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Science News

Miami moves ahead with science museum plan

MIAMI, Sept. 24 (UPI) -- Miami says it has cleared a major hurdle in its plans to create a major science museum downtown intended as a magnet for tourists.

The City Commission approved a sleekly contemporary, environmentally friendly design Thursday for the Miami Science Museum that supporters say will transform a bleak corner of Biscayne Boulevard into a tourist destination, the Miami Herald reported.

In a 4-1 vote, the commission set aside objections from activists who claimed violates city rules limiting development on flood-prone coastal land and who threatened a lawsuit to stop it, the newspaper said.

City planners and lawyers assured commissioners the rules do not apply to the government-sponsored museum project.

"Sometimes you have to dream," Commission Chairman Marc Sarnoff said.

The \$275 million science museum -- along with the adjacent new Miami Art Museum -- would help transform near-derelect Bicentennial Park into "Miami's Central Park," he said.

The five-level museum will incorporate an aquarium, a high-tech planetarium, science exhibits focusing on technology and the environment, as well as wildlife exhibits and educational facilities, officials said.

"It will make downtown a destination in the way that great cities like Baltimore and Sydney are grouped around the harbor," science museum Director Gillian Thomas said.