

To: Members of the Conservation Review Board of Ontario

**Re: Heritage Designation for the David Dunlap Observatory,
Richmond Hill, Ontario**

In 1935, the David Dunlap Observatory (DDO) was presented to the University of Toronto by Jessie Donalda Dunlap as a memorial to her husband, an amateur astronomer. The Observatory's goals of astronomical research, training of students at the University, and the nurturing of public interest in astronomy have been met effectively since its inception.

The DDO houses a telescope that was the second largest telescope in the world and is still the largest on Canadian soil. The telescope's primary mirror is 1.88 meters across and weighs 23 tonnes. Historically, the mirror was the first Pyrex mirror cast and was the test mirror for the famous 5-meter telescope at Palomar Observatory. The 1.88-meter telescope is the largest telescope through which members of the public have been allowed to view.

The Observatory was the home of notable Canadian professional astronomers such as Drs. Helen Sawyer Hogg, Bob Garrison, Ian Shelton, Wendy Freedman and Miss Ruth Northcott. In 1972, Dr. Tom Bolton discovered the first black hole – Cygnus X-1 using the 1.88-meter telescope. In 1995, Richmond Hill enacted light pollution abatement by-laws to support the work of the Observatory. Recently, the DDO has played a major role in taking observations for the NASA N-star program, imaging novas and supernovas for the international community, the close and contact binary project and the NASA Kepler project. The David Dunlap Observatory is also a source of great national pride!

June 2008, the property was purchased by Metrus Developments. The future of the Observatory and its parkland is now in jeopardy due to the pressures of urban development. Given its world-renowned astronomical history and unique geographical location to be easily accessed by millions, the Observatory and all its grounds deserve to be protected by the Ontario Heritage Act so they can continue to be enjoyed for many generations to come. **I ask that you WILL place heritage designations on the buildings and lands of the David Dunlap Observatory.**

(Please print name)

(Signature)

(Address)

(Date)