

FALL 2021

DMRI NEWS

Don Mills Residents Inc.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As fall slowly comes upon us I hope that everyone is doing well and is healthy. Who would have thought in March 2020 that we would still be dealing with Covid 18 months later. The kids are returning to school and I hope that they will be able to continue without any interruptions.

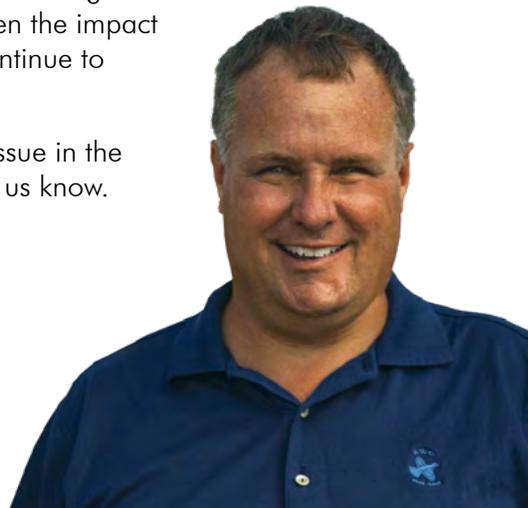
The Annual General Meeting of the DMRI will be held in October and we look forward to seeing you then.

The DMRI has been busy since the last newsletter dealing with a number of issues. Over the coming 5-7 years there are over 40 new towers in various stages of development. Some of the projects are well designed and will enhance the neighborhood as the City grows. Unfortunately, there are several projects that have not taken the surrounding areas into consideration and are too dense, too tall and detract from the surroundings rather than enhance it.

The DMRI has been working with City Staff, the developers, and residents surrounding these developments endeavouring to make changes to the proposals that will lessen the impact on the surroundings. The DMRI will continue to work diligently on these issues.

If anyone has concerns regarding an issue in the neighborhood please email us and let us know.

Regards,
Stephen Ksiazek, President, DMRI



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Options for Homes; Heritage

Options have not submitted formal plan. There are some heritage issues they are working on as well as engineering details.

801 York Mills Road & 1855 Leslie Street

In the last newsletter I provided an update regarding this proposed development. As a reminder, the property is located at Leslie and York Mills. It includes the buildings currently housing Windfield's Restaurant and the Swiss Chalet/Harvey's. It also includes the property on Leslie where Brown's Veterinary clinic used to be. It does not include the property at the corner containing a strip plaza with the Big Smoke Burger restaurant, Sleep Country and a dry-cleaner. First Capital owns the properties. It also owns the Longo's Plaza (York Mills Gardens) across the street as well as the Starbuck Plaza further east on York Mills (861 York Mills Rd).

It is significant that the owner of the strip plaza on the corner is Hastad Property Management Services Inc. i.e. not First Capital. While there have been rumours that First Capital has purchased the property from Hastad Property Management, that has not in fact happened.

As a result of strong opposition to this application by local residents, Councillor Minnan-Wong set up a working group of community stakeholders to examine the issues in more detail and inform revisions to the development application. The applicant (Developer) has agreed to the Working Group process to facilitate community input on the application. The first meeting of the Working Group was held on February 18 and a second was held on March 16. We understand that the owner has revised its application based on the feedback from the community and that revised application will be the subject of another Working Group review at some point – not yet scheduled.

900 York Mills Road

(Pan Pacific Hotel – formerly Prince Hotel)

There is no update on this application. Readers of this column will recall that the application is to expand the hotel, add an office building, 2 above ground parking garages and 2 condo towers. The complicating factor is the condo towers since that requires a conversion of the zoning from 'employment lands' to 'mixed use'. This is a

complex process. Generally speaking, neither the City nor the DMRI likes this sort of conversion. Once 'employment lands' are converted, they are effectively lost forever and it is essential to have employment lands for a viable and vibrant City.

1-3 Concorde Gate and 10-12 Concorde Place

In the last newsletter, I reported that the ownership of the 10-12 Concorde site had changed; it is now owned by the same group that owns the 175 Wynford Drive site (Don Valley Hotel site). I reported that "we suspect the application might take another turn based on what we have seen in the 175 Wynford proposal." We did not anticipate the magnitude of the revised application. It now includes both 1-3 Concorde Gate and 10-12 Concorde Place – this is both the north and south side of Concorde Gate - the existing buildings and the large parking lot. The submission proposes to demolish the existing office buildings on the lands at 1-3 Concorde Gate and 10-12 Concorde Place and to redevelop the lands with five residential and mixed-use buildings comprised of nine towers ranging from 40 to 52 storeys. The proposed development also includes two new public parks located at the north and south ends of the site, which comprise a total of 3,690 square metres in size, in addition to a new public street which will bisect the 10-12 Concorde Place property in a general north-south direction. Overall, the application proposes 4,086 dwelling units and 307,004 square metres of residential space, 841 square metres of retail and 437 square metres of community space at grade. The overall gross floor area proposed is 308,284 square metres, resulting in a gross density of 9.95 FSI. The scope of the new plan is overwhelming. It is too early to comment on where this one is going. The City has not even had a chance to review the new application.

175 Wynford Drive - Don Valley Hotel

As noted in the last newsletter, this development has a long history. The previous owner had planned to retain most of the existing 6-storey hotel, and they planned to add **2 towers**, one **36-storey** and one **30-storey**. The Wynford-Concorde committee of DMRI worked with that owner to come to this plan which also included some park space and a public children's playground. Unfortunately, the owner died before construction of this development began, the land was sold and the new owner has a very different plan.

The new plan would demolish both the existing hotel and conference space. It would include **four** mixed-use tall buildings ranging from **45 to 54 storeys** in height. In addition, the plan calls for a minimum of 10,082sqm of non-residential gross floor area for a hotel, retail uses and a childcare centre. A new hotel would be located within the podium of the 54-storey tower. A new signalized intersection is proposed on Wynford Drive at the location of the existing driveway.

A virtual community consultation meeting was held March 4 and there was considerable opposition. Once again, Denzil offered to set up a working committee to deal with the issues. Unfortunately, he didn't want to consult with DMRI in this regard nor did he want anyone from DMRI on the committee unless they lived in the area. While the original polling did not find enough participants to form the committee a working group has not been formed and is scheduled to meet in late August and September.

Since then, it appears that the applicant has revised the application yet again. The **new plan calls for towers of 55, 59, and 65 storeys (3 tall towers instead of 4)**, all at greater separation distances than in the previous four-tower plan and arranged around a new public road that would connect the buildings to Wynford Drive.

Procedure for Development Proposals

by Allan McKellar

An owner files a development proposal for a site with the City Planning Department. The planners review the proposal and write a preliminary report giving their thoughts and concerns which is submitted to the North York Community Council. The report also may recommend that a community meeting be held to get feedback from prospective neighbours. There is not normally approval or rejection at this stage. Following the community reaction, the planners and developer have further discussion and there may also be a working group which would include members of the community. The developer may make amendments to the original proposal to take into consideration the response of the planners and the community. It is at this stage where the planners could recommend approval or rejection and this recommendation would go to the Community Council for consideration. This is an open meeting and community members may make presentations. The Community Council decision then goes to the whole City Council for approval. Again, presentations from members of the community are usually permitted.

Along the south edge of the site there is a new public park to assist pedestrians, with paths to both Wynford Drive and to a proposed set of lights at Eglinton Avenue where pedestrians would be able to cross the street to access the Wynford stop of the coming Crosstown LRT.

Neither we nor City Planning has had an opportunity to review these new plans in detail.

In addition to the above proposed developments, there are a couple that have not reached the formal proposal stages so we have no details. They are;

Congee Queen Plaza

No details are available at this time, but a developer is considering development of this site. We will keep an eye on this but if you hear anything, please let us know.

Wingreen Court

This is a cluster of low-rise rental buildings at 200 The Donway East just north of Lawrence. The buildings have been purchased by Northridge Securities. At this time, we don't know their intentions but they will likely wish to redevelop it and increase the density significantly,

There is ample opportunity at each stage of the process for the community to have input and to try to influence the decision. It is crucial the community members express their views about a proposal to their councillor and the planning department directly and also at any public meetings.

With respect to the proposals for the property of the Don Valley Hotel and the site at 1 and 3 Concorde Gate and 10-12 Concorde Place, the height, density and lack of community resources mean that this is a totally inappropriate approach and should be strongly opposed. There needs to be a process whereby the community of Wynford Concorde would be examined from the point of view of what is needed before an injection of a development of this size is considered. This is a small geographic area which needs resources to make it a place where people can live, work, and play. There should be a context in which the City Council can give legitimate consideration to any new development.

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Don Mills Community Centre Update by Stephen Ksiazek

On February 16th, 2021, a hearing was held in the superior Court of Justice. The hearing was to decide the case of the Don Mills Residents Inc v. City of Toronto and CF Realty Holdings Limited regarding the community centre to be built at the Shops at Don Mills. Madam Justice J Ferguson heard the case. The Justice said that she would try and get her ruling out within the next week as she had some time set aside. Unfortunately the Decision was not released until June 2nd, 2021 which dismissed our application.

Our legal team and the Board of Directors of the DMRI felt that there were multiple errors in law and fact. We

held a meeting for the members of the DMRI to discuss our options at which our lead council made a presentation. After consulting with the membership, the board unanimously decided to appeal the decision to the Ontario Court of Appeal. The board felt that not only was this case important to Don Mills, the precedent of the case held Ontario wide repercussions.

The appeal will likely be held in the late spring or early summer of 2022. It is very unfortunate that the neighborhood has had to fight with the City council and our councilor to get what was promised in writing over a decade ago.

Garden Suites Update by Vera Straka

Readers of this newsletter will have noticed previously, a couple of items dealing with Garden Suites and Secondary Suites. Since then, the City has undertaken a number of consultation meetings with Toronto residents, an online Garden Suites survey and their own study of Toronto's low rise neighbourhood and the experience of other jurisdictions which allow garden suites, both in Canada and US.

The outcome of these efforts is a report presented to the Planning and Housing Committee in June 2021. Very importantly the report contains **Summary of Proposed Draft Garden Suite Regulations** <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/ph/bgrd/background-file-168225.pdf>.

I am representing the DMRI on a Federation of North Toronto Residents Associations (FoNTRA) organized Garden Suite Working Group. This working group met with the City's Garden Suite Group for clarifi-

cations and questions regarding their report. The following are some points raised, organized into three broad categories:

1. General – City wide issues

- a. Affordability
- b. Municipal taxes
- c. Infrastructure (water, storm and sewage, schools, parks, community centres)

2. Neighbourhoods

- a. Loss of tree canopy, especially if there is a significant uptake garden suites in a particular neighbourhood
- b. Privacy, shading and window locations and their impact on immediate neighbours. There doesn't appear to much concern for this expressed in the report.
- c. Compliance with the intent stated in the Report (referenced above) and the Proposed Regulations. The Committee of Adjustment is currently not enforcing by-law compliance so why would anyone believe

they will be any different with Garden Suites.

- d. Garden Suites might attract developers who want secondary suites in the main house and a garden suite – all rented out.

3. Site specific

- a. Height. The proposed rules allow a 6 m height with limitations on angular planes and setbacks from property lines
- b. Allowing basements for garden suites (excavation will destroy roots on trees and shrubs and disrupt vegetation and impact neighbouring property)
- c. Rear yard landscaping

It is anticipated that there may be further changes to the Proposed Regulations by the end of August. We have another meeting scheduled for the middle of September.

Please review the Proposed Regulations and if you can, the Report. I would appreciate receiving your questions/comments. It is not too late to make your input heard.

Regulation	Garden Suites (Proposed)
Permitted Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be used for living accommodations and home occupations. • Short-term rentals are permitted only in accordance with the Short-Term Rental By-law
Number of Dwelling Units	One Dwelling Unit. Garden Suite means a self-contained living accommodation for a person or persons living together as a separate single housekeeping unit, in which both food preparation and sanitary facilities are provided for the exclusive use of the occupants of the suite and is in an ancillary building not abutting a lane.
Density	Excluded from the permitted floor space index or other density provisions
Location on the Lot	Rear yard
Lot Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 25% of the lot for all ancillary buildings on the lot. • Maximum 40% of the rear yard for the Garden Suite, up to a maximum of 60 square metres
Building Footprint	Maximum 60 square metres and lot coverage maximums above
Basements	Permitted
Height and Separation Distances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 metres height where the Garden Suite is at least 5 metres from the principal residential building. • Up to 6 metres height, where the Garden Suite is at least 7.5 metres from the principal residential building
Rear Yard Setback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 1.5 metres. • On lots with a depth greater than 45 metres the minimum setback is the greater of half the height of the Garden Suite and 1.5 metres. On through lots, where the rear property line abuts a street, the minimum rear yard setback is the average setback of adjacent houses that face the street, or if there are no adjacent houses then 6.0 metres.

Rear Yard Setback continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minimum required side yard setback is the greater of either 0.6 metres or 10% of the lot frontage, up to a maximum of 3.0 metres. • Where openings such as windows or doors are proposed, the minimum side yard setback is 1.5 metres. • On a side lot line that abuts a street, the minimum setback is the same as the minimum required side yard setback for the principal residential building.
Angular Planes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front: 45 degrees starting at a height of 4.0m, 7.5m from the rear main wall of the principal residential building • Rear: 45 degrees starting at a height of 2.0m, from the rear lot line • Side: 45 degrees starting at a height of 4.0m from the required side setback • Where lot line abuts a street: None
Rear Yard Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 50% of a rear yard area, including the area covered by a Garden Suite, must be soft landscaping. Lots with a frontage of less than 6.0 metres will require a minimum of 25% soft landscaping. • The above soft landscaping requirement may be reduced by 0.5 square metres for every 1.0 square metres of green roof provided on a Garden Suite.
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two bicycle parking spaces required • No vehicle parking space required for a Garden Suite <p>Maintain required parking rates for the principal residential building on the lot</p>
Horizontal & Vertical Projections	Under review
Lawfully Existing Ancillary Buildings and Structures	Subject to Ontario Building Code requirements, conversion of a lawfully existing building to a Garden Suite may be permitted if it complies with maximum footprint (60 square metres), setbacks where openings are proposed, and meets minimum required soft landscaped area

Preserving Our History

by Terry West

As we are all aware, Don Mills, built in the mid 1950s, received international reputation as a model stand-alone town. It was designed to be a self-supporting community that included retail, industry, shopping, and housing suitable for all levels of income. More than sixty years later we are now a part of Metropolitan Toronto with all the advantages and disadvantages that this status brings. Those of us who live here enjoy our enclosed neighbourhoods of crescents and dead-end streets that make us a true family community.

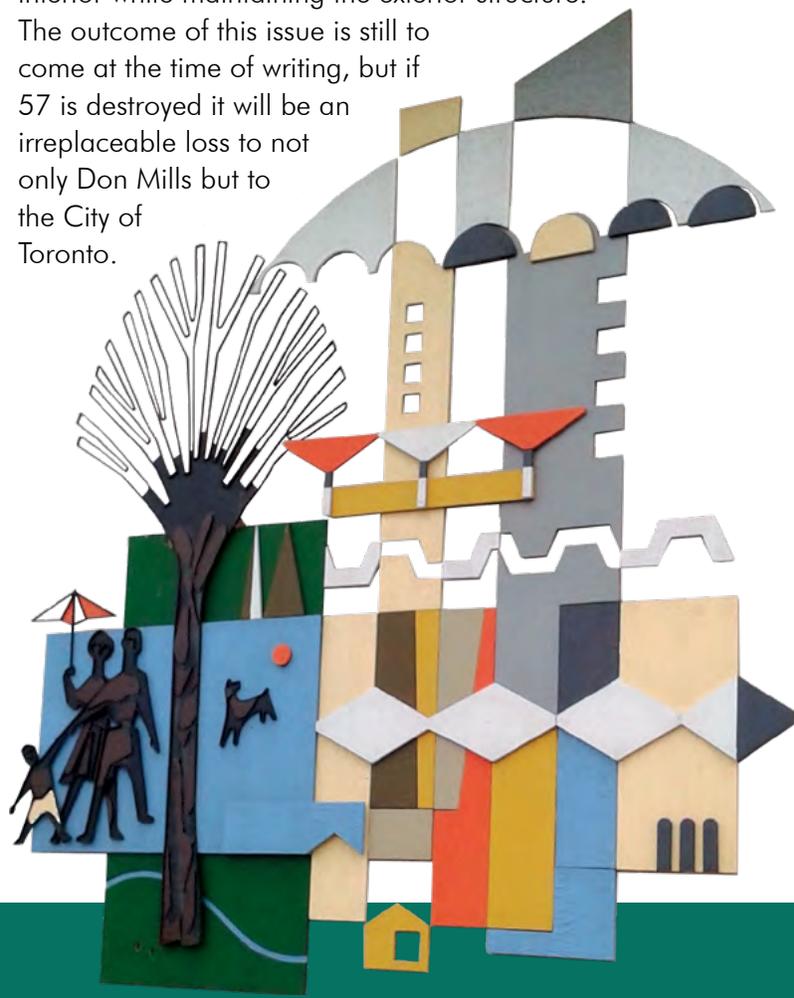
One of the major objectives of the Don Mills team was to provide housing for families at all levels of income, from small row homes and 3-storey walkups (Brydencourt), to single small bungalows and larger homes. This mixture of housing ensured a community that was both friendly and cooperative, and the availability of a school in each of our quadrants was the foundation of life-long relationships.

Average lot sizes of approximately 6000 square feet for single family homes meant that most houses were surrounded by an expansive green space with good front yard setbacks. In addition, the front lot lines were well back from the road as there were no rain water drains as are seen today, and surface water was drained in open ditches on each side of the road, which drained by the local topography. That changed when curbs were introduced and although the front green space seems large it is because it includes significant city property that is part of the front green space.

Unfortunately, at the time Don Mills was built, there were very few buildings that remained of historical significance. Only two remain today. They are the Donalda workshop and the house at the corner of Legato and Don Mills Road, opposite Bond Avenue. A third building was the Duncan Mills House which stood on the site of the current Pan Pacific (former Prince) Hotel. It was moved intact one Sunday morning and incorporated into the new restaurant. Although not a building, the oak tree at the Tim Hortons was saved when development was taking place on that corner. Because of our location and the large lot sizes, our community is rapidly changing. Small bungalows are being replaced by extra large homes that are no longer affordable to the average family, and which is changing the appearance and in some respects the community spirit of our neighbourhoods. A few years ago, the City identified this trend and an application was put into the heritage department to classify the original five homes as heritage homes. These were the show

homes for the new Don Mills Development and were designed by five different architects.

These homes are on Jocelyn Crescent behind the library and one of the architects, Henry Fleiss moved into the house that he had originally designed at number 55. He was the major architect for many residences in Don Mills, and received many North American awards for his original designs. especially the small townhomes that are in the south west quadrant. Unfortunately, developers and others only interested in profit are destroying many of these unique homes. Of particular concern are the original five show homes on Jocelyn Crescent. They are significant examples of new homes in the early 1950's, and 57 Jocelyn, just behind the library was featured on a Canada Post stamp series highlighting Canadian housing over the last century. This home has recently been purchased by someone based in Markham and they are planning on replacing it with a standard current monster home. Both the City Heritage department and many long-term residents feel that the destruction of this home should not be permitted and that it be protected, along with its neighbours, as significant Don Mills Heritage. We understand that one of the other five houses recently changed owners, with the new owner revitalizing the interior while maintaining the exterior structure. The outcome of this issue is still to come at the time of writing, but if 57 is destroyed it will be an irreplaceable loss to not only Don Mills but to the City of Toronto.



Out & About

by Kevin Skinner

As we slowly emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns, enjoying local Don Mills activities and events remains relatively limited. Under provincial guidelines, attendance at indoor and even outdoor activities is capped and masking and other requirements are in place. Still, a variety of local virtual events are on-going and can be enjoyed from home.

While limited attendance at church services is available (within strict provincial protocols), other programming remains virtual at this time. Some of these virtual events or activities includes coffee hours, bible studies, daily check-ins and various workshops covering a multitude of topics.

Information surrounding virtual activities at places of worship in Don Mills can be found by visiting the following websites:

- Church of the Ascension (including Café 65) – www.ascensiontoronto.ca
- Church of Our Saviour – www.oursaviourdonmills.ca
- Donway Baptist Church – www.donwaybaptistchurch.com
- Donway Covenant United Church – www.donwaycovenant.com
- Don Heights Unitarian Congregation – www.donheights.ca
- Jubilee United Church – www.jubileeunited.ca
- Parkwoods United Church – www.parkwoodsunitedchurch.ca
- St. Bonaventure – www.st-bonaventure.ca
- St. Marks Presbyterian Church – www.stmarkstoronto.org

The Don Mills branch of Toronto Public Library has successfully pivoted from live events in the branch to hosting virtual events for all age groups. Within library programming are activities for pre-school and school children, teens, adults, and seniors. There are book clubs and writers groups, guest speakers, and crafting activities to name some of the happenings the branch has organized. Learn more at www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/donmills/

Here are some other groups in Don Mills offering on-line and limited in-house programming:

- Each month the University Women’s Club North York hosts a guest speaker discussing a variety of pertinent and relevant topics. There are also a number of study and interest groups.
- University Women’s Club – www.uwcnorthyork.ca
- The Japanese Cultural Centre celebrates the culture, history, and legacy of Japanese Canadians for the benefit of all Canadians. While the centre is currently closed, virtual tours and on-line streaming are some of the programs available.
- Japanese Cultural Centre – <https://jccc.on.ca/>
- The Aga Kahn Museum is open with limited hours and timed-entry ticketing. Art and cultural exhibitions and the performing arts can be enjoyed in the museum. Virtual tours and other programming is available on-line.
- Aga Kahn Museum – <https://www.agakhanmuseum.org/>
- The Toronto Botanical Garden, Edwards Gardens, and the Don Valley ravine are open for you to enjoy from dawn until dusk. Although the building is temporarily closed, guided tours are being offered. Pre-registration is required.
- Toronto Botanical Garden – www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca
- Pearson International Airport’s Public Meeting for Toronto Residents concerned with Pearson Airplane Traffic and Associated Noise Over their Neighbourhoods – www.torontopearson.com/en/community/noise-management/noise-forums

Additionally, the Fall season brings an eruption of wonderful colours in the Don Valley and there are many walking and hiking trails to be enjoyed with family and friends. If you would like to see your Don Mills organization’s events promoted in the DMRI Newsletter, please contact secretary@dmri.ca.

Federation of North Toronto Associations

by Terry West

One of the main objectives of the DMRI is to monitor and respond to issues that are of concern to our members that will affect the community as a whole. Although many of these will occur in Don Mills itself, such as new developments, traffic issues and noise, many are city wide and are subject to By-Laws that cover the whole City. With only two Councillors representing the Don Mills Banbury area, our opportunities to respond to City proposals are somewhat limited. To overcome this drawback, in 2010 we participated in forming a larger organization known as the Federation of North Toronto Resident Associations, commonly known as FoNTRA, to share experiences and to have a presence at City Hall with access to many Councillors on important issues.

FoNTRA is an organization that represents 33 Community Organizations within the area of Bloor Street, Avenue Road, Finch Avenue and the Don East Don River. Members of its executive meet frequently with senior City Planners and other senior officials on such matters as development, affordable housing, parks and recreation and any matter that can have an impact on the quality of life within our communities. Recent issues have included the maintenance and protection of the many ravines

in Toronto for recreation purposes, the proposal from Metrolinx to establish a train service facility in the lower Don Valley just north of the Bloor Viaduct, and the proposal to allow garden suites and multi-unit rental homes in all areas of the City. In many of these issues we work in collaboration with similar regional organizations across the City.

Senior members of its Executive also speak at meetings of important Public City Committee meetings such as the Planning and Housing Committee on matters that are likely to impact all of our communities, as well as with senior staff members when important legislation on such issues as noise, cycling lanes and development issues are being discussed and developed. A full listing of its many activities and its position on many issues of importance to our community standards of life can be found on FoNTRA's website. Membership in the DMRI includes this important feature of having a say in the broader issue of city-wide activities.

If you need further information on any issue in which FoNTRA is involved please contact:
Terry West at tjdwestto@gmail.com

Renew your DMRI Membership - Thanks to all our members who have already renewed!

DMRI APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr. Full Name: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

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Annual Membership: \$25.00 Donation \$ _____ Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

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Please note: The DMRI is not a registered charity. Tax receipts are not provided.

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