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To the editor:

I am writing this letter because I'm concerned about the recent expansion plans presented by the Turnpike Commission on Thursday, March 29, 2007 addressing the widening of the Turnpike from the mid-County interchange through the Lansdale interchange. The current plan is more aggressive than the originally proposed plan, so there may be a more significant impact upon those homes bordering the Turnpike than originally presented. The Turnpike Commission has been remiss in their methods to notify residents and the Townships with regard to the development of these plans. Finally, the current plans do not include the sound barriers in many places where they were originally promised.

Over the past five years your elected officials have worked continually with the homeowners bordering the Turnpike to have their concerns heard by the Commission and to reach a reasonable series of compromises. These solutions included promises of sound barriers and minimal encroachment upon properties. The Commission has not honored these agreements in their new plans.

After discovering this development at Thursday night's meeting, I spoke with Representatives Kate Harper and Mike Gerber, as well as Senator John Rafferty. I also spoke with Senator Connie Williams prior to the meeting. I believe that all are committed to the goal of facilitating a responsible and reasonable plan for the Turnpike widening. Their plan is to make sure that every property owner, whose property is targeted for a full or partial taking, is notified. That the Turnpike Commission embraces a culture that is sensitive to the quality of life issues of property owners. That this culture extends to design issues. Finally, that the appropriate sound barriers are placed where they preserve the integrity of the community.

The Turnpike Commission is a relatively autonomous entity, so our elected officials can only encourage them firmly to approach this issue responsibly. If you own property bordering the Turnpike, you need to research the impact on your property. If your neighborhood borders the Turnpike then you need to research and communicate your concerns about noise and air pollution. I encourage you to contact Mimi Lindelow, Pa. Turnpike Public Involvement Specialist, with your questions and concerns. Her telephone number is 610-239-4117. Her e-mail address is [mlindelow@paturnpike.com](mailto:mlindelow@paturnpike.com).

This is our community and we need your involvement to insure that this Turnpike widening is accomplished in a manner that preserves and enhances the integrity of our municipalities.

Respectfully,

Joe Palmer, Whitpain Township Supervisor