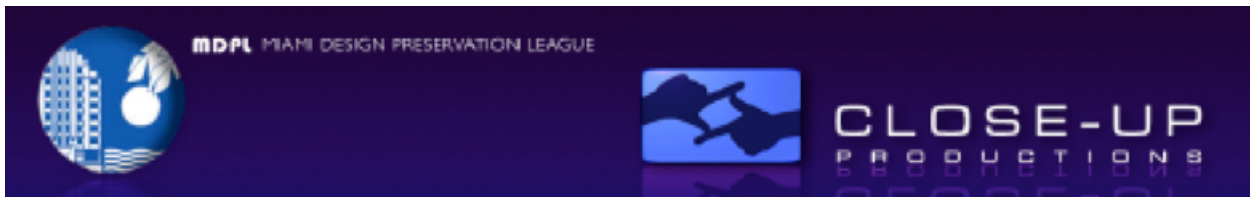
[Silence]

Interviewer: Literally the weekend following your conversation?

Finegold: Like three days later, two days later. We were really angry about that and realized that those were pressures that the local committees knew. The Miami Design Preservation League, Barbara Capitman and all, were going to be up against a lot of resistance.

Interviewer: Were you there when it came down?

Finegold: No. No. I would have cried.



Interviewer: We have video of people crying.

Finegold: I learned later. A few years after we finished this plan, very shortly after that, I became one of the architects for the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. During those designs, we met many, many survivors. Elie Wiesel was the chairman. I was confronted with a lot of people who had gone through hell on earth.

Resnick and his buddy were survivors. I realized later that they came to Miami Beach and they had gone through hell on earth, as I just mentioned. They weren't about to be told what they couldn't do in America. In that sense, I forgive them, but I can't for the actual act because we lost a tooth in that wonderful historical. I think that's a little bit of the back story of how that happened.

The other part of the plan was that the concept of this gathering place, this urban marketplace that we had, we called it Vanity Fair after a magazine of the '30s. That complex, Barbara Capitman did not like that. She objected to it. We weren't building high buildings at all. We were embracing it, but we were suggesting that you had to close a couple of streets and create a critical mass. She did not agree with that concept.

We explained how we got there and I said it wasn't critical to have it but we could leave it in or out of the plan. In the end we left it in and everybody understood it at that time. It now proves 40 years later, almost 40 years later that she was right. It's not necessary, but something has to be done yet on Washington Avenue.

Interviewer: What was she like to work with at the time?

Finegold: Our experience at that time in preservation and restoration was that certain building projects were only successful because an individual rose up and said, "I'm going to take charge of doing this". We had had that experience in Worcester, Massachusetts for the concert hall known as



Mechanics Hall, which was a wood frame building. The concert hall was on the third floor.

It was a great space. Everybody wanted to tear it down. She said no, and she spearheaded the community and raised the money. It's a great achievement. It was one of my early great successes. We won a national honor award for it, all of that.

Julie Fuller was her name, was the person who was the landmark person who created this over act of restoration. I think Barbara did that. We found such a person as Julie and Barbara in other communities as well. In working with her, she had that fierceness and focus. I think I have great respect for her and that we understood her that in order to achieve what she wanted, you had to be focused and rigid and essentially orthodox about it.

You couldn't vary. Therefore, there is a purity to it. We didn't waver either. "This is what you have to do. Here's the national district. Here are the design guidelines. Get a preservation ordinance. Have review commissions, and it'll go forward".

Interviewer: Back to the New Yorker, which really galvanized the movement quite a bit when it was torn down, did you have an actual conversation with Abe Resnick?

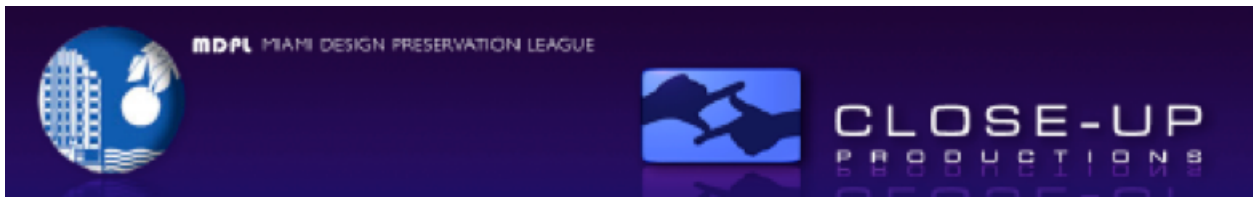
Finegold: Yes. We were in his office.

Interviewer: Did you discuss the Holocaust issue?

Finegold: No.

Interviewer: Your theory?

Finegold: With him, no, because I hadn't yet been invited to be the architect for the museum. It began in the early '80s, '82, '83 up through the early '90s. I was living uninformed, as was most of society at that time because it wasn't until Elie Wiesel began to write and speak that people began to write and talk.



Interviewer: He even used the word 'Holocaust'.

Finegold: Yes. No. If you want to rewrite history and want to do it and confront them and say, "This isn't about denying you your rights. It's about the greater society".

Interviewer: It's ironic because one of the mayors that we interviewed, former mayor, he had grown up in upstate New York Jewish and always felt like an outsider. One of the things that attracted him to Miami Beach at the time he came was because of the Jewishness of the community.

He wanted to experience that, and yet he was the mayor who got rid of rent control and caused a lot of the elderly Jews to have to relocate. He's very proud of that. He died recently, but in the interview he saw no contradiction. He was very proud of that.

Finegold: Well, as long as there was a plan for where those people could move to. Did they provide housing for the elderly or congregate housing or did they just displace them? I think you need to have a balance. It goes with the inexorable life cycle of the city. It's called gentrification to me, but it is the inevitable life cycle. Things get renewed and reused. Population groups move around. Things happen, and that's the economic engine that makes a place exciting and you want to be in.

Interviewer: Sustainable.

Finegold: Sustainable. It's sustainable economically and now environmentally. You have to do things like that, but you have to do them with sensitivity. It's not always done that way. Sometimes it's done with a gavel. Then you run around and you fix the problem after. I understand that Mr. Resnick became, actually, a part of the preservation community later on, afterwards.

Interviewer: He was not embraced by Barbara because she stated on camera that she hated him, but he did see the error of



having torn down the New Yorker, which is easy to say ex post facto.

Finegold: I think then he was an advocate for the movement after. I'm not sure in which way, but I think he became a commissioner, did he not?

Interviewer: He was.

Finegold: He wasn't exiled, so to speak. He became integrated with the process. I'm glad that happened.

Interviewer: Washington Street needs work.

Finegold: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you suggest?

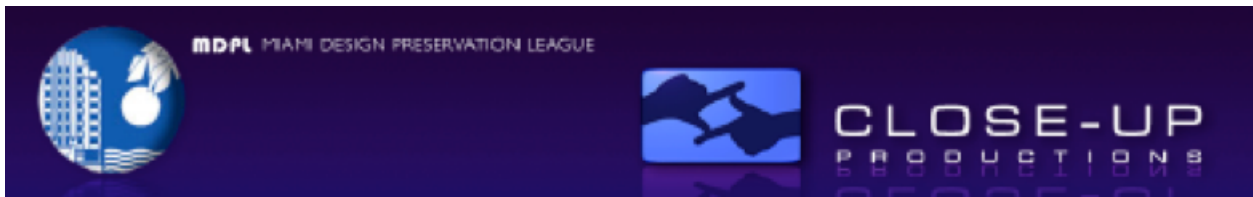
[Silence]

Finegold: The question is, if you widen the sidewalks, reduce the traffic lanes, will it be an inviting place for people to come? Will it draw people away from Ocean Drive? Now there are several nice places along. It's a long avenue, so I can't speak for them.

I haven't studied it all, but I think through proper lighting, proper landscaping, places to sit, pleasant pavement, maybe even a pedestrian strip in the middle of the avenue so you don't have as much traffic. I think it's a way to humanize it such as Lincoln Road has become.

If you developed a walkway path such as the boardwalk, which is the masonry up to 20-whatever, it was up to 20th Street, it's really beautifully done with resilient landscaping. It doesn't require a lot of water. I think it's possible to create an environment which says it's a respectful place, not a tough place.

Someone said to us as we went to a concert last night at the new Royal Symphony. We walked there from our hotel, and they said, "Don't walk on Washington Avenue at night".



Well, we walked back because we're city people. We don't get rattled. We're mindful, but we didn't see any problem. Maybe there are places where late at night it gets difficult.

We were aware that there are maybe more homeless people in view on Washington Avenue than elsewhere, but it doesn't mean that they are difficult people. They're suffering in their own way. I think that revitalization of the avenue needs to be in concert with what happens commercially along the way.

Perhaps it's time to recognize that development along Washington Avenue could be higher, that maybe they need a critical mass which is more intense in density than exists, say, along the Ocean Drive or the housing area and so forth. To allow more hotels and more high-rise apartments, goodness, they go straight up going north. We went as high as we were up to 65th Street, which is not terribly far.

Interviewer: In the plan?

Finegold: No. It was...

Interviewer: Last, okay.

Finegold: Sunday we got a ride up there. The development is intense along the water because people want to be there. Why not make it intense along the interior as well? It could be very pleasant. You get up high. You have a wonderful view across to the water, not on the water. There could be parks and playgrounds and so forth. I think I can imagine a vision of Washington Avenue that's quite pleasant and perhaps more residential in scale and attractive.

Interviewer: In this critical mass that you talk about, I presume that you're talking about residential and retail mix.

Finegold: Yes.

Interviewer: What I find interesting is that that is touted as something new, but that's actually not a new concept, right?



Finegold: No, it is not. The idea of the mixed zoning of commercial on the lower levels and residential above is as old as the oldest cities, the shops on the ground floor and the housing above it. Zoning in most places eliminated that. You got the offices, but you couldn't live.

I think of my own downtown in Providence, Rhode Island, which refused to allow people to live in the older departments. They killed it. They could have the students from Brown University or Rhode Island School of Design. They could have had the artists, could have been revitalized, could have been thriving. Right now it's still looking like it's droopy because they refused to change the zoning to allow that. Why? I haven't the foggiest idea.

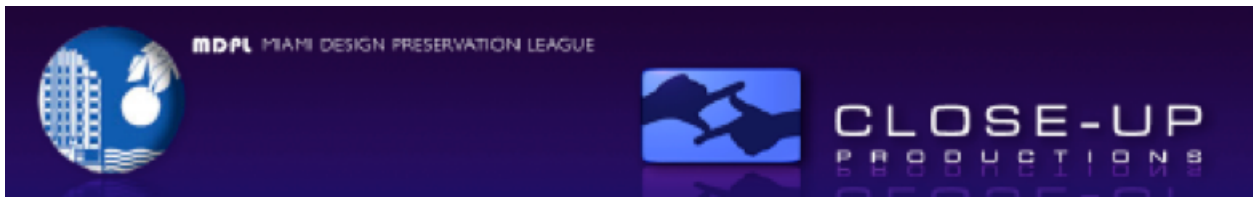
Interviewer: Now as a result in places like Miami, we have notorious commuting time with everyone going downtown to these offices. It is common for people to spend two hours each way.

[Silence]

Finegold: We see that in general people want to live in the inner city, especially the younger people who are not marrying until later or working. They don't want to live in the suburbs. They don't want to commute. They want to do many things after work. Oh my goodness. The things that people do even in my own office are astounding. Nobody will work late because they go to yoga, they go to dance, they got arch, they're teaching. They've got the whole...

Interviewer: They have a life.

Finegold: They have a life, say beyond architecture. We used to say we were married to architecture, but these kids aren't. It's okay. It's good, but they want to live in town. They don't want to commute. Later when they grow up and they get older and if they marry and have families, some of them do want to go out in the suburbs where the schools may be better and there's more green space.



That intensity is helping the communities diminish the need for more cars. Unfortunately, the ride programs are putting a lot of cars on the street as well, but of course that's the way these young people are getting around. They don't own cars, but they use the car services.

Interviewer: The Uber and Lyft.

Finegold: Yes.

Interviewer: That's very prevalent here.

Finegold: It's everywhere. It's a great service, but it's also adding a lot of vehicles roaming around, engines idling, not helping the environment. To me, they all should be required to either be electric or hybrid cars if you're going to be in one of those car services, but that's yet to come.

It probably should have gone at the beginning, but the name of my firm at the beginning, which is in the report is Anderson Notter Finegold. We called ourselves architects and preservation planners. We're first architects, but we called ourselves that because of what the preservation planning we were doing, which was so significant at the time.

Now the firm is Finegold Alexander Architects. We're just architects because the preservation planning movement became. It wasn't necessary for us to do that because communities were doing it themselves with planning commissions and CDCs and so forth. It's quite successful.

Interviewer: The CDCs and the federal incentives really made the big factor change here, I understand from talking to people involved. Ernie Martin, did you have any dealings with Ernie Martin?

Finegold: No.

Interviewer: Does than name ring a bell? He was the county manager at the time of Barbara's initial grounding of the movement,



founding of the Miami Design Preservation League. He was a bureaucrat, but he was essential in helping fund the profitability aspect of this. What you were saying really fleshes out that from another perspective, which we're really glad to have that.

Finegold: Is it still on? One of the anecdotes that came out of the process was Miami Beach's concern that it was seen as an aging, elderly community. There was one present public meeting. The mayor was there. I don't remember the mayor's name at that time, but he actually gave me the key to the city at that meeting.

It was interesting. They had a big poster, and it was a triangle, a big triangle. The bottom was like Thebes and Athens and Rome and showing how old all these cities were, and Paris and London and New York. At the top was Miami Beach, which at that moment had turned 65 that year.

I guess somehow it was founded in 1950s or '65. Where was I? 1980. That was 1980. They were celebrating. Across the 65, and they were worried about this aging community. They were proving what a young city it was. Among the photographs we have is not that one. I wish I had it. It was so—

Interviewer: Who was responsible for that?

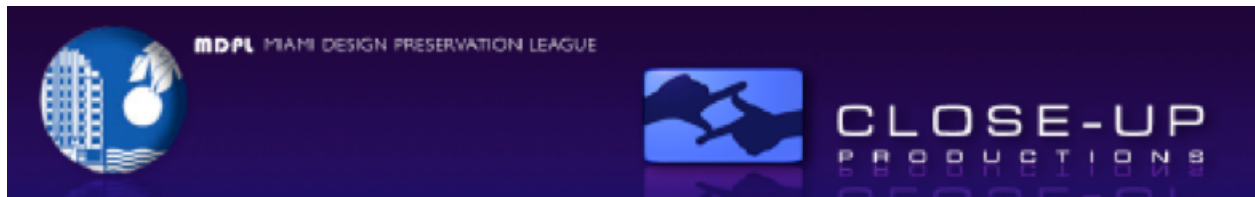
Finegold: I don't know. The city probably came up with that, but it was...

Interviewer: I think 1980, Alex Dowd maybe was the mayor. Right, Carl?

Carl: He was commissioner. I think it was [Inaudible] [47:07]

Finegold: Was there a fellow named Myers? I don't remember. I don't remember, but I thought that this poster was just very funny as they celebrated Miami being 65 years old and proving how young it was. It was very nice. Anyway...

Interviewer: Well, it certainly has the image of being on the cutting edge and young now.



Finegold: Oh, indeed.

Interviewer: Oh, one thing I wanted to ask you to comment on is so many people we've talked to, architects and planners and former mayors talk about how this city transforms itself about every 10 years. It has evolved. It went through a period of the Firestones and the J. C. Penney's mansions and being for the ultra rich.

Then it went through a Jewish phase. Then it went through an old Jewish phase. Then it went through the models and all the Europeans catalogs and Miami Vice. Now it's settled into an international Mecca, really, a place where you come to have a good time and basically anything goes. You can be yourself.

Finegold: I think it's very evident. Things were rather quiet about the revitalization effort until the Cuban boat people, as they were known, were the concern. It was not an incentive for development. As soon as the Miami Vice TV show, which was shot down here on Ocean Drive, right? Then we had Versace. Then we had La Cage Aux Folles, that movie, that wonderful movie where it was filmed.

The Miami Vice program brought the gay community and the art community. They really were the generators of making this whole work. It is interesting to see. There was a lot of police presence, but there was no suppression of people riding down with their loudspeakers going just deafeningly loud or people in all manner of dress. It was just wonderful.

Interviewer: All manner of undress too.

Finegold: Right, yes. Families with young children sitting there eating a meal, looking at these strangers go by and the strangest dress go by, which they might not see in Kansas. It's wonderful. I think it's a nice shot of multiculturalism and acceptance and across the climate. The answer is that you don't have to wear a heavy coat.



What happens in another 10 years? Well, the developer, Mr. Neeson was saying there's a lot of still development pressure and how the community reacts to the need to grow. People will keep wanting to come. They have to solve the transportation problem.

Interviewer: Yes, parking.

Finegold: Better bridges. Maybe parking, making an auto-free zone. Well, I don't know, but maybe the activity of those cars driving up and down attracting part of the ambiance of the place and making a lot of noise and calling. Nobody's doing anything harmful. They're just trying to say, "Here I am". Somebody—

Interviewer: I think it's not quite what Barbara had in mind. I think from what I've heard, she envisioned more of a café society.

Finegold: Listen. I asked the group I met with Sunday. I said, "What do you think she would say if she came back here?" She said she would be appalled. I said, "Well, my point of view, I'm so excited". I said, "I think it's a great success". Cafés, that's nice, but cafés aren't the economic engine for people, restaurants and drinking. It's a different kind of café, people having little bites and meals.

Eating has evolved and changed, the way people dine, my goodness. I think she did a great thing in recognizing what there was, the resource that was here and spearheaded its revitalization. Now, yes, it shouldn't go off without constraints because there always needs to be a plan. Maybe there needs to be now a new plan. What happens on Washington Avenue? How do you take care of increased pressures for development? Maybe it needs to be looked at again.

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