



Town of Richmond Hill

P.O. Box 300  
225 East Beaver Creek Road  
Richmond Hill, Ontario  
Canada L4C 4Y5  
(905) 771-8800  
www.richmondhill.ca

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## BACKGROUND: DAVID DUNLAP OBSERVATORY LANDS

### History of Property

- The land where the David Dunlap Observatory resides was donated in the 1930's as a gift to the University of Toronto by Jessie Dunlap as a memorial to her husband David Dunlap.
- Together with Mrs. Dunlap, the University of Toronto set three objectives for the project: astronomical research, the training of advanced students at the University of Toronto, and the fostering of public interest in astronomy.
- The David Dunlap Observatory has been a research centre of the Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics in the Faculty of Arts and Science at the University of Toronto and also carries out active public education and teaching programs.
- There are buildings of historical importance on the property.
- When built, the 1.88-metre telescope was the second largest in the world and is the biggest in Canada. It weighs in at approximately 23 tonnes and it was used to discover the first observational evidence for a black hole back in 1972.

### Potential Issues Affecting the Property

- The lands are currently zoned as Institutional Zone which means permitted uses of it are religious institutional and places of worship, nursing homes, homes for the aged, public and semi-public institutions, hospitals and cemeteries.
- The current main permitted use of land shall be for major public facilities including public and private elementary and secondary schools, government, health care, religious, recreation, social welfare, cultural purposes, and the Dunlap Observatory and its associated uses. Whomever purchases the property from the University of Toronto will have to use the lands as it is currently zoned, otherwise be subject to a full public planning process.
- The Town has a Tree Preservation By-law that requires property owners to obtain a permit before injuring or destroying any tree on private property with a diameter at breast height of 20 cm or more. Anyone who contravenes any provision is guilty of an offence and subject to penalties.
- A special piece of Provincial legislation was created (*Town of Richmond Hill Act, 1993*) which recognized the importance of the protecting the environment from light pollution. The Town established its own Light Pollution By-law over 15 years ago with the intent of preserving an appropriate environment for astronomical viewing at the Dunlap Observatory. Amendments to the By-law now also regulate installation, illumination levels, hours of operation, replacement of existing outdoor lighting fixtures and more.

For more information on the recent Dunlap Observatory announcement, visit the University of Toronto's Website at: <http://www.news.utoronto.ca/bin6/070910-3374.asp>