

AN AIRPORT IN RIDGEWOOD?



1994

IN: Okay. Now, I wanted to know about other developers. For example, Ridgewood Lawns. Can you tell me anything about that?

TC: I don't know anything about that except the—they're there. There was the property and there's a group of young men in the town that were interested in aviation and wanted to build an airport there. And they debated an airport against the development where you had to have a school. And I guess, to the happiness of most of the residents, why, the airport business was turned down—or a field is really what it was—was turned down. And those houses were built over there. I guess they must have been around 7,500 bucks or something like that. A lot of them—it's quite nice. Today, a lot of them have been enlarged and developed, and it's a nice little area. Yeah.



1994

DP: ... Do you remember the Ridgewood Lawns being built? Can you tell me anything about the start of that?

MC: Well, I remember that being built very well but I wasn't in real estate at the time.

DP: Tell me about its being built, anyhow. ... But anyway, they were trying to get an airport started where Ridgewood Lawns was eventually built. And, you know, you have little different ideas as you're growing up about when should be done with available land, for whose benefit it should be developed. And a lot of your reactions, when you look back on them, you realize were pretty prejudiced. But, I mean, this is a product of what you heard at the dinner table, and I worked hard to try to get that airport built. And part of it was because, strangely enough, people did not want a large development of houses down there. They thought it would be detrimental to the town. ...

DP: Tell me about the philosophy behind the airpark. Who wanted the airpark in town?

MC: Well, a lot of people wanted the air park and it was—a lot of people wanted it because there wouldn't be a whole bunch of cheap houses built.

DP: That many people had airplanes that they would fly out of the area?

MC: Well, I imagine that it was to function the way several of the airports around Northern New Jersey functioned, giving—

DP: [unclear] and Morristown and—

MC: Well—well, I'm thinking of smaller ones where they would probably give flying lessons and people could have small planes come in—

DP: Yeah.

MC: —or could own their own planes. I imagine there might have been 30 or 40 people around town who might have been thinking they might have a plane of their own, whether they ever really would or not, I don't know.

DP: Mm-hmm, so tell me how the Lawns got started then.

MC: Well, this was defeated in a referendum, the airport, and whoever the builder was, I don't know. He built Ridgewood Lawns and he did a very good job. ...

DP: Mm-hmm. And what did people say when they saw the completed job? Was there a lot of negative—

MC: Of course.

DP: —reaction to it?

MC: Of course