

KICA'S LONG RANGE PLAN

During the last quarter of 1998, a professional facilitator (Catherine Musham, Ph.D.) conducted 23 focus groups on KICA's long range plan. Dr. Musham commented that she had never facilitated such intelligent, informed groups, and reminds us that our best assets are our members! Following is a summary of the quality of life concerns from each group. Please bear in mind that the opinions expressed are the personal opinions of the participants. In some cases, opinions may be based on information which is no longer accurate. The board may or may not take action on particular items. There is still much work ahead to determine our goals. (Complete Executive Summary reports from each session are available for review at our administrative office.)

FUTURE DIRECTIONS RESEARCH PROJECT

Quality of Life Concerns

Group One: Committee Chairs

Conducted October 6, 1998

This group consisted of knowledgeable and concerned KI residents who are fully aware of the complexities facing the island brought about by its history and social structure. Their chief concerns are 1) a decline in the quality of life on the island due to a great influx of short-term renters and general population growth; and 2) existing conflicts among the KICA, the town and special interest groups. Above all, they would like to see greater initiative in controlling population increase, especially short-term renters. Because the new hotel will attract more short-term renters to the island, it is highly opposed.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Increase of short-term renters
2. Development of new hotel bringing more short-term renters to KI
3. Resort activities in general
4. Lack of a sense of community, lack of a geographical center and a sense that "no one's in charge"
5. Continuing competition between KICA, KRA and town
6. Lack of consolidation between resort, developer and town

7. Polarization brought about by "opposing" groups such as Kiawah Island Club versus Governor's Club, residents versus non-residents, town versus KI residents, 3 different newspapers and so forth.

8. Environmental conservation concerns.

9. Lack of a centralized newspaper.

10. Bohicket Road is dangerous.

11. All of the Andell extension implications and facts are not known at the present time.

12. Hurricanes.

Group Two: Regime Board Members A

Conducted October 16, 1998

This group consisted of regime board managers, both residents and non-residents. Their chief concerns are 1) lack of representation of regime interests on the KICA Board and other governing bodies; 2) regimes and especially non-residents being treated like "second class citizens"; 3) the lack of clearly stated rules and enforcement of rules for renters (regarding trash, conservation, laundry and so forth); and 4) existing conflicts among the KICA, the town, the resort and other groups. Their single most important concern is the overall lack of power of the regimes.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The future of KICA as a viable organization.

2. Growth of the area and direction of development with special concern about the Andell Tract.

3. Increases in the town's power and wealth.

4. Continuing conflicts between property owners, town and resort.

5. Road conditions with particular concern about how Bohicket Road will be affected by inevitable traffic increases in the next few years.

6. "Trashing" of the island by short-term renters. This includes overflowing dumpsters, failure to clean up after dogs, laundry bags being left out, abuse of dunes and landscaping, and other problems largely associated with the presence of transient residents.

7. Security problems related to renters, especially during summer months. This includes burglaries and vandalism, much of which is attributed to the teenage children of renters.
8. Maintenance of sidewalks and marsh areas.
9. Lack of consolidated government resulting in a sense that no one knows "who's in charge."
10. Environmental concerns including abuse of eco-system by renters, beach erosion and beach protection.
11. Impact of the new hotel.
12. Expansion of the Sandcastle (participants were equally divided in votes for and against expansion)
13. Potential loss of amenities if changes in ownership or management of VIT occur.

Group Three: Regime Board Members B

Conducted October 16, 1998

This group consisted of five regime board members and included both residents and non-residents. Their chief concerns are: 1) the number of diverse and conflicting political and social groups resulting in emotional stress for property owners; 2) population growth of the island including an increase in renters and resort activity; and 3) challenges to KI's environmental integrity by continued development and renter behavior. Two participants expressed concern that KI's "early settlers" (people living at KI during the time of Hugo and before) might not be able to keep up with the island's increasing cost of living.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Continuing hostilities and personality conflicts among and between various governing and political groups. Discord on the island is produced by the existence of highly polarized factions. Participants said this heightens the stress of property owners and is out of place in the "paradise" that Kiawah is supposed to be.
2. Lack of clear understanding about which groups are responsible for specific security, maintenance and other functions.
3. Abuses of the island's ecosystem brought about by increased number of renters and developer activities.
4. Increase of resort activity resulting in crowding, traffic congestion and security problems.

5. Location of the new hotel in the mid-island area, creating the need for additional gate security.
6. The costs of living on KI will be too high for long-term property owners who contributed much to the development of the island. Many of these people have limited assets.
7. Inequitable assessments. It was noted that "early settlers" with limited incomes may not be able to afford assessments that are easily borne by new, more affluent property owners.
8. KI is becoming "elitist" with privatization of some amenities and the significant price increases in cost of living and property.
9. The River Course has created another "them and us" dichotomy on the island. Some people are unfriendly to River Course members because this club is a KRA enterprise.
10. KICA is "stuck with maintenance costs" incurred by new amenities added by developers.
11. Traffic problems including Bohicket Road and the connecting bridge.
12. Property owners pay taxes to but derive little benefit from the town.
13. Although non-residents outnumber residents by a significant degree, non-residents lack voting power and are not proportionally represented.

Group Four: Town Representatives

Conducted October 26, 1998

This group consisted of 4 participants consisting of council members and/or staff members.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. KRA representation on the KICA Board is a major problem because of inherent conflicts of interest between developer and property owners.
2. There is little constructive communication between the town and the KICA Board. The two entities meet only during crisis times and there are no regularly scheduled meetings.
3. The KICA is viewed as a "tool of the developer" because of the influence of the KRA on the Board.

4. The KICA Board is not effective because it lacks management skills, knowledge and a long-term vision.

5. Maintenance of the "gate" has become a key issue because although the gate does not effectively prevent "outsiders" from getting on the island, it is a symbol of KI continuing as a gated community.

6. The social structure and politics of KI are different from other gated communities because there is one gated community and one town.

7. Gated communities in general are in danger because South Carolina has limited legislation on gated communities. Ambiguities in the law tend to work in favor of developers.

Group Five: Naturalists

October 27, 1998

This group consisted of 12 participants concerned with preserving the natural habitat of Kiawah Island. Most are members of the Kiawah Island Natural Habitat Conservancy, and several are members of the KI Naturalists Club. Two participants are staff members, one KICA and one Resort, who have worked closely with naturalists. The issues discussed by this group include 1) preservation of the natural environment on KI; 2) Lack of interest in and knowledge of the island's natural habitat on the part of KICA and other influential groups; 3) Lack of a cohesive long-range plan to protect the environment; and 4) Future roles of KICA, the resort, KRA and the town and how this will impact the island's natural environment and future commercial and real estate development.

The primary concern of participants in this group is that resort and developer activity threatens the island's natural habitat. The island's leadership has not taken proactive steps to protect the environment. This is a fundamental quality of life issue for naturalists because many mentioned that KI's unique natural environment is the primary reason for living there. Many are afraid that the natural beauty that first drew them to the island will be lost to continued development. This group urges KICA to adopt a pro-environment vision.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Increasing loss and destruction of KI's natural habitat to continued land development, and lack of clear-cut environmental protection policies. This includes woodlands, wetlands, dunes, outer banks, beaches and wildlife.

2. The lack of clarification of the roles and responsibilities of KICA and the town.

3. Lack of cooperation between KICA and the town.

4. The fragmentation of different groups on the island resulting in barriers to cooperative solving of environmental problems.
5. KI may lose its uniqueness and become like other resort areas (Hilton Head, for example) if environmental issues are not address now.
6. The participation of people representing developer interests on the KICA board prevents it from truly representing property owners (although most participants are aware that this will change in the future).
7. KICA board members' attitude toward environmental issues is one of "benign neglect." Many participants were dismayed that the long-range plan draft did not mention long-term strategies for protecting the island's natural environment.
8. KICA board members do not realize that a proactive approach is needed to protect the island's natural habitat. Board members are not "anti-environment," however, they are not well informed about environmental issues nor do they view this as a priority area.
9. An adequate number of clearly stated pro-environment policies do not exist.
10. There is little enforcement of existing environmental policies.
11. Mitigation that involves areas not on KI is not fair. Mitigation is acceptable only if it is self-contained on KI.
12. The landscaping committee should also be most concerned with land management issues with landscaping being a component of land management.

Group Six: Former Property Owner Directors and Committee Chairs

Conducted November 5, 1998

This group consisted of six participants who have served as KICA property owner directors and committee chairs. The participants are knowledgeable about the history of the island. They are primarily concerned about conflict between the KICA Board and the town, and conflict between various other entities and groups that live on the island. They feel that KRA, while protecting its own interests, dominates KICA.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The KICA Board is politically naïve and tends to succumb to KRA pressure.
2. The KICA Board is not "in tune" with property owners.

3. New KICA Board members are primarily new residents who do not understand island history or dynamics between various groups. This makes them more easily manipulated by KRA.
4. Social relationships among KRA representatives and the KICA Board may influence KICA decision-making.
5. Lack of open and honest communication among the various influential island groups.
6. Conflicts among influential groups create stress for property owners. The Digest is biased and tends to paint the town in an unfavorable light. It also has a history of censorship based on the experience of people who have previously worked on it.
7. Conflict between KICA and the town.
8. Polarization of club groups is creating antagonism among people who were previously friends and neighbors.
9. A sense of economic class division (between the "haves" and the "have mores") is exacerbated by the River Course.
10. The island's early settlers who are on fixed incomes may not be able to keep up with the island's increasing cost of living.
11. The practice of curbside garbage pick-up creates unsightly mess on the streets.
12. The ARB is permitting the construction of houses that are not covered by trees; this is not in keeping with the island's early building requirements.
13. Wildlife preservation.
14. The town is composed of hardworking and good people and does not deserve the criticism it receives from Common Sense and other groups.
15. Non-residents are not properly represented in KI politics. KRA canceled a non-resident committee.
16. The effectiveness of KICA security may be compromised by fear of offending residents.
17. Who will run the island in Year 2002?

Group Seven: Residents Group A

Conducted November 10, 1998

This group consisted of 10 residents, many of whom are committee members. Relatively few residents responded to the recruitment program, therefore, the KICA staff called members and requested their participation. The primary concerns discussed by this group include 1) Friction among the influential groups on the island; 2) The town's growth and future role in bringing changes to the island; 3) Population growth and how this will impact KI's quality of life; and 4) Damage to the environment and natural habitat.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Concern about development on the island that will lead to overcrowding, harm to the natural habitat and other detriments to the current quality of life on the island.
2. Concern that KI will become like Hilton Head if some constraints are not put on development.
3. The influence of the KRA on the KICA Board.
4. KICA and KRA are represented by the same attorney creating a conflict of interest.
5. The ARB reports only to the developer and is making decisions that are not in the spirit of the original building restrictions.
6. KRA wrote covenants intentionally "slippery" to be able to get around them.
7. Friction among groups is being "manufactured" over the town election.
8. Secret meetings between the town and the KRA (without knowledge of KICA).
9. The tendency of the KICA Board to feud with the town.
10. KRA encourages conflicts between KICA and the town because this strengthens its own position.
11. Future town initiatives may not be in the best interest of property owners.
12. Abuse of the island's natural habitat by continued development and short-term renter neglect.
13. The effect of the transient population on the town's quality of life.
14. Short-term single family home rental brings changes to neighborhoods every week.
15. Mitigation that involves areas not on KI.

16. The future of the Inn after the construction of the new hotel is completed.

Group Eight: Residents Group B

Conducted November 10, 1998

This group consisted of 6 residents. Some of the members of this group responded to the recruitment program and some were contacted by telephone and asked to participate. One member is currently employed part-time on the KICA staff. She said she could discuss issues as a resident and others did not think they would be inhibited by her presence. Another participant is currently a director of the naturalist group and an attorney (who had not participated in the naturalist focus group conducted earlier).

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Lack of proactive and skilled leadership will put island property owners in a vulnerable position in relation to commercial interests.
2. Concern that KI will remain a private and gated community.
3. The KRA is perceived as an excellent developer, however, it is not a highly trusted force on the island at this time.
4. Recognition that the existence of a gated community *and* town is an uncommon and challenging situation, however, the gated community and the town should remain separate.
5. Crowding of the island brought about by increase in the population (both residents and renters) will lead to a host of problems that will harm KI's quality of life.
6. Tourism and traffic are great threats to the quality of life offered by KI.
7. The natural habitat is put at jeopardy by continued development.
8. There is significant social fragmentation on the island that has been heightened by the two clubs.
9. The establishment of the Beach Club has decreased access to beach for some property owners because of parking problems.
10. Size of the new hotel and its effect on the natural habitat.
11. Lack of preparation for future water supply needs.

Group Nine: KPOG Representatives

November 12, 1998

This group consisted of 10 KPOG members. The current KPOG president did not attend because he participated in another focus group held earlier. Overall, these participants perceive the central issue to be fair and equitable treatment of property owners by KICA and KRA. The present KICA Board is viewed as a tool of the developer and therefore, ineffectively represents property owner interests. The KRA is perceived as the cause of many problems on the island including destruction to the natural habitat, inconsistent ARB policies, future overcrowding and mounting of social tensions. KICA is not an effective body in dealing with the KRA because it tends to yield to KRA pressure both from within the Board and from the outside. This puts KPOG in position of being the only truly property owner-oriented political organization on the island.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The present political atmosphere on the island is characterized by power struggles, personality conflict, pettiness, distrust, secrecy, financially driven decision making and other unfavorable factors. KRA is believed to be largely responsible for this with KICA as a willing accomplice.
2. Current treatment of property owners by KICA and KRA is not perceived as fair and equitable. This will lead to quality of life detriments because property owners' interests are being overridden by commercial endeavors.
3. Although KRA is perceived as a first class developer, people in this group are concerned that this organization thinks it "owns the island".
4. Concern about development on the island resulting in overcrowding and problems that accompany population growth.
5. The need for greater emphasis on environmental protection and concern that too much of the natural habitat is lost to development.
6. Lack of adequate reserve funds to maintain the island's infrastructure and to be prepared for emergency situations such as hurricanes.
7. The ARB reports only to the developer and is inconsistent in enforcing policies and procedures. It bends to financial and commercial pressures and has ignored building restrictions that have previously set the aesthetic tone of the island.
8. Covenants as written now support KRA interests and do not adequately reflect property owner interests.

9. Many people do not want to serve as leaders because they are unwilling to put up with the "bull", i.e., the pressures, tension, in-fighting and other unappealing aspects of the island's political milieu.

10. The presence of the River Course has created social tension that did not exist previously.

11. KRA landscaping efforts are described as "going all out" for new streets and neglect for old streets. The cost for expensive landscaping on new streets is then passed onto KICA.

12. Kiawah Island Utility has frequent rate hikes that are not justifiable.

13. Tax and assessment increases.

14. Kiawah 2000's open criticism of the town, the resort and KPOG is unwarranted and not constructive.

Group Ten: KRA Department Heads

Conducted November 17, 1998

This group consisted of five participants. All are employed by KRA. The primary concerns expressed by this group are: 1) The need for firmer and more rationale leadership on the part of KICA; 2) The invasive actions of the town and the need to curb its power; 3) the need to prepare for the new hotel's effect on population density, traffic and infrastructure; and 4) lack of representation of non-residents who account for the majority of property owners. Members of this group do not think property owners understand KRA's commitment to lower/density-higher prices and how this will benefit the island in the long run.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Lack of cooperation and common goals among influential groups.

2. Communication problems between influential groups and from influential groups to property owners.

3. The KICA Board's involvement in day to day operations distracts them from more important issues.

4. Many problems stem from property owner directors' distrust of KRA.

5. The town is potentially a threat to the private nature of the Kiawah community.

6. The town's actions regarding signage, setting of speed limits and restrictive ordinances are unwelcome intrusions.
7. The town committees are redundant.
8. The town doesn't adequately represent property owners. It focuses primarily on the resident segment that accounts for a small percentage of total property owners.
9. The need for access to the island via safe roadways is a major issue that requires addressing.
10. Property owners do not understand the full implications of annexation.
11. The Resort's new hotel will have a greater impact on the island's infrastructure, traffic and natural habitat than KRA final build-out of 600 remaining lots.
12. The new hotel is needed, however, long-term planning is also needed to accommodate its impact on the community.
13. No one will "take on" the Resort because of its golfing facilities.
14. The Resort is well meaning but lacks a vision of quality because doesn't understand Kiawah.
15. The long-term benefits of KRA's commitment to less density and higher prices is not well understood by the island community.
16. KICA committees were initially established to serve in an advisory capacity; now, they are setting policy.
17. Gate security personnel are not always "welcoming".

Group Eleven: Resort Department Heads

Conducted November 17, 1998

This group consisted of seven participants. All are employed by VIT.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Some of the influential groups on the island lack a long range focus.
2. KICA leadership is too concerned with the short-term "bottom line" and does not understand that the financial well being of the island depends on a long term vision.

3. The Resort's role in providing revenues to the community is not fully acknowledged. The Resort has contributed significantly to the increase of property values and quality of life, yet many people fail to recognize or appreciate this.
4. KICA has not been fully supportive of the new hotel, suggesting that it is unaware of the future benefits this development will bring to the island.
5. DHEC's involvement has created delays that ultimately work to the detriment of the island's quality of life.
6. Many people do not recognize the difference between the Resort rental program and that of competitors. The key distinction is that Resort rental activity generates revenue for the island.
7. Some people believe that the new hotel will result in "crowding", however the maximum number of rooms is not being used and the hotel will be as small as is financially feasible. Planning of the new hotel has been guided by the "less density higher prices" principle.
8. There is limited awareness that every hotel decision has been made with the perspective property owners in mind.
9. Security personnel at the gate are not consistently welcoming and friendly. This has a negative effect on tourists and visitors.
10. Rigid adherence to rules on the part of gate security has created inconveniences for some Resort employees, including a situation in which a Resort employee who has worked on the island for 22 years was not allowed in because his pass was out of date.

Group Twelve: Governor's Club

November 19, 1998

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The presence of the KRA on the KICA Board means that the Board cannot fully represent property owners. KRA Board members are more interested in KRA interests than property interests.
2. KRA directors and property owner directors should learn to work together for the overall good of the island.
3. The current KICA Board is an improvement over previous Boards, however, it needs to improve in communication.

4. The recent clash between KICA and the town occurred because of the personalities of two people in leadership positions.
5. Security demands will increase as the island grows. VIT's growth puts a burden on security.
6. An unfair share of landscaping resources are allocated to new neighborhoods (being marketed to prospective buyers) as opposed to settled, "sold-out" ones.
7. The River Club has "fractionated" the island and "split the community" because River Club members do not mix with others.
8. Continued development will create a burden for traffic management and infrastructure.
9. KI's natural habitat and wildlife are threatened by development.
10. The demographics of island visitors has shifted from small families to large groups bringing various types of recreation equipment.
11. Abuse of the environment by short-term renters.
12. KI's evacuation preparedness in event of a hurricane or other emergency because there is only one road off the island.

Group Thirteen: Non-Residents A

Conducted Nov 24, 1998

This group consisted of one participant. [Others registered did not attend.] He had obviously given some thought to quality of life issues and was able to name five immediately. These are: 1) The environmental integrity of the island; 2) The current political situation in which KRA maintains control and KICA is not a viable governing body; 3) The condition of the island's infrastructure and how it will be affected by future population increases; 4) The Architectural Review Board allowing overbuilding of lots and allowing the construction of beach front buildings designed to accommodate group rentals and 5) The town's lack of ability to enforce regulations and zoning.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. At the present time KICA is not a credible, distinct body.
2. KPOG is doing what KICA should be doing.
3. The "Digest" is a "puffery piece" from the KRA. "Talk", produced by KPOG, is the most reliable 4. newspaper on the island.

4. Non-residents are not well represented in island politics.
5. The natural habitat and wildlife of Kiawah Island are threatened by continued development. This poses a significant quality of life concern because the natural beauty is what motivates people to move to Kiawah Island. KRA cannot be trusted to preserve the island's natural habitat.
6. KRA is the only influential group on the island for whom it cannot be said: "their heart is in the right place".
7. The island's infrastructure (roadways, sewage, water) cannot hold up to expected increases in population without changes being made.
8. The gate will be overwhelmed by traffic from construction and tourists in the future.
9. The ARB allows construction that is not in keeping with the ambience of KI. Overbuilding of lots and the building of multi-person rental units on the beach are two examples of this.
10. Some of the new buildings on the waterfront are "monstrosities" and resemble Ramada Inns.
11. The town lacks power to enforce regulations about maintenance of property and zoning.
12. The group Common Sense is misguided.
13. Will the new hotel attract enough people to support itself?
14. Maintenance of property is an issue for this non-resident because a neighbor has let his home deteriorate.

Group Fourteen: Non-Residents B

Conducted November 24, 1998

This group consisted of five participants. Four members of this group belong to the River Club.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. An inherent conflict of interest exists between property owners and KRA.
2. KICA and the town are in "utter conflict" and neither group can be trusted.

2. KPOG does what KICA should be doing. KICA does not represent property owners' interests because it is dominated by KRA.
3. KRA is motivated by greed and its sole mission is to increase its profits. KRA "will hurt the island to make money".
4. Distrust of various influential groups on the island (especially KRA) has been intensified as a result of the Andell annexation/extension proposal.
5. KRA thinks it "owns" the island and is the sole reason for property value increases, thereby, discounting the time and money property owners have contributed.
6. The Andell annexation/extension issues is not dead because KRA will find a way to do it in the future due because of significant profits to be obtained.
7. Annexation/extensions would have a detrimental effect on KI's quality of life and lower property values (however, some members of the group believe that if annexation is inevitable, it should be done intelligently).
8. Annexation/extension of the Andell tract will lead to the annexation/extension of other areas.
9. The mayor's comment to the effect that people living on KI would like a "downtown KI" demonstrates that he is out of touch with property owners' viewpoint.
10. KRA is a dictator but some think of it as a benign dictator. Some people are concerned about which group will dominate when KRA is no longer present on the island.
11. The natural habitat is being lost to development. Mitigation off the island (such as the donation to Edisto Plantation) is not acceptable.
12. The new hotel will hurt nearby property owners, flood the roads with tourists (who have no vested interest in the island) and may create a precedent for more hotels to be built.
13. Communication is confusing; there are a number of publications each with their own agenda. "Talk" was described as the most trusted and most objective publication.
14. Non-resident viewpoints are not represented, in fact, property owner viewpoints in general, are not fairly represented in island affairs.

Group Fifteen: Property Owner Directors

Conducted November 30, 1998

This group consisted of three property owner directors. The primary concerns discussed by this group include 1) Governance issues; 2) Social division in the KI community created by economic stratification; and 3) Population growth and how this will impact KI's quality of life.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Governance issues
2. Possible overcrowding due to increase of population, both long and short term..
3. Division among property owners based on club memberships, location of residence (and economic differences.
4. "Early settlers" of the island being priced out due to increased cost of living.
5. Too much distinction between island groups will exacerbate the social friction that already exists.
6. The town has not been straightforward or truthful in its dealings with KICA.
7. The town council's interference with behind the gate matters has exacerbated tension between KICA and the town.
8. Some of the conflict between KICA and the town is due to personalities and the anti-developer attitude of the Mayor.
9. KPOG's publication, Talk, is a gossip column that stirs up trouble between various groups on the island. It unfairly portrays property owners directors as being in the "developer's pocket".
10. The need to upgrade landscaping in the West End of the island and how the cost of this will be covered.
11. Deer population is out of control.
12. Increased population density due to new hotel and rentals will result in more traffic and security problems especially during the summer months.
13. No opportunity to appeal ARB decisions.
14. Off island mitigation is inappropriate.

15. The future of the Governor's Club is dependent on Resort decisions and the Resort has no allegiance to residents.

16. Some residents paid a "fortune" for their KI residence and do not want to be bothered by rules.

17. The same attorney represents KICA, KRA and the utility company.

Group Sixteen: KRA Executives

Conducted December 1, 1998

This group consisted of three KRA executives. Two currently serve on the KICA Board. One is a former director.

Quality of life concerns

1. KRA is in a position of "damned if they do; damned if they don't: because they cannot please everyone all the time. KRA resents being "beat up" by a small number of residents who do not appreciate the KRA's impact on property values and their contributions to KI's quality of life.

2. Some property owners do not understand that landscaping expenditures benefit the entire island

3. People who complain about water and other costs do not know that they have it good compared with other communities.

4. The town council is responsive to residents and not property owners in general.

5. The town intrudes beyond the gate and is bringing in elements that are not compatible with high-end development such as speed signs.

6. KRA is presented in a very distorted and negative manner by communications such as Palmetto Connection.

7. KPOG deliberately "sets up" the KICA Board with loaded questions and other strategies.

8. The town has a lot of money it doesn't know how to spend.

9. The long range implications of annexation are not fully understood.

Group Seventeen: Kiawah Island Club Members

Conducted December 2, 1998.

This group consisted of five participants, all members of the River Club.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The island will remain the same in terms of quality of life after the transition from KRA to KICA control.
2. Commercial development on Bohicket Road may harm quality of life.
3. Short-term renters are a problem and should be controlled.
4. The Resort keeps getting bigger and bigger.
5. Concern about whether VIT will force people out of the Governor's Club.
6. Future development should be better managed in terms of the number of houses constructed each year.
7. Contractors create traffic problems.
8. Bohicket Road is a safety problem.
9. The town is intrusive and potentially will harm quality of life.
10. The town meets and acts secretly.
11. Conflicts between KICA and the town have been exacerbated as a result of leadership personalities.
12. KRA has been unfairly criticized by some and is now "afraid to come out of the closet".
13. When the KRA build-out is final, it is possible that they will sell the River Club.
14. Rapid development of single homes has created loss of open space.
15. Non-residents do not receive their proportionate share of representation.
16. Annexation/extension is an emotional issue because property owners do not understand the full implications of it.
17. VIT has a "factory" mentality.

18. Landscaping resources are not equitably distributed. Some parts of the island are beautiful; others are a disgrace.

Group Eighteen: Individual Resident Property Owner

Conducted December 3, 1998

One individual was interviewed in this session. The reason for meeting with this individual separately was that his presence in another group might influence other participants because he is regarded as highly knowledgeable about KI's history and current situation.

Quality of Life Concerns:

1. Governance issues including conflicts between the town and KICA, continuing control by KRA, and the role of VIT in the island's future.
2. Concern over the future of the Development Agreement and conflict between the KICA Board and the town.
3. The current KICA Board is liberal and affluent and appears unconcerned about rising costs of living on the island.
4. KICA's belief that the current reserve fund is adequate is erroneous.
5. KICA's spending shows that it is overconcerned with the island's appearance at the expense of property owners who are not in the super-wealthy category.
6. Condo owners and early residents may organize, resulting in more conflict.
7. KRA undermines the town and VIT.
8. KRA may endanger KI's gate in the future.
9. Sociological issues related to polarization of the River Club and the Governor's Club.
10. Future of golf access that is now controlled by VIT.
11. Condition of beach and lagoons.
12. Condition of lagoon drainage system as build-out occurs.
13. Increased traffic due to population changes.
14. More crime as a result of population increases.

15. Off island problems including dangerous roads, relationship with residents of Johns Island and urban sprawl coming from Charleston.
16. The need to take control of the utility company.
17. The future of Bear Island.
18. Environmental problems including disappearance of wildlife and need to control deer population.
19. Hurricane preparedness.
20. Lethargy of some property owners who prefer not be involved.
21. Adequacy of reserve funds.
22. More families moving to the island with more young children creating a new set of problems.
23. Real estate deals that appear suspect. Owner agrees on a price with realtors help then ends up selling the property to a real estate agent. In a short period of time, the realtor sells the property at a significant profit to him/herself.

Group Nineteen: Mixed Club Members

Conducted December 4, 1998

This group consisted of seven participants. Five are members of the River Club and two are members of the Governor's Club. One participant belongs to both clubs. Participants in this group are highly satisfied with life on KI. They believe that preservation of the gate and maintaining the island as a private community is critical to the well being of property owners. They expressed concern about 1) short-term renters, 2) maintenance of lagoons; and 3) Bohicket Road. However, they think that things are "pretty good" due to the hard work of KICA, KRA and the town.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The KICA Board is doing well with the exception of inappropriate displays of anger in public settings.
2. Preservation of the gate as a symbol of privacy is critical to the island's quality of life.
3. Inappropriate level of animosity toward KRA on the part of some residents.
4. Reserve funds are needed for infrastructure needs.

5. Better preparation for hurricanes is needed.
6. The importance of keeping and guaranteeing amenities.
7. Beach erosion.
8. Short term renters create problems in general.
9. Traffic problems exacerbated by the increase of short-term renters.
10. Renters behind the second gate.
11. Concern that Governor's Club costs will increase.
12. VIT doesn't obtain citizen input.
13. New hotel will destroy wetlands and create a problem for adjacent community.
14. Bohicket Road is dangerous.
15. Uncontrolled deer population.
16. Problems with the lagoons/ponds including erosion, foul odors, and fish kills.

Group Twenty: Rental Agents

Conducted December 8, 1998

Four rental agents participated in this focus group. One is from VIT and another heads her own company. One is also a property owner.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Rental agents hear from property owners that the KICA Board is "stacked in favor of KRA".
2. Some of the older renters do not feel that KICA adequately represents them.
3. The garbage situation "is a mess". It's sometime difficult to determine who is responsible for what.
4. "Mass confusion" between KICA and the town results in "getting the run-around" when asking for information or trying to get things done.

5. People with money are allowed to do things that other people are prevented from doing. (One property owner constructed a water garden that posed a safety hazard for children).
6. Security staff can be inconsistent depending on how they're feeling that day.
7. KPOG is a productive group however, property owners are confused by all the letters they receive.
8. The new hotel will result in depreciation of properties that are adjacent to it.
9. Annexation may be an easy way for the developer to bring in a commercial area.
10. There are currently not enough swimming pools on the island.
11. Parking at the beach is a problem.
12. Current rental prices have priced out some of the older renters.
13. People who bought ten years ago are doing well however, new buyers are lucky to break even on their investment.
14. Population increases during peak season presents a problem for certain areas. Congested traffic, the number of children and bikes create problems.
15. Contractors are a security problem.
16. Gate personnel aren't consistently welcoming and friendly.
17. Billing for gate passes is cumbersome.
18. KICA does not always notify property owners or rental agents when road or other type of work is to be done.
19. The new rental agency associated with KRA is absorbing a lot of business. This is a threat to smaller rental companies.

Group Twenty-One: KICA Staff

Conducted December 9, 1998

This group consisted of six full-time KICA staff employees. Different departments were represented. Length of employment ranged from 2 years to 9 years. The general discussion focused on KICA's "corporate culture" and inconsistencies in expressed values

that make it difficult for staff members to perform. The primary inconsistency is the KICA Board's commitment to both "excellence" and short-term cost-effectiveness. Communication problems, lack of appreciation for staff members and inadequate funding are perceived as major quality of life issues. The staff believes that the KICA efforts to save money in the present will have a negative impact on the future quality of life on the island for property owners as well as employees.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. KICA Board tends to focus on short range and not long range issues.
2. KICA Board is over-involved in day-to-day KICA operations.
3. KICA Board is "penny wise and pound foolish" in its financial decisions.
4. KICA Board wants a first-class staff and first class job performance but does not understand this cannot be done with inadequate funding.
5. Some KICA Board members are rude and abusive when communicating with staff members.
6. Lack of communication between KICA departments.
7. Staff salaries are less than those of comparable positions in other resorts. The KICA "brags" about this in its reports.
8. Not all department heads are knowledgeable in their areas.
9. Staff members lack the equipment and supplies needed to do their jobs.
10. The staff gets "caught in the middle" between property owners and KICA.
11. Staff members are forced to work on a "need to know" basic which leaves them ill-equipped when dealing with property owner questions and complaints.
12. Staff does not feel appreciated by KICA management or property owners.
13. Property owners view staff as an extension of their assessment tax and do not respect them.
14. KICA Board does not support staff when people complain about a staff member doing his/her job.
15. There are not enough landscaping staff employees to keep up with the growth of the island.

16. The future survival of the KICA landscaping division is a concern.
17. Too much reliance on outside landscaping help.
18. Expanding the KICA staff would result in better landscaping and save money in the long run.
19. VIT employees have little respect for gate personnel.
20. Property owners call their contractors "guests" to avoid paying the \$10.00 pass fee.
21. Poor communication and cooperation among influential groups is potentially harmful to the island's quality of life.

Group Twenty-Two: Department Heads

Conducted December 9, 1998

This group consisted of the heads of five departments, and one assistant manager who substituted for his department head. Length of employment ranged from 2 years to 10 years. The General Manager was not included.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Joe Bunting is the "best thing that has happened to KICA. He should be given more control and strong incentives to remain for a long period of time.
2. Development and expansion leads to frustration because there are not enough resources to perform services.
3. Personal conflicts among directors are upsetting and counterproductive.
4. Overall, KICA Board "cries poor". This results in inadequate funding.
5. Certain directors have a tendency not to approve funding.
6. Communication between influential groups on the island is a problem because they all have different agendas.
7. Board members are overly-involved in politics, personal disagreements and personalities.
8. KICA employees have to be sensitive to the needs of four groups: KICA, KRA, Resort and the Town.

9. KICA Board does not back up KICA employees in conflicts with property owners or other situations.
10. New KICA Board members need training or orientation to bring them up to date.
11. The Board tends to micromanage and this is not effective because they do not know exactly what is going on with daily operations.
12. Transition creates apprehension because of the possible battles for control that will ensue.
13. The Board needs to loosen up reserves so KICA departments can obtain the equipment they need to perform their jobs.
14. The Board does not take staff input about understaffing and other problems seriously.
15. Hurricane evacuation off the island would be extremely difficult given road conditions.
16. Some new property owners are young, aggressive and think they're "above the law".
17. Continued development may endanger the natural habitat.
18. Staff works well with the town and other groups yet bears label of not being cooperative with other entities.

Group Twenty-Three: Residents C

Conducted December 11, 1998

This group consisted of four residents. One participant is a recently elected town council member and another is a member of the covenant compliance committee. Another participant is married to a KPOG leader. Another participant had volunteered for the initial long-range planning committee and still wants to be a part of it. One participant is a member of the River Club.

This group seemed to take the "high road" in focusing on major, long-range issues throughout most of the discussion. The primary concern of this group is that there be a framework or system for making democratic decisions regarding the future of the island. They are concerned about the present leadership's continued conflicts between influential groups on the island. In general, it was agreed that the island is not "big enough for three competing groups". Future hopes for the island mentioned by people in this group include peaceful co-existence, working together toward a common vision, well managed change and respect and trust for all people involved.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The political framework needed to make democratic decisions about the island's future is not in place at the present time.
2. Poor communication and cooperation among influential groups is potentially harmful to the island's quality of life.
3. Conflicts between the town and KICA.
4. A "distinct" power struggle between the Resort and KRA.
5. Fear of town gaining power by increased number of voters and broadening access to beach.
6. KICA Board leadership lacks political skills and is too short-tempered.
7. Some KICA Board members tend to think in terms of past problems and not how the island should move forward.
8. The Board has a CEO mentality that is not constructive in political situations,
The Board tends to act without engaging in enough planning.
9. KRA has a legacy of control.
10. KRA has too many covert discussions and tends to think in paranoid terms.
11. Property owners are "hopelessly confused" about the social and political structures on the island and "who does what for whom".
12. Annexation/extension cannot be discussed logically now it has become an emotional issue.
13. Keeping the island beautiful, land management and environmental issues are primary concerns.
14. Landscaping services are not equitably distributed and the main problem is money.
15. The way KRA has marketed the River Club has created tension with members and non-members.
16. Some of the "super-rich" property owners do not want anything to do with the community.

Group Twenty-Four: Bill Goodwin

February 1999

Bill Goodwin prefaced his comments by mentioning that since he does not live at Kiawah he is not familiar with all the quality of life issues. His primary concern is that the governing bodies determine a direction for the future of the island that balances environmental, aesthetic and commercial interests.

1. Although the Board is doing a good job, they should recognize that it is not possible to satisfy all the divergent groups on the island.
2. Too much emphasis on efficiency (to hold costs down) will be damaging in the long run if the infrastructure is harmed.
3. Property owners need to be aware of their responsibility in maintaining quality of life on the island.
4. A small group of residents who represent a small minority of property owners are trying to control the island's future.
5. Some property owners concerned with environmental issues take a narrow, uninformed perspective that does not address the whole picture and the need for balance of environmental, aesthetic and commercial interests.
6. Mr. Goodwin commented that last time he was on the island, the general condition of landscaping was not satisfactory.
7. Future traffic problems can be expected if new roads and entrances to the island are not developed.

Group Twenty-Five: Non-Residents

Conducted April 1, 1999

Only one person attended this session. I decided to interview him because he had come for the morning group (which had been canceled due to lack of participants), and was courteous enough to return to the afternoon group. It was also possible that more people would arrive late.)

Quality of Life Concerns

1. The recent Annual meeting left this non-resident feeling "great concern" about the future of the island because of the behavior among board members he observed. He also mentioned that the meeting was not conducted in a professional manner and one board member, in particular, "sounded off" inappropriately.
2. Over-commercialization of the island may result in it's losing its unique character and becoming another Ocean City or Hilton Head.
3. Renters abuse the dunes, ignore rules such as no bikes on the boardwalk and in general, show little respect for the island.
4. It is not clear who is responsible for enforcing island rules, the town or KICA.
5. Although the deer issue is being studied, there are several other environmental issues that should be addressed.
6. Beach security is inadequate.
7. This property owner felt he was treated in a non-courteous manner by Sandcastle personnel over obtaining an identification card to use the facility.
8. The island is in need of more attractive landscaping. There may be too much emphasis on retaining a "natural look" by restricting use of non-indigenous plants.
9. Not enough information as been disseminated about the new hotel.

Group Twenty-Six: Non-Residents

Conducted April 7, 1999

Executive Summary

Two people attended this session, one male and one female. One has owned property for approximately 10 years and the other has owned property for approximately 8 years. Both expressed similar concerns about the future of the island.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Growing commercialization of the island resulting in an increase in traffic and people.
2. Potential loss of the two distinguishing features of the island: willdlife and the sense of serenity that comes from its isolation and aspects of the master plan that promote a peaceful, quiet environment.
3. Conflicts among the leadership of the island cause both confusion and concern.

4. Concern about new hotel leading to greater commercialization and the development of a bigger "straw market" than the current one.
5. Concern that the new hotel may eventually hurt property values at Parkside.
6. Concern that building of the new hotel is a "symptom" of a general shift from property owners who appreciate and enjoy the unique character of Kiawah to those only interested in the island for investment reasons.
7. Concern about the development of the Andell tract, especially with respect to addition of a mall or shopping area.
8. Both recall receiving a letter from two Board members endorsing a candidate for the recent election and wondered if this was proper.

Group Twenty-Seven: Non-Residents

Conducted April 7, 1999

Executive Summary

A couple attended this session. They have owned a beachfront 3 bedroom condo on the island for approximately 20 years and they spend approximately six to eight weeks a year on the island. They do not plan to become full-time residents in the future. They are largely satisfied with property value increases and believe that the island development has been orderly and consistent with the master plan. They recognize that the island is changing and perceive this as inevitable. Their attitude toward growth is positive. On the other hand, they do not want the island to become another Hilton Head and believe strongly that the master plan should continue to guide island development. Their greatest concern is that short term rental restrictions will be established in the future.

Quality of Life Concerns

1. Concern that there will be some restrictions on their capacity to rent their property in the future and that short-term rentals might even be banned.
2. Concern that at some point in the future the island will become "another Hilton Head" as a result of crowding and traffic.
3. Bohicket Road is dangerous and needs attention so that people can travel more safely to Charleston. (However, his wife was not completely in favor of this because it would bring more traffic to the island).
4. The lack of good restaurants located in proximity to the island.
5. Concern about new hotel leading to greater commercialization and the development of a bigger straw market" than the current one.
6. Some property owners are allowed to "get around" ARB regulations.
7. Concern that future development of Andell Tract may have a negative impact on Kiawah.
8. The two commercial groups on the island seem to be in conflict with each other.