

HOMES AND LIFESTYLES

WE'RE THE PLACE TO BE

The word “sustainability” has been getting a lot of ink these days and it’s an important concept, particularly in geographical areas like ours that have an abundance of rich natural resources. In short, it means making sure the planet’s ecosystems are protected at all costs.

In Ulster County, we get it and some of our greatest visionaries are planning “environmentally progressive development,” as in The Williams Lake Project in Rosendale.

The goal is to sustainably redevelop the former Williams Lake Hotel, a legendary vacation destination, as a resort spa and residential community. The new resort community will offer hotel guests and homeowners the chance to live and play in a unique conservation development.

“We believe the location and site are really special,” said Tim Allred, manager of Williams Lake Project. “It’s hard to find this combination of a large nature preserve within two hours of New York City in close proximity to the cultural and recreational amenities the county has to offer.”

“It’s a unique site because of its beautiful lakes and trails and the amazing industrial history of Rosendale Cement – all just minutes from the NY Thruway. We think we really have something.”

Allred said bringing the property back to life as an “eco-resort” and tourist destination will additionally bode well for the county, which boasts tourism as its No. 1 industry. When it’s all said and done, the resort will offer a spa, farm-to-table cuisine, and swimming, fishing, hiking, biking, skiing, and even an historic interpretive center alongside a recently opened rail trail.

Another exciting project underway that respects our natural assets is Hudson Landing, a unique, “walkable” community directly on the river with sustainable living as its goal.

The project by AVR Homebuilders embraces the environment through open space, public parks, a riverfront promenade, and a village green at its center, while proposing a variety of housing styles to accommodate a wide range of family sizes and income levels.

One housing project that opened last year in the town of Ulster is Ulster Gardens, which features affordable housing units for seniors and another building for the younger set.

“We have 82 units right now and we are building an additional

82,” said Daphne Scarafoni, project manager at Ulster Gardens.

Our Ulster County visionaries aren’t the only ones who value our precious, clean and green open spaces. In fact, city-dwellers often choose our region to buy second homes or even primary ones, according to our local realtors.

In recent years, noted publications like the *Wall Street Journal*

cited our overall quality of life and housing affordability as primary incentives, particularly among Brooklyn residents, “many of whom are renters in the city.”

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) recently noted Ulster County’s “funky string of artist-haven villages edged by vast swaths of bear-haven mountains” as a plus, and named us among its “Top Ten Quirky Places to Retire.”

As AARP indicated, our region is a magnet for artists,

who often find inspiration in the county’s contemplative landscapes and alluring, historic cities. A big bonus this year

was the opening of the former 80,000 square-foot United States Lace Curtain Mill in midtown Kingston. Architect Scott Dutton designed the 55-unit affordable housing complex for RUPCO—one which is expected to enrich the artists who live there and the residents who will benefit from their contributions.

Meanwhile, the UK’s *Daily Mail* recently ran a

story about the numerous celebrities who call us home with the headline, “Stunning mountains, small town charm and plenty of celebrity inhabitants: Why New York’s Catskill Mountains are the new A-list oasis (and the Hamptons are so last summer).”

In the overall picture, philosophies of sustainable living, exceptional quality of life, a vibrant arts culture, historic architecture, and affordability make Ulster County an unparalleled place to put down roots. To all prospective residents looking for a piece of paradise, we say, “Welcome home.”



The Williams Lake Project, Rosendale



Ulster Gardens, Town of Ulster