

The Valley Forge Turnpike Berm

After a protracted negotiation (c. 2007–2014) involving the Turnpike Commission, HMSHost (the turnpike's restaurant franchisee), Tredyffrin Township, and concerned local residents, the Valley Forge service plaza on the eastbound Pennsylvania Turnpike was finally reconstructed, with a new structure completely replacing the old, along with new parking areas and lighting. A large expanse to the east of the new building, gas station, and truck parking lot was transformed into a stormwater management catch basin.

In an attempt to address the concerns of security and noise abatement for the adjacent residential neighborhood, a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile long large earthen berm was constructed along the turnpike's right-of-way to the south of the highway and adjacent service plaza and parking lots. The berm's purpose also included protection from the additional noise resulting from the turnpike widening project.

To construct the berm, a wide swath was cleared of trees and other vegetation, and then earth moving equipment brought in many truckloads of clean fill to build up the substantial berm, which runs east from Valley Forge Road to a point well-past the new rest area complex.



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2019 Update: A local resident observed recently that the level of turnpike traffic noise on her adjacent property seemed to have actually increased after the construction of the berm, and that the berm itself has grown into a very weedy backdrop for her property.
— John O. Senior

