


FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill #21-0109 / City Property – City Property - Renaming Calverton Elementary/Middle School to Katherine Johnson Global Academy		

TO

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 North Holliday Street

DATE: October 8, 2021

At its regular meeting of October 7, 2021, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #21-0108, for the purpose of renaming the Calverton Elementary/Middle School located at 1100 Whitmore Avenue to Katherine Johnson Academy.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report, which recommended amendment and approval, and adopted the following resolution, with nine members being present (nine in favor of amendment and approval):

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission voted to approve the recommendation of its departmental staff, and recommends that City Council Bill #21-0109 be **amended and approved** by the City Council with the following amendments:

- In lines 4 and continuing on to line 5, strike “201 North Bend Road” and replace with “1100 Whitmore Avenue”; and
- In line 12 strike “201 North Bend Road” and replace with “1100 Whitmore Avenue” of City Council Bill #21-0109

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Eric Tiso, Division Chief, Land Use and Urban Design Division at 410-396-8358.

CR/ewt

attachment

cc: Ms. Natasha Mehu, Mayor’s Office
Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor’s Office
The Honorable Eric Costello, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
Mr. Matthew Stegman, City Council President’s Office
Ms. Nikki Thompson, City Council President’s Office
Mr. Colin Tarbert, BDC
Ms. Kathleen Byrne, BMZA
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, DHCD
Ms. Elena DiPietro, Law Dept.
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC
Mr. Liam Davis, DOT
Ms. Natawna Austin, Council Services



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

October 7, 2021

REQUEST: City Council Bill #21-0109/ City Property – Renaming Calverton Elementary/ Middle School to Katherine Johnson Global Academy

For the purpose of changing the name of Calverton Elementary/Middle School, located at 1100 Whitmore Avenue, to Katherine Johnson Global Academy.

RECOMMENDATION: Amendment and Approval, with the following amendments:

- In lines 4 and continuing on to line 5, strike “201 North Bend Road” and replace with “1100 Whitmore Avenue”; and
- In line 12 strike “201 North Bend Road” and replace with “1100 Whitmore Avenue”

STAFF: Ivor A. Quashie

INTRODUCED BY: Councilmembers John T. Bullock & Phylicia Porter

OWNER: Mayor & City Council of Baltimore

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: This site is located in west Baltimore boarded by Winchester Street to the north, West Lafayette Street to the south, Whitmore Street to the east, and Braddish Street to the west.

General Area: The general area is a residential community of attached two-story homes and three- and four-story apartments. The property is zoned R-6.

HISTORY

There are no previous legislative or Planning Commission actions regarding this site.

ANALYSIS

Background:

Katherine Johnson was born as Creola Katherine Coleman on August 26, 1918, in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. She was the youngest of four children. Katherine was a child with a gift for numbers, she breezed through her classes and completed the eighth grade by age 10.

Although her town didn't offer classes for African Americans after that point, her father, Joshua, moved the family 120 miles to Institute, West Virginia, where they lived while she attended high school.

After high school, Mrs. Johnson was enrolled at West Virginia State College (now West Virginia State University) in Institute, West Virginia. Dr. William W. Schieffelin Claytor, the third African American to earn a Ph.D. in mathematics, became her mentor and was determined to prepare Johnson to become a research mathematician. At age 18, she graduated West Virginia State summa cum laude with degrees in mathematics and French.

After attending graduate school and working as a public-school teacher, she learned that the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) was hiring African American women to serve as "computers," namely, people who performed and checked calculations for technological developments. Johnson applied, and the following year she was accepted for a position at Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia.

Katherine married James Goble from 1939 to 1956, they had three daughters; Constance, Joylette, and Katherine. Mr. Goble died of a brain tumor in 1956. In 1958 Kathrine married James A. "Jim" Johnson, a United States Army officer and veteran of the Korean War.

In 1958, after NACA was reformulated into the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Johnson was among the people charged with determining how to get a human into space and back. As a result, the task of plotting the path for Alan Shepard's 1961 journey to space, the first in American history, fell on her shoulders.

The next challenge was to send a man in orbit around Earth. This involved far more difficult calculations, to account for the gravitational pulls of celestial bodies, and by then NASA had begun using electronic computers. Yet, the job wasn't considered complete until Johnson was summoned to check the work of the machines, providing the go-ahead to propel John Glenn into successful orbit in 1962.

While the work of electronic computers took on increased importance at NASA, Johnson remained highly valuable for her unwavering accuracy. She performed calculations for the historic 1969 Apollo 11 trip to the moon, and the following year, when Apollo 13 experienced a malfunction in space, her contributions to contingency procedures helped ensure its safe return. Ms. Johnson continued to serve as a key asset for NASA, helping to develop its Space Shuttle program and Earth Resources Satellite, until her retirement in 1986.

In November 2015, President Barack Obama presented Johnson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Margot Lee Shetterly's 2016 book *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Who Helped Win the Space Race* celebrated the little-known story of Johnson and her fellow African American women who would compute complex calculations for NASA. It was also turned into an Oscar-nominated feature film, *Hidden Figures* (2016), starring actress Taraji P. Henson as Katherine Johnson.

A year later, in September 2017, 99-year-old Katherine Johnson was honored by NASA, with the dedication of a new research building which is named after her – the Katherine G. Johnson Computational Research Facility. Johnson, her family and friends were at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new building which is part of NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia. In August of 2018 Katherine Johnson was honored with a statue and scholarship at her

alma mater West Virginia State University. NASA honored Katherine Johnson in 2019 when they renamed the Independent Verification and Validation Facility, in Fairmont, West Virginia, to the Katherine Johnson Independent Verification and Validation Facility.

When asked to give her advice to NASA employees who will follow in her footsteps and work in the new building named after her, Johnson simply said: “Like what you do and then you will do your best.”

Ms. Johnson passed away on February 24, 2020. She was 101 years old.

Notification: Notice of this meeting was sent to the West Gate Community, Tremont Community Association, Ten Hills Community Association, Beechfield Community Association, S. Rock Glen Association, Baltimore City Public Schools, Councilmember Phylicia Porter, and Councilmember John T. Bullock.



Chris Ryer
Director