

Privacy Act

by Becca Bastyr



Blue spruces once screened an extraordinary water feature in the front yard of this Eden Prairie, Minn., home from the street and neighbors. But the 30-year-old spruces started dying, and the homeowners weren't willing to wait years for a new row of trees to mature and fill in. Since the city wouldn't permit the family to put up a tall privacy fence, we replaced the trees with a series of freestanding timber-framed architectural panels and a space-saving barn-door entry gate.

We built the timber frames using

rough-sawn cedar that we custom-distressed on site, and we infilled them with 1/4-inch-thick aluminum Parasoleil panels (parasoleil.com). These have a copper-patina finish and are laser-cut with what their manufacturer calls a Dubblevey pattern, for which 14% of the material is removed from the panel, creating a whimsical shadowing effect while blocking most of the view.

We also used Parasoleil panels for the 8-foot-wide entry gate, which is topped with a circular timber-framed arch that mimics a large pergola structure fram-

ing the home's front door. We chose barn-door hardware for the 4-foot-wide door panels to avoid having an awkward hinged entry. And while we kept the original pond, we shrank its size. This cut down on maintenance and made room for a new sitting area with a wood-burning masonry fireplace and a pair of timber-framed modular living walls equipped with drip irrigation and removable planters. ♦

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