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BILCO Roof Hatches Add Unique Element to D.C. Housing Project

The historic buildings, monuments and scenery around Washington D.C. draw tourists from all over the world. Tenants of 32 new townhomes in the city's swanky Capitol Hill will have a unique and private vantage point to the area with individual roof hatches, offering them a perspective that is available to only a few residents of the nation's capital.

Buchanan Park is a residential development being built by Ditto Residential. It will include 41 condominiums in a redeveloped historic three-story school building that dates to 1895 and was named after James Buchanan, the nation's 15th president. Buchanan Park includes a central green, multiple outdoor gathering areas and pedestrian walkways.

The 32 three- and four-bedroom townhomes will line 13th and D Streets in Washington, surrounding the Buchanan School. Inspired by the Federal-style homes in the neighborhood, the townhomes will include brick exteriors and spacious living areas.

The architect for the townhomes, Maurice Walters, designed them to provide residents with individual access to rooftop deck areas. DJB Contracting is installing 32 thermally broken roof hatches from The BILCO Company to meet the architect's request.

"We have used BILCO roof hatches all the time," said Eric Ward, project manager for DJB, whose business has been providing roofing and related services to the Washington area for more than two decades. "We had never used the thermally broken roof hatches before this project. I think it's a good fit for the situation. It's an access point to the roof, and I like that they are pre-fabricated and pre-coated. It makes the job a lot easier."

BILCO's E-50TB thermally broken roof hatch offers a new standard in energy efficiency, making them ideal for the project at Buchanan Park. The hatch minimizes heat transfer and the effects of condensation. The unit includes a thermally broken cover and curb featuring R-20+ insulation. The unit also offers corrosion resistant aluminum construction.

"The increased R value makes this hatch superior to its competitors in the industry," Ward said. "Typically, roof hatches don't have much insulation in the cover. It's made of aluminum, too, while others are made of steel around the base. It's much lighter. I like this model because it's lighter and maintenance free."



When DJB started the project, the general contractor pushed for a quick install of the roof hatches. BILCO delivered them swiftly so that Ward and his team could meet the project timeline. While there have been other delays in the construction process, BILCO's customer service team delivered astonishingly fast. "BILCO's customer service is great," Ward said. "They did what they promised they would do. I absolutely loved working with BILCO."



Ward believes the residents of the townhomes will appreciate the roof hatches. Besides increasing energy efficiency, they will allow residents rare private access to their roofs. Most city housing projects that offer rooftop access accommodate multiple tenants, and not individual access.

"I think the hatch will work great," Ward said. "I've never seen this application before, but I think it's a great idea and tenants will find they really like the BILCO product."

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