

Project Summary



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Winchell Residence

What started out as the replacement of an unsightly cinder block wall, turned into a lifestyle showpiece. "It's probably the most beautiful job I've ever done" says Dave Klein who designed and built this project for the Winchell family in Bloomington, Minnesota. The project began when the Winchell's decided to replace an aging concrete block retaining wall that ran parallel to the back of their home holding up a hillside. The block wall was not only hard to look at, but too close to the house to allow any practical use of the backyard. Dave Klein was chosen as the contractor for his experience in wall construction.



PROJECT NAME & LOCATION

Winchell Residence, Bloomington, MN

PRODUCT

AB Collection –
AB Ashlar Blend Patterned Wall

OWNER

The Winchell Family

LOCAL ENGINEER

G.M.E. Consultants

GENERAL CONTRACTOR & WALL BUILDER

Klein Scape

ALLAN BLOCK MANUFACTURER

Amcon Block, St. Cloud, MN

PLAN



The primary objective was to create more useable space in the backyard, and to eliminate the overbearing visual appearance of a tall, straight wall built too close to the house. The Allan Block AB Collection was chosen early in the planning process for visual appeal, and it was up to Klein to come up with a design that the customer liked. Klein knew that the wall would have to be reinforced based on the proposed wall heights and slope above the wall.

DESIGN



Klein's final design introduced a raised patio, sweeping curves in the walls, and a built-in fire pit wrapped in natural Chilton stone. The combination of these design elements met the customer's requirements and looked great on paper. With an approved design concept, Klein contracted G.M.E. Consultants to engineer the wall. A geogrid-reinforced wall was ruled out due to the amount of excavation needed in a grid design, and the proximity of mature hillside trees above the wall. G.M.E. came up with a pin and anchor solution that involved screw type earth anchors drilled into the hillside and tied into the back of the Allan Block wall units.

BUILD



First the masonry wall and footings were removed, and the hill excavated to allow for base installation. The sandy soils at the site allowed for good compaction and were more than suitable for backfilling. A bed of $\frac{3}{4}$ " minus crushed limestone was placed for the base trench, and $\frac{3}{4}$ " clear stone was brought in for the wall rock behind the block and in the block cores. The AB Classic units were used for base installation, followed by stacking of the Ashlar pattern. The blocks were stacked to bond beam levels where the earth anchors were tied-in. A notch was cut into the back of the hollow core block at each anchor location, and the anchor secured in place. The bond beam was grouted and the process

repeated to completion.

"It was a really slick tie-back system and a real advantage provided by using Allan Block," said Klein.

The Winchell's now have an extension to their home that welcomes family and friends. The new outdoor living space has added an element to their lifestyle that is used every day. The Chilton stone fireplace, raised paver patio, flowing lines and spaces all add up to one great landscape masterpiece. Winters is proud of the final result, and sure that Allan Block was the only product he could have used to meet all the engineering and aesthetic requirements of this project.