

## Penn State Harrisburg New Freshman Housing

*Location:* Middletown, Pennsylvania

*Client:* Penn State University

*Size:* 3 acres

*Cost:* \$1 Million in Site Work and Landscape

*Status:* Construction completed Spring 2011

The new dormitory is nestled into the hillside opposite the existing Community Center Building and Student Housing Building. Pedestrian connections are made with both of these buildings and the new dorm, as well as major pedestrian routes that lead to the parking lot and the main pedestrian spine which connects the residential side to the academic side of campus. Exterior spaces combine formal terraces, informal meeting areas, and recreation greens (areas of open lawn) for play. The plant palette is native to Pennsylvania and representative of species from the Appalachian Oak Forest.

Stormwater is carried through a series of vegetated swales and rain gardens. These allow water to infiltrate and help to restore the natural hydrologic balance. The northeast portion of the site is seeded with meadow which reduces the need for mowing, and encourages water infiltration and evapotranspiration.

Viridian worked closely with the campus maintenance staff to ensure that the end product did not overburden staff resources. Another key to success was the knowledge brought to the project by soil scientist, Tim Craul. Soil tests showed the existing site was essentially absent of any organic matter and had high pH levels. Through a combination of created and amended soil, the site can support the vegetation which is essential to creating a sustainable landscape.



Site Plan



Rain garden at entrance with limestone bench



The rain gardens manage stormwater while also providing beauty throughout the seasons (left, summer; right, spring).