If You’re Thinking of Living in:

Mountainside

Mountainside residents live one of the three lakes at Echo Lake Park, a 147-acre recreation area.

By RACHELLE GARBARINE

Mountainside, the business district of Mountainside with busy Route 22. But there a series of numbered roads run along Union County borough that often a world, and a real presence of homes toward on the Watchung mountains.

Mountainside has the Watchung Reservation’s 1,940 acres and most of the 147-acre Echo Lake Park, with its three large lakes, lies within the borough’s borders—making nearly two-thirds of its four square miles parkland.

"It’s like entering another world, serene and pretty," said Gerard Gallagher, who married Madeleine, lived in Mountainside for 20+ years except for a brief job transfer to Washington in 1982.

"When we came back it was like coming home again," he said.

Mountainside, the pace is unhurried and customs are a bit old-fashioned, by choice. Sidewalks and street lights are rare, the grocer makes home deliveries and papers are put out in honor for the annual Little Leaguers parade. And although many residents like the borough to an isolated country barrow, they revel in the fact that they can drive to Manhattan just 24 miles away.

In the 1970s, to ease traffic on Route 22, the state Department of Transportation wanted to build a cloverleaf at New Providence Road, the borough’s busiest intersection. But residents, who saw it as an invasion on their tranquil setting, protested. The cloverleaf was not built.

Mountainside is more than just a pretty place. It has the Children’s Specialized Hospital, and until ’90 it’s light industrial and commercial business base, most of them along Route 22. As a result, the borough has a low, at an average of $183,000, the lowest in Union County.

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