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Architect converted road into retreat for pedestrians

Hampton Dunn

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



ARCHITECT CONVERTED ROAD INTO RETREAT FOR PEDESTRIANS

By HAMPTON DUNN

MIAMI BEACH --- Fashionable Lincoln Road, long a mecca for shoppers of America, is even more attractive since its conversion to a pedestrian mall.

Automobiles were outlawed the street place became a veritable garden to lure foot traffic into the exclusive shops.

The man chosen to design this radical beautification and revitalization program for the shopping heart of the resort city was a hometown, controversial Morris Lapidus.

A native of Russia, Lapidus came to America as an infant and studied architecture at Columbia. He's noted as the designer of the Fountainbleau, Eden Roc and Americana hotels here. Lapidus has been characterized as a man who blends "a deep insecurity and flashes of real arrogance with a fanatical devotion to the drawing board."

Be that as it may, he carried out well his aim to make Lincoln Road Mall so attractive that visitors would be irresistably drawn there as to other major tourist attractions. The designer felt four factors were necessary in creating an ideal shopping area: (1) Accessibility; (2) Large parking area; (3) Diversification and quantity of shops; and (4) Absence of traffic.

So it was he provided an abundance of tropical gardens, pools and fountains, shelters and many other unusual and esthetically appealing features. The Road merchants enthusiastically accepted his ideas and even voted assessments totaling \$600,000 to finance the undertaking in 1960.

