

**REPORT OF**  
**FUTURE DIRECTIONS PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL SUBCOMMITTEE #E3**

**PREAMBLE**

A. The task of the subcommittee was to make recommendations to the Kiawah Island Community Association (KICA) Board of Directors on how to control future development. We sought “actionable” recommendations that can be:

1. Decided by the Board on its own;
2. Discussed by the Board with other entities to encourage them to take recommended actions; and/or
3. Referred to KICA membership for their decision, such as by amending the covenants.

B. The methodology used by the Subcommittee was as follows:

1. All statements in the reports on the Focus Groups that related to the assigned topic were extracted and assigned to one or more categories based on their context:

KICA Board Role	New Hotel	Town
Sense of Community	Short-term Visitors	Wetland Mitigation
Compliance with Rules	Resort in General	Growth in General
Amenities	Landscaping	
Conservation of Environment	Kiawah Resort Associates (KRA)	

2. To facilitate analysis, focus group comments were then classified as Problems, Solutions and Assumptions. Elimination and/or combination removed redundancies.
3. Each category was assigned to one of three Working Groups for research and analysis. The goal was to determine the actual facts applicable to each statement as well as the controlling “law” affecting each statement [e.g. KICA Covenants, the Development Agreement, and Architectural Review Board (ARB) Guidelines].
4. We then developed the recommendations given below. This was a complex, complicated process, and required much deliberation.

C. Most of the issues raised by the focus group interview comments reflect the rights, responsibilities and concerns of those individuals making them. Kiawah, however, is a very complex place in which diverse, and sometimes conflicting, interests exist side-by-side. Solutions to the problems raised in the Focus Groups must respond not only to the views expressed, but also to the rights, privileges and concerns of the other legitimate island interests.

D. One fundamental fact we determined is that KICA itself has little or no control over future development on Kiawah outside the boundaries of its own properties.

While the community association can interact constructively with the entities that do control development on Kiawah, KICA has authority neither to enact zoning regulations nor to commit the two major developers on Kiawah to any limitations on development. The Development Agreement between the Town of Kiawah Island and KRA governs what KRA can do from a development standpoint for the life of the agreement. The Covenants provide very little direct control over development of property on the island, beyond the ability to influence landscaping and to enter property to control reptile and insect pests.

Our recommendations therefore focus on the role KICA can fulfill in facilitating positive development through 1) cooperation with all other island entities, and 2) educational endeavors to eliminate misconceptions and create for property owners a better understanding of Kiawah.

### **Recommendation #1: Establish a Cooperative Relationship with the Town, KRA, KIR, KINHC and the ARB**

The Town, through its authority to pass zoning ordinances, KRA, the Resort, and individual property owners through the development plans they submit to the ARB for approval, are the entities that have responsibility for direct control of development.

While the community association cannot *directly* control development, it nevertheless has the ability to exert influence and work cooperatively with the entities that do. If it develops a positive working relationship with the Town and the two major developers, KICA can serve as a positive influence on the development process. If such a positive relationship can be developed, the Community Association can provide a strong voice for those issues of importance to the association and the island.

Specific actions we encourage KICA to undertake at this time include:

1. Support the Architectural Review Board's efforts to require more environmentally sensitive construction by providing ongoing monitoring with KICA resources, such as the Compliance Committee and the Encroachment Permit Officer, as appropriate.
2. Encourage the ARB to maintain the harmony of neighborhoods as defined in its "Designing With Nature" publication.
3. Encourage and support the initiatives of all island entities responsible for and/or interested in environmentally sensitive development. As an example, KICA could collaborate with KINHC in its pro-active effort to promote environmentally sensitive development through a series of videotapes.

### **Recommendation #2: Provide pro-active educational programs to correct misconceptions and broaden property owners' knowledge of and understanding about Kiawah**

In the Subcommittee's analysis of focus group reports, a number of misunderstandings and downright errors were patently clear about many topics, not just environmental issues. The community association needs to take steps to address these misconceptions pro-actively for its benefit and that of all property owners.

The educational process can be accomplished in a variety of ways. If the *Digest* and the KICA website gain credibility, they can serve as two vehicles for providing accurate and up-to-date information to lessen the confusion about the responsibilities of the major organizations and entities on Kiawah. Informational brochures can be developed for distribution at the KICA Annual Meeting; these can also be provided to new property owners, along with their copies of the Covenants.

Perhaps the Subcommittee's most unique educational recommendation is the implementation of a Kiawah Island Expo, sponsored by KICA, with representatives from the town, KIR, KRA, KPOG, KINHC and the ARB, and perhaps other island organizations such as regimes. We envision this "fair" being held over a two-day period. We believe this approach is critically important, since the past has demonstrated that written communication has little impact; we must overcome this.

This seminar could begin in the afternoon of the first day, with a plenary session. A local historian would speak about how Kiawah has come to be where it is today. Then, small "breakout" sessions would be held concurrently on topics such as the Development Agreement between the town and KRA, the KICA Covenants, the role of the ARB, etc. These would be repeated at least once to accommodate all who wanted to participate. A reception would end this first day. The next morning, a plenary session with the town, the resort and KICA could feature each discussing its role in the "governance" of the island. Then, additional "breakout" groups would include KPOG and KINHC, as well as any other organization responsible for and representative of property owner interests. An optional dinner could be planned for the evening of the second day, with the "fair" ending the next morning.

Such an event could serve not only an educational purpose, but also could foster a sense of community, which is so greatly needed. A suitable time of year to hold such an exposition, when non-resident property owners are most likely to be here, could be determined by conducting a survey of property owners.

In addition, KICA should work with the town and the rental agencies in a coordinated effort to develop updated informational materials regarding KICA rules and regulations. These could be funded with ATAX dollars and provided not only to all rental agencies for placement in every unit, but also to all property owners who rent and/or loan their properties. By working together cooperatively, the island entities could help to educate property owners and visitors alike.