Additions – Conversions and Change of Use to an Existing Building on Aischylou Street

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First Equal Architectural Award in Memory of Alexis Theodosiadis

ECONOMOU, architects and engineers

description

The project involves the restoration and adaptive reuse of an architecturally significant building located in an Area of Special Character at the intersection of Aischylou and Evripidou streets within the Venetian walls of the historic center of Nicosia.

existing building

Originally designed in 1955 by architect Panayiotis Stavrinides, the former Glyki Lodge is a notable example of Cypriot modernism, featuring a semi-circular end at the corner, a façade clad with local stones, and an impressive semi-circular projection adorned with a mosaic along the façade. This style of urban building, common in Nicosia's former commercial district, includes ground-floor commercial spaces with upper-floor residences, as well as an arcade connecting Aischylou and Evripidou streets.

In recent decades, this once-thriving commercial hub has experienced significant decline, leading to the deterioration and abandonment of many buildings. To address this, local authorities initiated revitalization efforts aimed at restoring the area. The building was affected by this decline but was acquired by Akelius in 2019. Akelius, known for restoring and reusing historic structures, has undertaken the building's redevelopment.

programmatic objectives

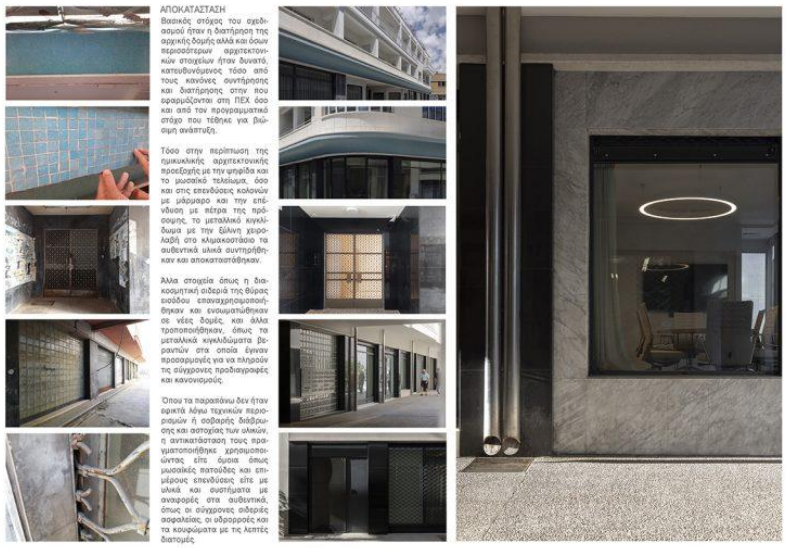
Aligned with the authorities' vision for the area's revitalization, the project will redevelop the building into a mixed-use space. It will house offices, long-term rental apartments, and extensive communal spaces with green elements for tenants and employees.

building structure - study outline

On the ground floor, previous commercial spaces have been transformed into open office spaces facing the street and the arcade, promoting transparency and connectivity between the three independent office units. The arcade serves as an intermediate meeting or rest area, enhancing communication and functionality. The staircase entrance to the existing first floor is also within the gallery. A new vertical connection, including an elevator, has been added within the space of the pre-existing skylight, connecting all floors, including the underground parking.

The first floor has been redesigned into apartments within the original shell. A new floor will be added in

line with zoning regulations, increasing the number of residential units to 18. The extension, on the Evripidou side, steps back from the existing floor to respect a neighboring listed building and culminates in a curvilinear projection that echoes the original design. The rooftop, above the new addition and parallel to Aischylou Street, will serve as a communal space with extensive greenery and panoramic views, providing a meeting and relaxation area for all users. Greenery extends into inaccessible areas to enhance biodiversity and visually shield engineering systems.



state of the existing structure and upgrading interventions

The building's age and abandonment resulted in structural damage, complicating its restoration and the addition of a new floor. Beyond restoring the original structure, the building required seismic upgrades, as its original design only accounted for structural loads. Reinforcements, including steel plates, concrete cladding, and FRPs (carbon fiber), were applied to key

structural elements, considering preservation requirements.

conservation and restoration

The primary design goal was to retain the building's original structure and architectural elements, in line with PEX conservation rules and the project’s sustainable development goals. Features such as the semi-circular mosaic projection, marble column cladding, stone façade cladding, metal railings with wooden handrails, and the decorative ironwork on the entrance door were preserved or restored. Where modification was necessary to meet modern standards, elements were adapted, while severely damaged items were replaced with identical materials or references to the originals.

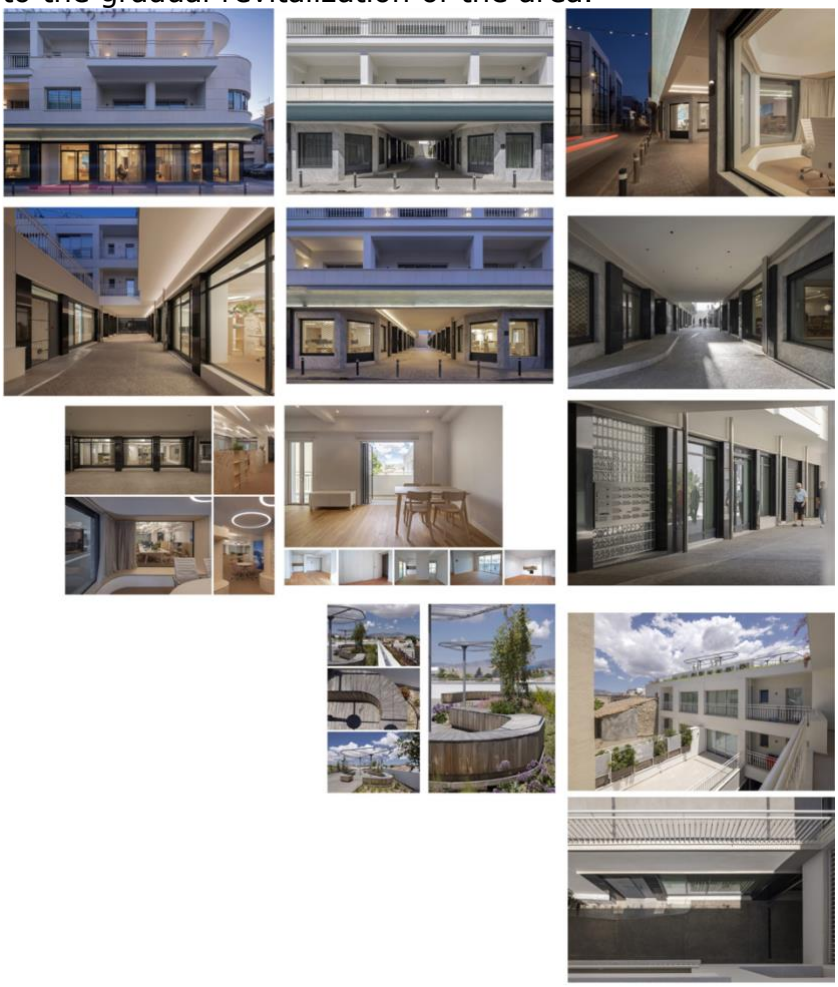
timetable - cost

Project design began in September 2019, following Akelius's acquisition of the building. Construction took 21 months, with the project completed in July 2023. Covering a total of 2300 square meters, the project’s construction cost was €2,350,000.

completion

The recently completed project enhances the quality of public spaces and restores vitality to the neighborhood. Alongside other local initiatives, such as the CYENS Centre of Excellence, the future relocation of the architecture school to the Faneromeni School building, and other private investments, this project contributes

to the gradual revitalization of the area.



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