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Academy Fence Company, Inc. of Orange, N.J. installed a vinyl privacy fence to line the right side of the extremely steep road leading up to the condominiums in order to maintain the complex's spectacular view of the Manhattan skyline, but block a less pleasing view of some commercial property.



PHOTOS COURTESY CERTANTEED CORPORATION

New Jersey contractor creates unique terraced vinyl privacy fence

Nestled into a steep cliff overlooking the Hudson River Valley, new condominium development Church Hill Estates in North Bergen, N.J., offers pristine natural surroundings and a spectacular view of Manhattan and all the scenery leading up to it. However, the angle of the view also provides a clear line of sight to commercial real estate and construction projects below.

Knowing that condominium owners would eventually see this, Church Hill Estates owner Steve Silverman, of Jersey City, N.J., hired contractor Academy Fence Company Inc. of Orange, N.J. to install a solid privacy fence to line the right side of the road leading up to the condominium complex.

"We had widened the road and wanted to allow unobstructed views of the Manhattan skyline for people driving up to the condos, but there was some commercial real estate at the bottom of the hill that was rather unsightly," Silverman said.

"We decided that installing a nice privacy fence along the road would be a good way to block the undesirable views."

For fence material, Academy Fence recommended CertainTeed's Bufftech® Chesterfield with CertaGrain vinyl privacy fence in Natural Clay, topped with Bufftech solar post caps in nickel finish. The solar post caps absorb the sun's energy dur-

"It's the steepest street I've ever been on; getting the fence materials to the jobsite was easy enough, but if you put the materials on the ground, they would slide down the hill. We had to keep them on the truck and unload one section at a time."

— Louis Cavallo

ing daylight and this energy powers their solar lighting system after dark.

Silverman said he was impressed with the product's authentic wood-like appearance and the fact that it requires very little maintenance.

"The Chesterfield fencing with the CertaGrain

texture doesn't have a plastic look, like some other products," said Louis R. Cavallo, president of Academy Fence Company. "Also, the Natural Clay finish hides dirt and dust much better than a traditional white vinyl fence, and if it does get dirty, it's easy to clean."

Academy Fence Company began work in May with a crew of five, and immediately encountered the project's biggest challenge — the steep incline of the cliff. To put this into perspective, the road was on a 60-degree grade, significantly complicating the crew's logistics.

"It's the steepest street I've ever been on," Cavallo said. "I was very careful about where I parked my truck because if it would have somehow popped out of gear, it would have been gone! Getting the fence materials to the jobsite was easy enough, but if you put the materials on the ground, they would slide down the hill. We had to keep them on the truck and unload one section at a time."

The steep incline also called for unique design
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Unique vinyl privacy fence

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and installation considerations. Church Hill Estates' builder, The Trademark Company, LLC, also of Jersey City, constructed a terraced concrete retaining wall, leading from the base of the cliff to the condominiums.

The length of the terraced wall sections range from 10 to 12 feet as the wall winds up the hill.

For aesthetic purposes, Academy Fence Company opted to halve the standard 8-foot x 5-foot fence sections with a table saw and install a long series of 4-foot x 5-foot sections on top of the retaining wall.

"We knew we'd have to use two sections of fence on each terraced section of the wall, so we just split those fence sections in half to ensure uniformity," Cavallo noted.

The crew drilled 2-1/2-inch post holes into the terraces every 5 feet with a wet core drill and set 2-inch metal posts in the holes.

Using EZ Mount post mounts, they set Bufftech Chesterfield with CertaGrain 5-inch x 5-inch vinyl fence posts over the metal posts. They then installed the fence sections.

The installation ran smoothly, aside from the fact that the installers were literally working on the edge of the retaining wall, with a 30-foot to 40-foot drop on one side of the fence.

In the three-day duration of the project, the crew installed about 200

feet of Bufftech Chesterfield with CertaGrain fencing, supplied by distributor LR McCoy and Company Inc., of Worcester, Mass.

The crew found that the Bufftech Chesterfield fence handled well and was easily adaptable to the application, Cavallo commented.

"It's a nice, flexible product, and you don't have to worry about it breaking, chipping or getting scratched because it's very durable," he added.

After the Church Hill Estates fence was finished, Academy Fence Company installed 50 feet of Bufftech Chesterfield with CertaGrain in Sierra Blend fence for the back of a used car lot adjacent to the development's entrance.

"The new Church Hill Estates fence has received excellent reviews from the property owner for its dramatic appearance, especially when the solid, clay-colored fence is down-lit by the solar post caps at night. Academy Fence did a great job, and they were in and out in a timely fashion," Silverman said. "We're very pleased with the new fence. It looks great."

Cavallo said he is proud of his crew's results and the accomplishment of tackling a challenging installation opportunity and doing a great job.

"This was probably the most involved you could ever get installing a PVC fence because you're not just putting up a fence — you're doing everything you could possibly do on one job," Cavallo said. "It really was a unique opportunity, and I'm proud of the work we did there."

Established in 1967, Academy Fence Company is a family-owned and operated business installing fencing and outdoor living materials for customers throughout New Jersey and New York. They have 20 employees. For more information, go to www.academyfence.com.

Founded in 1922 by Lawrence R. McCoy, LR McCoy and Company is a wholesale distributor of fence, flooring, landscape products, specialty building materials, and industrial wood components serving professional contractors, retail outlets, home centers, and industrial accounts throughout North America and Canada. For more information, visit www.lrmccoy.com.

For more information of Bufftech Chesterfield fence products, go to www.certainteed.com.

This story was written by Patricia Pellock of CertainTeed Corporation.

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