H-2-.Sunday, December 13,1987/THE COURIER-NEWS

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Two large parks take one-third

of Mountainside
By CYNTHIA HELLERMAN
Real Estate editor v'VJy ^

^Mountainsidei.j suffersi i
same identity problem as much of the
state: Too many people have only a
passing acquaintance with'it. ';',•* ••"•'.:.: ••'
But the borough has tried to see to
it that motorists passing by oh Inter-
state 78 and Route 22 receive a favor-

able impression. ' -^A:^:;

; '':•')".-.
"The zoning regulations prohibit a
lot of the commercialization in strips
along Route 22," said KathyTqland,
who moved to Mountainside'from
Westfield four years ago. '^No glaring
neon lights. The zoning board and
planning board are adhering strongly

CNm«pbyJ«m«»W«i

S to past practices, keeping Mouritain-3
Side very dignified." j^fi v t i r?Z <••-:;'*•

. ' Interstate 78 is surrounded by the
vwoods of the IWatchung Reservation.;
Vas it slices through the borough, and
.there is a wooded buffer zone along
much of Route 22 through Mountain-
side./ sK^rlh - • :.;;<•. A

: The trees seem to act as a sound

:

barrier, creating a quiet atmosphere
for the suburban streets beyond."It
was this ambiance that led 35-year
resident John Ekstedt to remain in

the borough after he retired. •;>;?

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• "It's' a quiet town," Ekstedt said
recently, while walking down Central
Avenue. Although less than half a =
mile from the bustle of the highway,
the only sound was the rustle of fallen '•]
'leaves.;:r:v:;

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": v'\i. A •••••;

'Mountainside may be one of the
most densely wooded communities in
Central Jersey. About one-third of the •
borough is parkland — the Watchung
Reservation and Echo Lake Park. Al-
most all of the borough sits on a
glacier bed that extended form Perth
Amboy to Belvidere. In Colonial
times, it was on the old Minisink
Trail, which ran from Clay Pit Creek
throughWestfield to Branch Mills.

Mountainside broke away from
Westfield in a taxpayer's revolt in
1895 as the last of several subdivi-
sions of the large West Fields of Eli-
zabethtown, yxQtediatfSij (Other
towns that were paffof the original
municipality are Westfield, Plain-
field, Cranford and Scotch Plains.)

Residents in three sections of what
was then northern Westfield — Lo-

Trees in the parks and residential areas In^puntainside buffer sound from Interstate 78 and Route 22.

Courier-News photo by Ed Pagliarini

]^I ^ pay taxes' for
services in Westfield such as street
lights, sewers, fire and police
protection. .

Mountainside counts among its for-
mer residents a colorful 19th century
counterfeiter named Henry Krawfit,
who specialized in $20 bills. He was
so skilled, that when finally caught,
he was offered a suspended sentence
in exchange for designing legal mon-
ey. He refused the offer and elected to
spend six years in jail.

MOUNTAINSIDE
Town name: Mountainside
Location: Central Union County
Square miles: 4.1
Founded: 1895 u- -, •.•••.;.-. •:•*.
Population: 7,060
Government: Mayor-council.
Robert Viglianti will take office
as mayor Jan. 1. • . •
School system: One elementary-
school — Deerfield School on
School Drive at Central Avenue
— for grades K-8. Older stu-

Regional High School in
Springfield.
Tax rate: $2.22 per $100 as-
sessed valuation. Average tax
bill approximately $3,300.
Average home price: $200,000
(town estimate).
Shopping: A small shopping
district with deli and profession-
al offices on Mountain Avenue.
Don't miss: Watching Reserva-

tion and Echo Lake county
parks, especially the fitness
trails. Mountainside's many
special interest clubs, recre-
ational activities.