

# New Resident Survey

Final Report

September 15, 2020

# New Resident Survey Background

---

- “New Resident” survey was sent to 245 new Mendham Township households on June 15, 2020, as part of Ad-Hoc Communications Committee efforts to better understand why people move to Mendham Township
- Survey details:
  - Sent to all new resident households who moved to Mendham Township between January 1, 2018 and May 31, 2020.
  - Sent with cover letter and pre-addressed return envelope; internet option for the survey was also provided in the cover letter
  - Survey consisted of 10 questions, including both open-ended and closed ended; target completion time was 5-10 minutes
  - Survey was anonymous, no contact information was requested
  - New residents given deadline of July 17, 2020 (one month) to complete survey

# New Resident Cover Letter + Survey



June 15, 2020

Dear New Mendham Township Resident,

Welcome to our community! We hope that you and your family are healthy and weathering the current challenging times well.

As a new member of our community, you have a unique perspective that we are interested in learning more about. Specifically, the Mendham Township Committee is interested in understanding what attracts new residents to our community and how we can better promote Mendham Township.

Enclosed is a brief survey and pre-addressed return envelope that is being sent to every new resident who has moved to Mendham Township since 2018. Please complete and return the survey in the accompanying return envelope or complete it online at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDPK376](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDPK376). Please only complete one survey - paper or online - per household, and do not share the survey link with others.

All surveys are anonymous, and results will be aggregated. No individual results will be reported. Please help us learn more about what attracts new residents to our town by completing this survey as follows:

- Read the questions carefully, and answer the questions in order
- **Complete the survey online or via the enclosed pre-addressed envelope by Friday, July 17.**
- Please only complete one survey per household. Do not make copies of the survey or distribute it to anyone outside of your household.

Thank you in advance for your help with this important initiative! Questions can be addressed to: Mendham Township Committeewoman Amalia Duarte at: [aduarte@mendhamtownship.org](mailto:aduarte@mendhamtownship.org).

Sincerely,

Mendham Township Ad Hoc Marketing Communications Committee

## New Resident Survey

The Mendham Township Committee wants to better understand what attracts new residents our community. Please complete the survey below or online ([www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDPK376](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDPK376)) and only complete one survey per household. Thank you for taking a few minutes to answer this survey about your experience in selecting Mendham Township as your new hometown!

### 1. When did you move to Mendham Township?

- During 2018
- During 2019
- During 2020

### 2. Describe your family (check all that apply)

- Young children (infant - preschool)
- Elementary/Middle school age children
- High School age children
- Adult children living at home
- Adult children living elsewhere
- No children
- Other (please specify):

### 3. From where did you move to Mendham Township?

- A city in New Jersey (e.g. Morristown, Hoboken or Montclair)
- Another New Jersey suburban community
- New York City
- Another town/city in New York State (other than New York City)
- Another state (besides New Jersey or New York State)
- Another country
- Other (please specify):

### 4. What other communities did you strongly consider moving to?

### 5. What were the three most important factors that influenced your decision to move to Mendham Township vs. other places?

Most important factor:  
 Second most important factor:  
 Third most important factor:

### 6. How important were each of the following factors in your decision to move to Mendham Township versus other places you were considering?

	This was VERY IMPORTANT	This was FAIRLY IMPORTANT	This was SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	This was MINIMALLY IMPORTANT	This was NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
Size of town	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to workplace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to train station	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of public K-8 schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of public high school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small-town environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability/quality of parks, hiking trails, and open space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability/quality of community services (e.g. library, recreation, sports)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to family or friends in the area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific attributes of the house purchased	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Property tax levels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Input from real estate agent or relocation company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to New York City	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to Morristown	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grew up in Mendham/nearby	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 7. How satisfied are you with your experience in Mendham Township so far?

Very Satisfied      Satisfied      Neutral      Dissatisfied      Very Dissatisfied

### 8. In what ways did Mendham Township not meet your expectations?

### 9. How likely are you to recommend moving to Mendham Township to others?

Definitely Yes      Probably Yes      Uncertain      Probably No      Definitely No

### 10. Why would you recommend/not recommend moving to Mendham Township?

# New Resident Survey Completion

---

- 60 surveys were completed, a 24% completion rate (10x the typical completion rate for unsolicited surveys)
- 37 paper surveys were mailed in (62%) and 23 were completed online (38%)
- The average completion time of the online surveys was just over five minutes

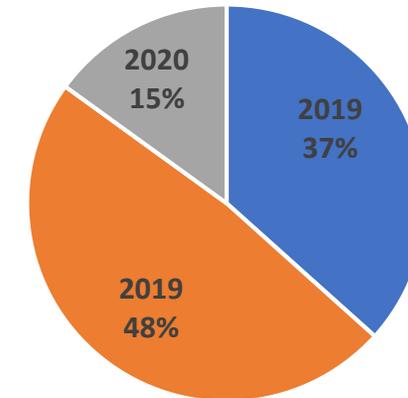
# Results: Survey Demographics

- Respondent arrivals in Mendham Township were well distributed

Year Moved to Mendham Township

**Q1: When did you move to Mendham Township?**

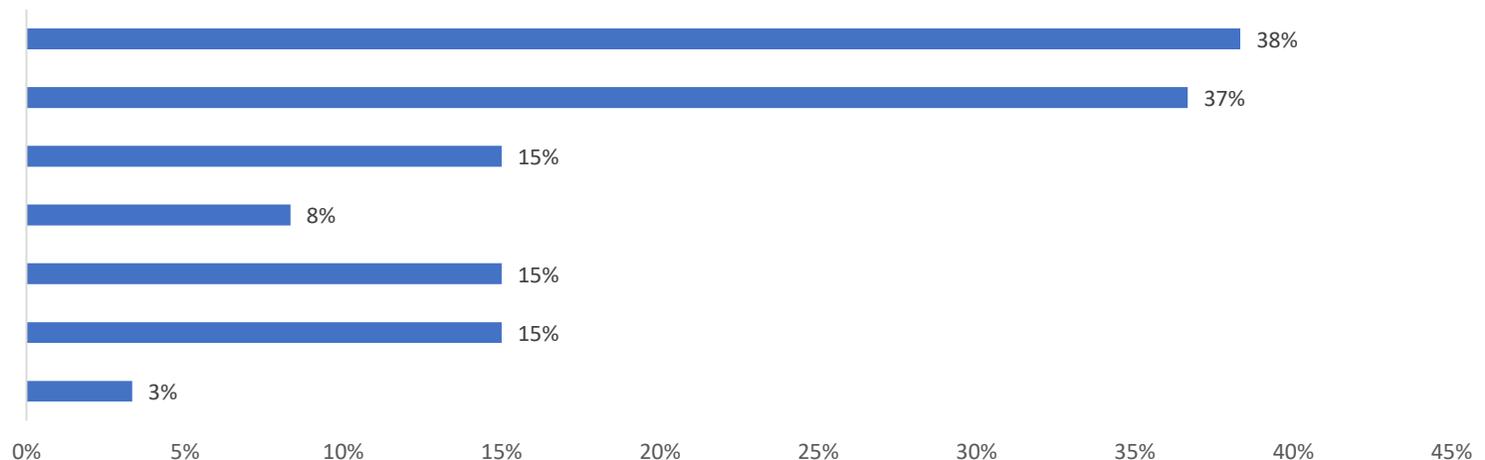
- 2018: 37%
- 2019: 48%
- 2020: 15%



- Nearly three-fourths (70%) of new residents have children under 18

**Q2. Describe your family (check all that apply)**

- Young children (infant-preschool) 38%
- Elementary/Middle school age children 37%
- High school age children 15%
- Adult children living at home 8%
- Adult children living elsewhere 15%
- No children 15%
- Other (please specify) 3%



Note: percentages total to more than 100% because residents could check more than one answer

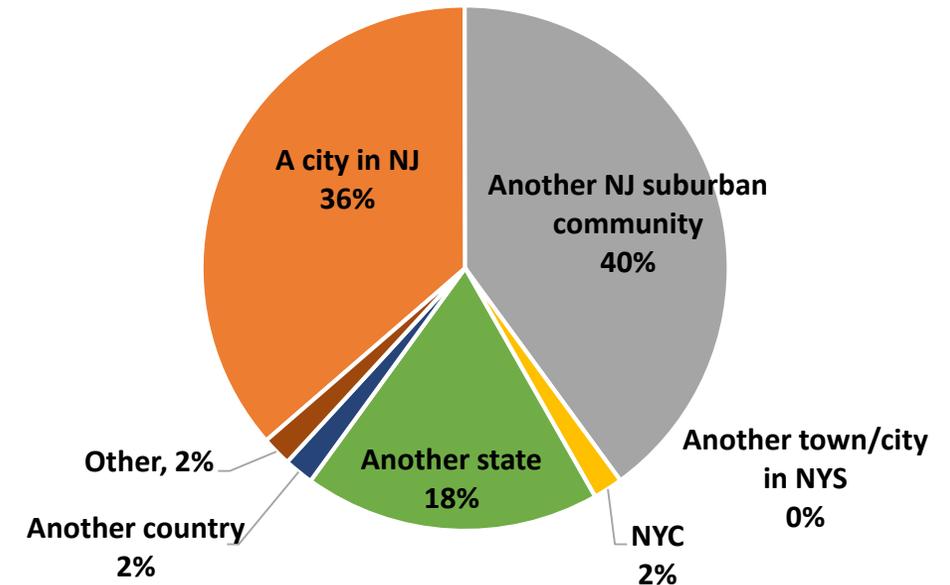
# Results: Survey Demographics

- Three-quarters (77%) of new residents moved to Mendham Township from another New Jersey city or town
- New York City (3%) and the rest of New York State (0%) was not a big source of Township new residents

## Q3: From where did you move to Mendham Township?

- A city in New Jersey (e.g. Morristown, Hoboken, or Montclair) 35%
- Another New Jersey suburban community 42%
- New York City 3%
- Another town/city in New York State (other than New York City) 0%
- Another state (besides New Jersey or New York State) 17%
- Another country 2%
- Other (please specify) 2%

From where did you move to Mendham Township

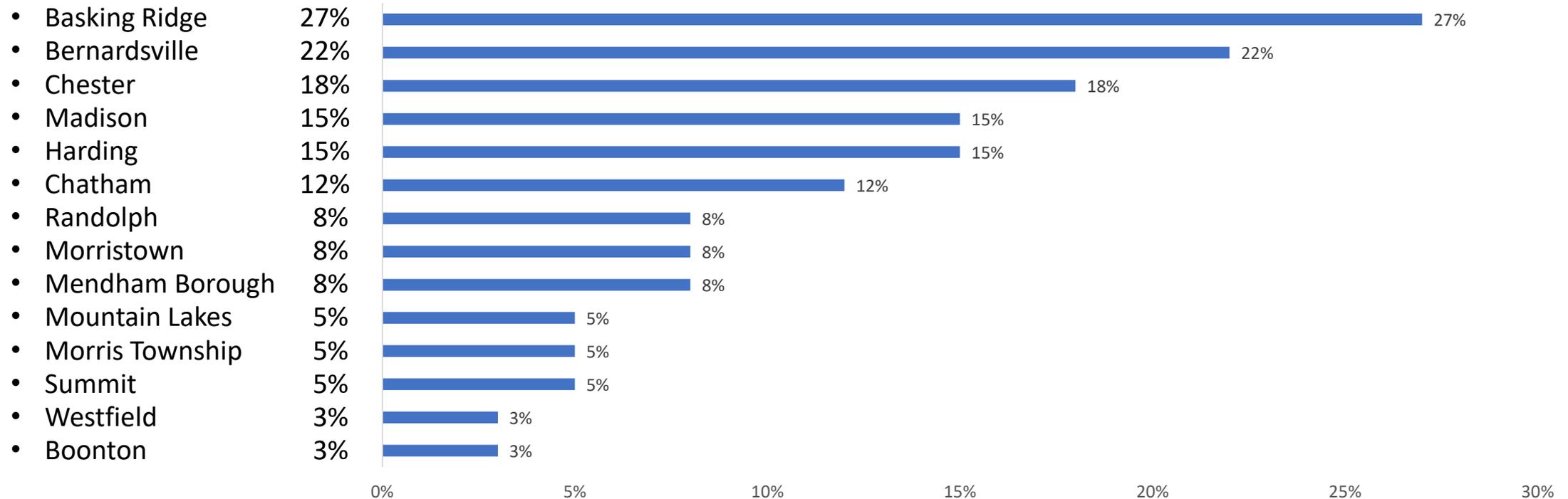


# Results: Who is Mendham Township's Competition?

- Very few new residents looked at *just* Mendham Township: 90% listed at least one other town they considered
- Basking Ridge (27%), Bernardsville (22%), and Chester (18%) are the communities Township new residents considered moving to most, followed by Madison (15%), Harding (15%), and Chatham (12%)

## Q4: What other communities did you strongly consider moving to? (open-ended, respondents could list as many as they wanted)

Communities considered by more than one respondent (% of respondents considering):



(22 additional communities were considered by just one respondent each)

# Most Important Factors in Choosing Mendham Township

- When asked open-ended (no answers listed to choose from) what their most important factor for choosing Mendham Township over other communities, “schools” was the top answer, listed on 28/56 (48%) of surveys

**Q5: What were the three most important factors that influenced your decision to move to Mendham Township vs. other places?**

Most important factor:

Second most important factor:

Third most important factor:

- Compilation of the “Most important factor” from every survey:

- 1. Schools
- 1. Schools
- 1. Schools
- 1. The home we purchased
- 1. Schools
- 1. Schools - IB Program
- 1. Quaint, small town
- 1. small condo
- 1. Right house
- 1. Open space / trees / parks
- 1. Schools
- 1. Space/lot size

- 1. Quality of schools
- 1. School
- 1. Land / house space
- 1. Location: relation to Morristown
- 1. Schools
- 1. Quality of Schools
- 1. Educational system
- 1. Quiet areas
- 1. Acreage
- 1. Space/Property
- 1. Schools
- 1. Schools

- 1. We grew up here
- 1. Proximity to work
- 1. Home price
- 1. Schools
- 1. Location
- 1. more open space
- 1. High school
- 1. Safe
- 1. Great schools
- 1. Style of house
- 1. Schools
- 1. Peacefulness of small town

- 1. Schools
- 1. School system
- 1. Small town
- 1. House/Community
- 1. Schools
- 1. Proximity to school
- 1. schools
- 1. our property
- 1. neighborhood culture
- 1. School
- 1. Home & property

- 1. Property
- 1. School System
- 1. Great schools
- 1. Schools / Special Services Program
- 1. Friends from WMMHS live in Mendham
- 1. Public schools
- 1. Location (close to parents and work)
- 1. School district
- 1. land
- 1. House
- 1. Space --> no neighbors right on top of us

# Most Important Factor in Choosing Mendham Township

- “Most important factor” answer was highly correlated to whether or not residents had younger children

**Q5: What were the three most important factors that influenced your decision to move to Mendham Township vs. other places?**

Most important factor:

Second most important factor:

Third most important factor:

## New residents with children younger than high school age

- |                         |                         |                                     |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Schools              | 1. Quality of schools   | 1. Property                         |
| 1. Schools              | 1. School               | 1. School System                    |
| 1. Schools              | 1. Land / house space   | 1. Great schools                    |
| 1. Schools              | 1. Schools              | 1. Schools/Special Services Program |
| 1. Schools - IB Program | 1. Quality of Schools   | 1. Public schools                   |
| 1. Quaint, small town   | 1. schools              | 1. Location (close to parents/work) |
| 1. Schools              | 1. neighborhood culture | 1. Schools                          |
| 1. School system        | 1. school               | 1. Safe                             |
| 1. House/Community      | 1. Space/Property       | 1. Great schools                    |
| 1. Schools              | 1. We grew up here      | 1. Location                         |
| 1. Schools              | 1. Land                 | 1. School district                  |
| 1. Schools              | 1. Schools              | 1. Schools                          |

## New residents with children in high school only

- 1. Open space / trees / parks
- 1. Proximity to school
- 1. Location: relation to Morristown
- 1. our property
- 1. High school
- 1. Quiet areas

## New residents with no school age kids at home

- 1. The home we purchased
- 1. Proximity to work
- 1. Home price
- 1. small condo
- 1. Right house
- 1. Educational system
- 1. Acreage
- 1. Small town
- 1. Friends from WMMHS in Mendham
- 1. more open space
- 1. Style of house
- 1. House
- 1. Home & property
- 1. Space - no neighbors right on top of us
- 1. Space/lot size
- 1. Peacefulness of small town

# Other Important Factors in Choosing Mendham Township

- Besides **schools** (42 mentions), these important factors were the most often chosen: **large lots** (14), **neighborhoods/community** (11), **small town/rural feel** (11), **open space/nature** (9), **proximity to work** (9), **proximity to NYC** (6), **taxes** (6), **safety** (5)

- Schools
- Walkable neighborhood with kids
- Pleasant suburb but still easy access to city + all necessary stores

- Schools
- Rural feel
- Work proximity

- Schools
- Open space
- Style of home

- The home we purchased
- The greenery -- nature
- safety/proximity to work

- Schools
- Value of home
- Community

- Schools - IB Program
- Sense of Community
- Proximity to NYC

- Quaint, small town
- school
- ideal house

- small condo

- Right house

- Open space / trees / parks
- Access to schools (public and private)
- Proximity to transit

- Quality of schools
- Proximity to work (max 30 minutes each)
- size of home/amenities/value for price

- Schools
- Outdoor space
- Proximity to NYC

- Location, especially in relation to Morristown
- Size of lot/space in yard
- Strength of political party affiliation

- Schools
- Lot size
- Price

- Quality of Schools
- Reputation of town
- Finding the right home/property for our family

- Educational system
- Community/safety
- Healthy/clean environment

- Quiet areas
- Access to larger home lots

- Acreage
- Affordability
- Distance to Work

- Space/Property
- Schools
- Taxes

- We grew up here
- Schools
- Open land/big yard

- Proximity to work
- Quality of housing
- Proximity to recreation

- Home price
- School district
- Neighborhood reputation

- Location

- Location
- School rating
- Property Taxes

- more open space
- tax base
- town size

- High school
- resale value

- Safe
- schools
- small town suburban

- Great schools
- Length of commute to work
- quiet neighborhood

- Style of house
- Pool
- Property

- Schools
- Proximity to work
- Community/diversity

- School system
- Proximity to work (Bridgewater)
- Reputation of town (safety, best places to raise kids)

- Small town
- Attractive
- Proximity to Morristown

- House/Community we found (Brookrace)
- Schools (Blue Ribbon)
- Proximity to 287

- Space - no neighbors right on top of us
- Proximity to train
- Size of home for money

- School
- Privacy
- Commute to NYC

- Land / house space
- schools
- Proximity to nature

- Schools
- Taxes
- Safety

- Proximity to school
- Town
- Convenience

- Schools
- Outdoor space, community based-programs
- low key downtown, locally owned stores

- schools
- land availability

- Location (close to parents and work)
- Public Services (i.e. schools)
- Small Town Feel

- School district
- School district
- School district

- Public schools
- Community/Neighborhood
- Housing

- land
- schools
- quiet

- Home & property
- Proximity to friends and family
- Small town charm but NYC accessible

- neighborhood culture
- school district
- affordable taxes

- school
- large space
- rural feeling

- Property
- Schools

- School System
- Safe / Low Crime
- Neighborhood/small town feel

- Great schools
- Nice neighborhoods

- our property
- community ties
- neighborhood

- Schools / Special Services Program
- Proximity to Morristown
- Housing availability

- I have friends from high school (WMMHS) who live in Mendham
- It's relatively close to NYC where my kids live
- I loved living in Mendham in the late 70's while in high school

- house
- property
- proximity to morristown

- Schools
- Old boss lives in Borough
- We always loved the feel of Mendham when we visited -husband

- peacefulness of small town
- aesthetics
- taxes

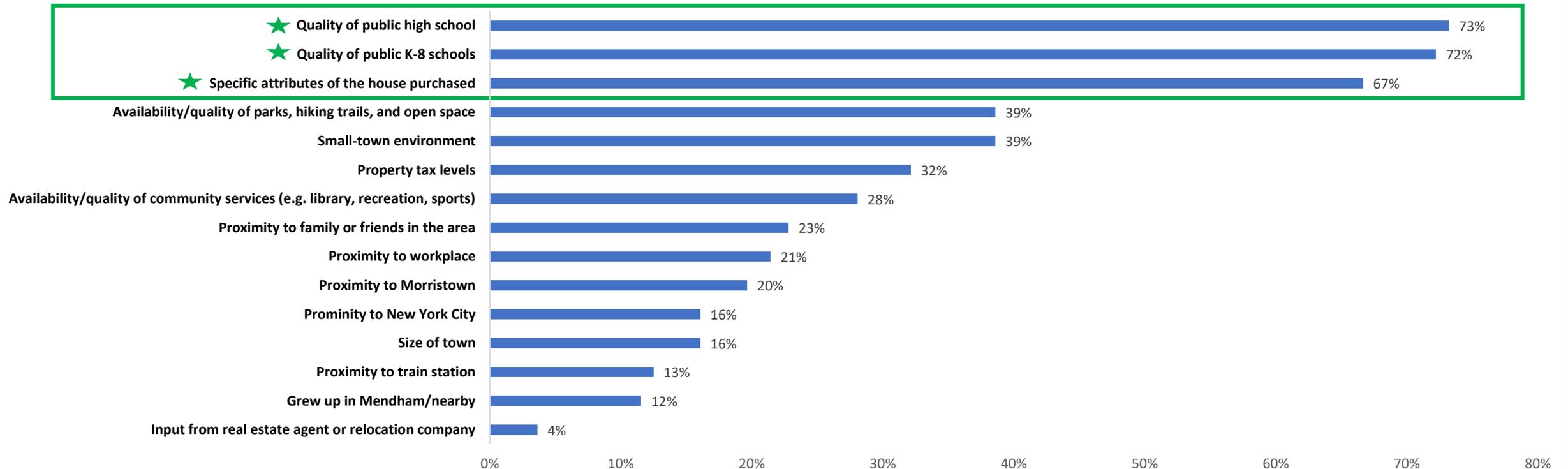
# Factors Most Important to Choosing Mendham Township

- The three factors most considered “very important” in choosing Mendham Township were quality of public high school (73%), quality of public K-8 schools (72%), and specific attributes of the house purchases (67%)

**Q6: How important were each of the following factors in your decision to move to Mendham Township vs. other places you were considering?**

Very Important / Fairly Important / Somewhat Important / Minimally Important / Not at all Important

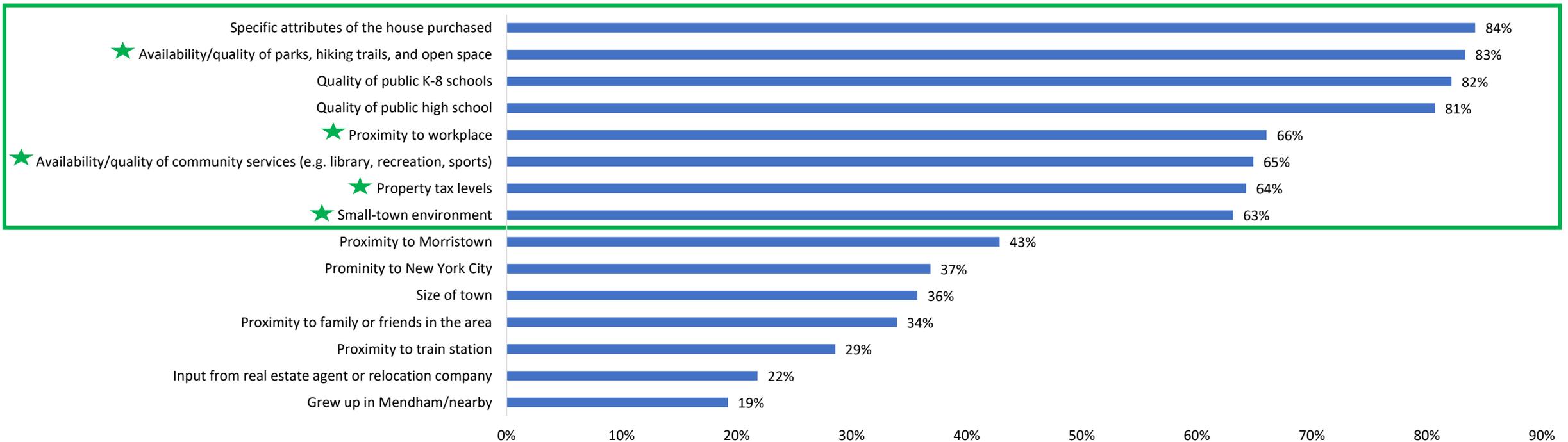
**% Indicating "Very Important" in their decision to move to Mendham Township versus other places they were considering**



# Factors Most Important to Choosing Mendham Township

- The factors most considered “**very important**” or “**fairly important**” in choosing Mendham Township were specific attributes of the house purchases (84%), availability/quality of parks, hiking trails, and open space (83%), quality of public K-8 schools (82%), quality of public high schools (81%), proximity to workplace (66%), availability/quality of community services (e.g. library, recreation, sports) (65%), property tax levels (64%), small-town environment (63%)

**% Indicating "Very Important" or "Fairly Important" in their decision to move to Mendham Township versus other places they were considering**



# Factors Most Important to Choosing Mendham Township

- Growing up in Mendham/nearby was not a factor for most people
- Proximity to Morristown was more important than proximity to New York City or a train station
- Small-town environment was much more important than the size of the town itself
- Availability/quality of parks, hiking trails, and open space is “fairly/very important” to 8 out of 10 new residents
- Proximity to workplace is “fairly/very important” to two-thirds of new residents

Factor	Very Important	Fairly Important	Somewhat Important	Minimally Important	Not at All Important	% Very or Fairly Important
Specific attributes of the house purchased	67%	18%	11%	4%	2%	84%
Quality of public K-8 schools	72%	11%	6%	0%	11%	83%
Quality of public high school	73%	9%	7%	0%	11%	82%
Availability/quality of parks, hiking trails, and open space	39%	42%	12%	2%	5%	81%
Proximity to workplace	21%	45%	20%	7%	7%	66%
Availability/quality of community services (e.g. library, recreation, sports)	28%	37%	21%	12%	2%	65%
Property tax levels	32%	32%	29%	2%	5%	64%
Small-town environment	39%	25%	26%	7%	4%	63%
Proximity to Morristown	20%	23%	30%	16%	11%	43%
Proximity to family or friends in the area	23%	14%	32%	16%	16%	37%
Proximity to New York City	16%	20%	30%	16%	18%	36%
Size of town	16%	18%	36%	18%	13%	34%
Proximity to train station	13%	16%	23%	25%	23%	29%
Input from real estate agent or relocation company	4%	18%	11%	27%	40%	22%
Grew up in Mendham/nearby	12%	8%	10%	4%	67%	19%

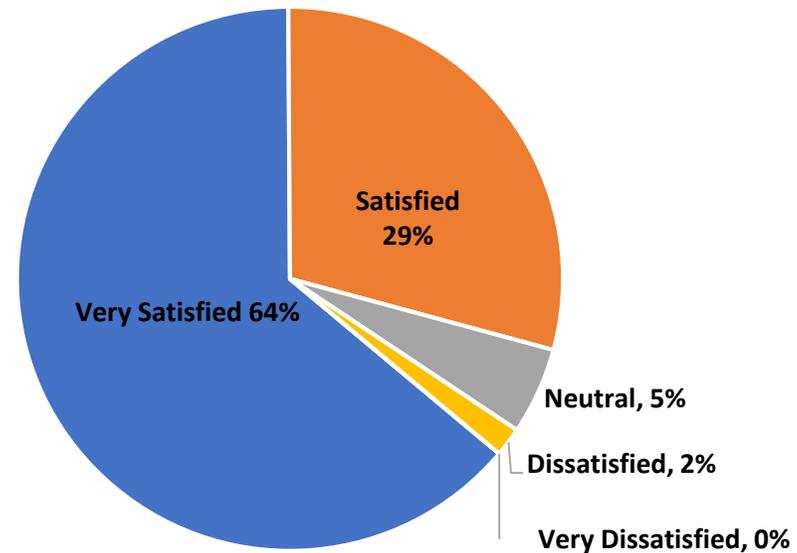
# Satisfaction with Mendham Township

- New residents are very much satisfied with Mendham Township, with 93% “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” and nearly two-thirds (64%) “Very Satisfied”

## Q7: How satisfied are you with your experience in Mendham Township so far?

Very Satisfied	64%
Satisfied	29%
Neutral	5%
Dissatisfied	2%
Very Dissatisfied	0%

How satisfied are you with your experience in Mendham Township so far?



# Ways in Which Mendham Township Did Not Meet Expectations

- Half of survey respondents did not list any ways in which Mendham Township did not meet expectations
- The most common topics listed were lack of shopping/dining options, taxes, diversity, township services, and roads/driving

## Q8: In what ways did Mendham Township not meet your expectations (open-ended)

### Shopping (listed on 7 surveys, 12%)

- We would like greater variety and quality of dining options downtown
- Downtown area needs more business activity and restaurant options
- The only downfall is the distance to most major shopping areas
- I find myself in Chester more often due to restaurants, shopping, etc. Wish there were more to do.
- Lack of dining options
- We wish there were more experiences for young people, like wineries or breweries
- CVS closes at 6:00 on Saturday

### Diversity (5 surveys, 8%)

- super happy and grateful to be here. would love some more diversity
- Having moved from a diverse city, I have been somewhat disappointed at the lack of tolerance for welcoming people of color and different backgrounds. Our experience is that people are generally unaware of their biases (and how comments are inappropriate). Additional initiatives supported by the Township to help bring awareness and understanding so that the community is one that is welcoming to people of color.
- Would like to see a more diverse local government
- Diversity! My kids struggle to have play mates.
- Lack of diversity in terms of Chinese/Korean/Japanese Americans. As a Korean American (professional working in NYC) I've been confused for one of the nail salon workers, Chinese restaurant worker and an au Pair on multiple occasions. When we saw higher "asian" diversity figures in the schools we didn't realize they were mostly Indians. We may move from the town due to these ongoing experiences.

### Taxes (4 surveys, 7%)

- Taxes were higher than expected. We also would like to see more community events and activities -- the community is not that open/friendly without kids in school.
- school tax base increased and looks like it will continue to increase
- Taxes too high. Neighborhood streets not maintained
- taxes a bit high.

### Township Services (4 surveys, 7%)

- Over policing, township services unavailable during pandemic. Voicemail full for months now.
- Tax bill is sent too late.
- Sewer and water issue in neighborhood related to Twp.
- Trash pickup. Brush pickup.

### Roads / Driving (3 surveys, 5%)

- Some drivers don't obey residential speed limits (25 mph!) Extreme road noise from county roads.
- Traffic on Tempe Wick far exceeds what we were expecting. Speeding is also a concern
- The speeding & excessively large vehicles on my street/commercial noise too early - landscapers, tree removal

### Misc.

- Distance to highways, Mendham Twp. community is very spread apart - hard to build relationships initially
- We do wish very much there was a town pool
- Mendham does not have any good sports facilities or club for families
- Lack of diversity, taxes increasing, better suited for stay at home moms than working moms (e.g. time of events) pretty far from basics (vs. Bridgewater) (e.g. multiple grocery stores, Starbucks, fast food) but we knew that tradeoff
- Too much pesticide use on the public fields. If our children are out playing sports, they don't need to be exposed. Mendham prides itself on being a safe community, but not so safe if harmful chemicals are used on ball and soccer fields. Also, not enough good playgrounds for toddlers where they don't spray next to them!
- Not enough community activities; many closed-minded older residents
- We have been very disappointed with the lack of communication regarding COVID, especially in the beginning. We have had to rely on our former town for factual information on testing sites, number of people affected, etc. Most of our information came from "About Mendham" which is the Facebook page run by residents.
- There are no ways (it didn't meet expectations); GREAT community environment, gorgeous town in general

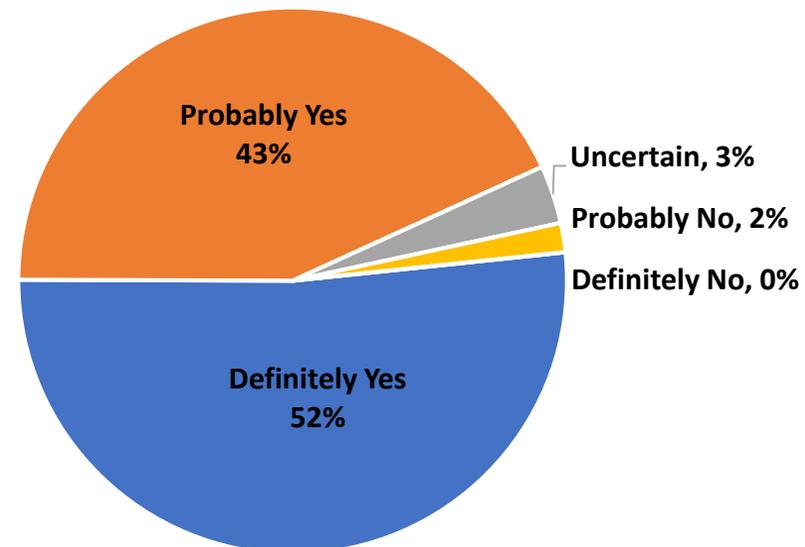
# Would They Recommend Moving to Mendham Township?

- New residents would very much recommend moving to Mendham Township, as 95% answered “Definitely Yes” or “Probably Yes,” with over half (52%) answering “Definitely Yes”

## Q9: How likely are you to recommend moving to Mendham Township to others?

Definitely Yes	52%
Probably Yes	43%
Uncertain	3%
Probably No	2%
Definitely No	0%

How likely are you to recommend moving to Mendham Township to others?



# Why Would You Recommend/Not Recommend Moving Here?

- The overwhelming majority of respondents gave reasons why they recommend moving to Mendham Township

## Q10: Why would you recommend/not recommend moving to Mendham Township (open-ended)

### Recommend

- Quality of schools, small town environment, less crowded than other places
- The friendly neighbors, quality public service, great parks, convenient retail and very safe and beautiful
- Beautiful town, great school system, great bussing to schools, great home value, easily accessible to everything, reasonable taxes
- Rural yet very civilized and close to all amenities
- I would recommend Mendham Township because friendly community, excellent schools and large yards for kids to play
- Schools exceeded expectations and we are loving it here. Friends looking for a new home need better train access. Everyone was so welcoming - felt like a storybook.
- School system
- The schools are fantastic, the proximity to nature is not to be beat! Community is very warm. :)
- We would recommend because we really like the community, serenity, and beauty of Mendham. We are happy to be here!
- People are friendly and welcoming, schools are excellent, small town atmosphere
- I would recommend due to the environmental conditions, clean air, the beauty of nature and wildlife that flourishes here. It's a perfect balance.
- We believe quality of life is much better here than other areas
- The kind of property to be found (rural, large lots, lots of orchards in the area).
- Small town charm and excellent schools!
- Beautiful area, close to Morristown. Nice amenities and shopping nearby. Great outdoor recreation spaces (walking and hiking and mountain biking trails)
- Great small town feel – schools are excellent wish high school was smaller
- I would recommend it
- Great place to raise a family.
- Schools and general upkeep
- It is a lovely country community. It is what you put into it.

### Recommend (continued)

- I would recommend it as a quiet historic town with close proximity to Morristown and hiking trails, as well as for its highly-rated schools and fair property taxes.
- small town feel, nice neighbors, close to morristown
- recommend for the community activities, schools, friendly people, and it's a beautiful town.
- Recommend: Lot size, well located, Morristown/NYC highway access
- Peaceful town, Beautiful nature trails, farm stands, esp. during COVID it's been like a perfect sanctuary.
- Great community + schools, kind people, beautiful area and only a 1 hr drive to NYC.
- Need to manage population growth well to maintain the community aesthetics
- Preserved beauty and obvious appreciation for the environment.. Accessibility to major hubs.
- School system
- We are happy here. We would recommend as we are close to what we need, yet have space and privacy.
- The schools, small town, friendly feel, active community members

### Pro/Con

- Recommend: schools, safe, small town living Not recommend: taxes too high
- Pro: Quiet; Con: Police are over-bearing
- Great town lots of recreation + amenities; con: a bit on the expensive side
- I would recommend Mendham for its natural beauty & charm; I would not recommend it for the above 2 reasons (speeding/large vehicles, commercial noise too early)
- Perfect town besides lack of diversity mentioned in question 8. Would highly recommend to white couples but not bi-racial or Asians (basking ridge instead).

### Not Recommend

- Not good for folks who need to travel into the city
- Lack of diversity