



## **Staff Report for Heritage Richmond Hill Meeting**

**Date of Meeting:** October 15, 2019

**Report Number:** SRPRS.19.167

**Department:** Planning and Regulatory Services

**Division:** Policy Planning

**Subject:** SRPRS.19.167 Heritage Permit Application for  
123 Hillsvie Drive, David Dunlap Observatory  
and Administration Building

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this staff report is to seek Heritage Richmond Hill's consideration of the Heritage Permit Application to allow the maintenance and repair work needed to ensure the continued conservation of the David Dunlap Observatory and Administration Building.

### **Recommendation(s):**

- a) That the Heritage Permit Application to preserve, rehabilitate and restore all major envelope components related to the Observatory and Administration Buildings as described in the David Dunlap Observatory & Administration Building Conservation Plan, prepared by +VG Architects and dated September 12, 2019, be approved.

### **Contact Person:**

Isa James, Senior Urban Designer, phone number 905 771-2538 and/or

Joanne Leung, Manager, Heritage and Urban Design, phone number 905 771-5498

### **Report Approval:**

**Submitted by:** Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services

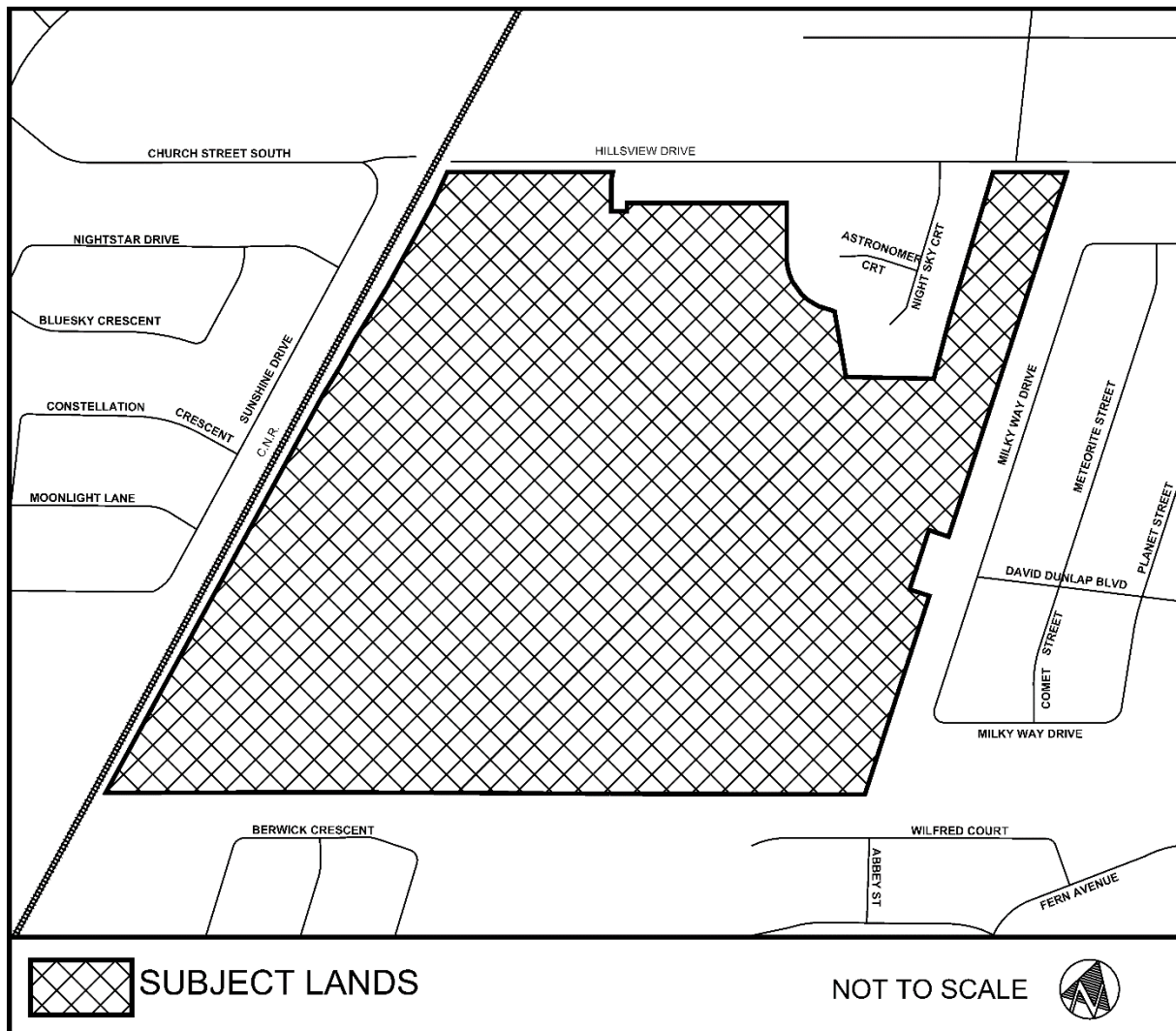
**Approved by:** Neil Garbe, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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### Location Map:

The map below illustrates the subject property location. Should you require an alternative format, call the contact person listed in this document.



### Background:

The property located at 123 Hillview Drive (south of Hillview Drive and east of the Canadian National Railway Bala Line lands) houses the David Dunlap Observatory (“DDO”). The Observatory was established by the University of Toronto in 1935. The Observatory, which includes both the observatory building and the administrative building, is significant as a site of important teaching, public education and research as well as important discoveries in the field of astronomy and astrophysics. In 2009, the site was designated as a site of Cultural Heritage Importance and was protected under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by Designation By-law 100-09 as amended by 28-17

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(see Appendix A). The 2010 *DDO Lands Conservation Management Plan*, prepared by the City of Richmond Hill, describes in detail the considerations that inform the establishment of the Cultural Heritage Conservation Area.

The City now owns the DDO lands containing the Cultural Heritage Conservation Area and established a long-term vision for the DDO Park through the *David Dunlap Observatory Park Master Plan* in 2016. One of the key short-term implementation strategies is to stabilize the deteriorating attributes and undertake repairs that will protect the buildings into the future. The property was also designated as a Canadian National Heritage Site earlier this year.

The Observatory and the Administration Building are key heritage attributes of the property and the City has committed itself to conserving the DDO buildings and heritage landscape for the foreseeable future. In May of 2017 the City hired +VG Architects to undertake building condition assessments that included these structures. As a follow-up to that work, the firm was further enlisted to develop a conservation plan and documentation to detail the preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of all major envelope components of the Observatory and the Administration Building.

On September 10, 2019 +VG Architects made a presentation to Heritage Richmond Hill describing the current building conditions and outlined the interventions recommended to restore and conserve the buildings. The Conservation Plan (see Appendix C) was submitted and considered complete by the City on September 12, 2019.

## Discussion

+VG Architects undertook a building condition assessment for the David Dunlap Observatory lands that included the Observatory Building and the Administration Building. The firm reported back to the City that both the Observatory and Administration Buildings have deteriorated as a result of normal weathering, the less than ideal construction techniques in use at the time of construction and the passage of time that has taken many building materials beyond their functional usefulness.

+VG Architects provided City staff with a Conservation Plan on September 12, 2019 that sets out strategies for the conservation and management of the buildings' heritage values, attributes and integrity. The main objective of the +VG Architects Conservation Plan is to guide the repair of the crucial architectural and structural elements in order to halt the on-going deterioration of the heritage attributes, stabilize and protect the buildings and appurtenances, and provide direction for future long-term interventions. In developing conservation strategies, the firm examined the short and long-term planning for the cultural resources and how to retain their significance in any future use, alteration, repair or development. The Conservation Plan contains comprehensive recommendations and provides sufficient details to enable the City to make informed decisions regarding any proposed changes or impacts to the buildings.

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The +VG Architects Conservation Plan recommends the repair of the necessary architectural and structural elements in order to:

- halt the ongoing deterioration of the heritage attributes;
- stabilize and protect the buildings;
- provide direction for future long-term interventions; and
- ensure that the use is compatible with the building.

Where heritage attributes are too severely deteriorated to repair and where sufficient physical evidence exists, the elements shall be replaced with new (sound) versions of the same elements that match the forms, material and detailing of the original (replacing in kind).

Where there is insufficient physical evidence, the form material and detailing of the new elements shall be compatible with the character of the buildings. The proposed scope of work for the conservation of all major envelope components of the Observatory and Administration Building is intended to ensure the long-term stability of the buildings while ensuring that the building's heritage attributes are conserved.

The major envelope components of the Observatory and the Administration Building recommended for intervention include:

### Administration Building:

- Installation of a new foundation drainage system;
- Upgrades to the existing municipal services;
- Landscaping work associated with drainage;
- Restoration of wood windows and doors;
- Masonry and concrete repairs and restoration;
- Replacement of metal roofing and flashing;
- Repairs and conservation of metal surfaces;
- Repairs and conservation of metal domes;
- Removal of two trees at the Administration Building necessary to facilitate the foundation repairs.

### Observatory:

- Limited repairs to the concrete podium foundation;
- Repairs to and conservation of metal surfaces;
- Repairs to and conservation of metal domes.

### Staff Comment

Staff consider the +VG Architect's Conservation Plan for immediate rehabilitation, restoration and conservation of the Observatory and Administration Building to be complete and in line with Sections 3.2.2, 3.2.4, 3.2.6, 3.3.2 and 3.3.4 of the Council-

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approved David Dunlap Observatory Conservation Management Plan (see Appendix D). Further, the proposed work is considered “rehabilitation” under the *Parks Canada, Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* as it qualifies as repairs or replacement of deteriorated features.

### **Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:**

Capital costs associated with the preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of all major envelope components related to the Observatory and Administration Buildings as described in the David Dunlap Observatory & Administration Building Conservation Plan prepared by +VG Architects, dated September 12, 2019, were previously approved by Council through the 2018 Capital Budget process.

### **Relationship to the Strategic Plan:**

A careful consideration of the alteration of a designated property aligns with the direction to “steward Richmond Hill’s heritage resources”, and implements Outcome 2 of Goal 3 which is the promotion of a sense of identity and place through “the celebration, promotion and enhancement of the City’s unique places”.

### **Conclusion:**

The heritage permit process is designed to ensure that heritage attributes, as described in a heritage designation by-law, are not obscured, damaged or destroyed unnecessarily by alterations and other forms of intervention.

The David Dunlap Observatory & Administration Building Conservation Plan, prepared by +VG Architects on behalf of the City, presents a reasonable and logical approach to the preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of all major envelope components related to the Observatory and Administration Building and is aligned with the attribute interventions recommended in the 2012 DDO Conservation Master Plan. The heritage permit application submitted has provided sufficient detail to enable Council to make an informed decision and the conservation approach has been previously recommended in the Council-approved DDO Conservation Master Plan, and meets the federal building conservation standards as established by Parks Canada.

### **Attachments:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Appendix A City of Richmond Hill Designating By-law 100-09 as amended by By-law 28-17
- Appendix B Heritage Permit Application for preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of all major envelope components related to the

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### Observatory and Administration Buildings of the David Dunlap Observatory – 123 Hillview Drive

- Appendix C +VG Architects – David Dunlap Observatory and Administration Building Conservation Plan dated September 12, 2019
- Appendix D Sections 3.2.2, 3.2.4, 3.2.6, 3.3.2 and 3.3.4 of the David Dunlap Observatory Conservation Management Plan, City of Richmond Hill

### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPRS.19.167 Heritage Permit Application for 123 Hillview Drive, David Dunlap Observatory and Administration Building.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- SRPRS.19.167 Appendix A (By-law 28-17 amending 100-09).pdf</li><li>- SRPRS.19.167 Appendix B Heritage Permit Application 9Sept19.pdf</li><li>- SRPRS.19.167 Appendix C DDO_Conservation Plan_190912.pdf</li><li>- SRPRS.19.167 Appendix D excerpts DDO master Conservation Plan.pdf</li></ul>
Final Approval Date:	Oct 3, 2019

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Patrick Lee - Oct 1, 2019 - 10:29 AM**

**Kelvin Kwan - Oct 1, 2019 - 10:31 AM**

**David Dexter - Oct 1, 2019 - 1:02 PM**

**Neil Garbe - Oct 3, 2019 - 11:30 AM**