

Specialty fabrics Review

A clean sweep in fabric

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Gambling is a game of chance, and when the Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway in New York planned a \$50 million expansion, project managers bet on a knock-your-socks-off entryway design to invite and excite the playing customer. Studio V Architecture PLLC, New York, developed a sweeping transparent tensioned fabric porte-cochere sculptured to emerge organically from the surrounding hills. The Studio V porte-cochere roof design featured 11,000 square feet of ETFE film manufactured by Birdair Inc., Amherst, N.Y., experts in custom tensile membrane structures.

The ETFE film offered advantages in aesthetics, performance and sustainability. The film's transparency allows daylight to illuminate the space while providing cover and shade for people driving into the casino. During nighttime hours, a custom-colored LED lighting installation sets off the soaring, wing-like shape of the porte-cochere. The transparent film won't discolor or weaken over time; resists airborne pollutants, dust and dirt; is lightweight; and is also recyclable, giving the casino long-term benefits not available with many other material types.

The Empire City Casino porte-cochere uses a two-layer ETFE application with a pneumatic system that maintains air between layers, creating inflated cushions that enhance the unique design. Architects using the Birdair ETFE can choose to increase or decrease film transparency for solar control or shading by incorporating fused patterns into one or multiple layers. Colors ranging from red to violet can be added to the film during the extrusion process for consistent tint across the membrane.



Guests arriving at the Empire City Casino drive through a graceful and transparent cushioned porte-cochere made of Birdair's next-generation ETFE film, a fitting welcome for the casino's "inviting and exciting" \$50-million expansion. Photos: Birdair

Comments

There are not yet any comments.