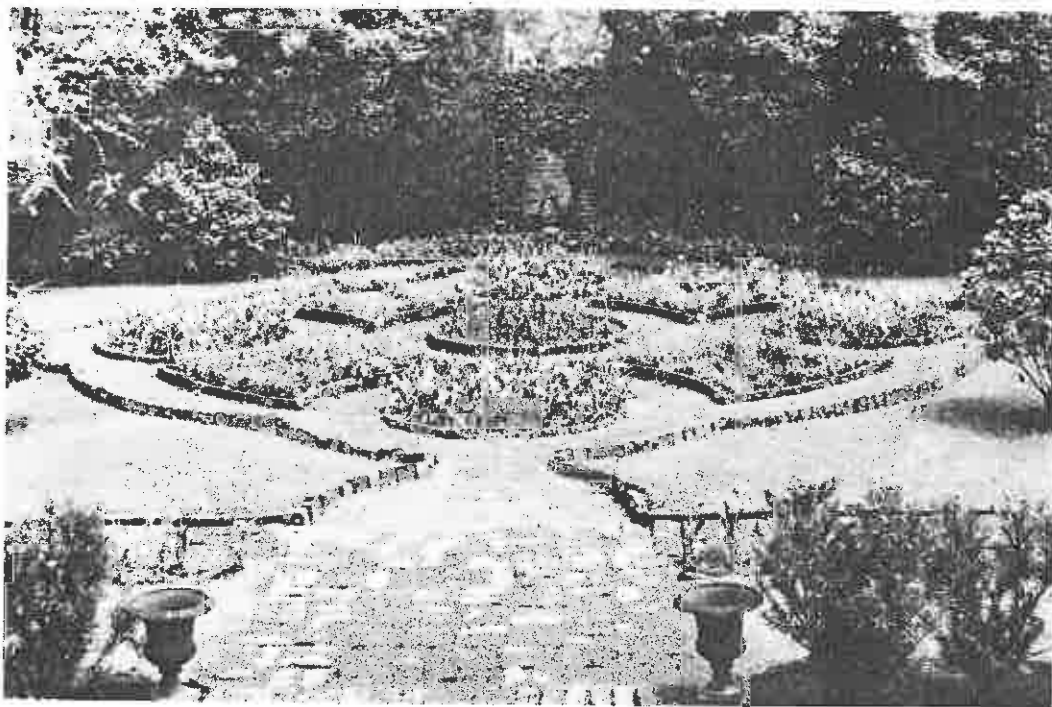


Allee of  
flowering  
peaches forms  
the approach



"The owner was inspired by an old pattern  
in planting the flower beds."



## **GARDEN OF THE TIMOTHY FORD HOUSE**

2004

**54 Meeting Street**

**c. 1800-06**

**Residence of Dr. and Mrs. A. Bert Pruitt**

This house was built by Timothy Ford, a New Jersey native who moved to Charleston after graduating from Princeton and qualifying as an attorney. Ford bought the site Nov. 9, 1800, for 500 pounds sterling from Francis Mulligan, and built a substantial, though simply ornamented, brick single house, three and a half stories high on a high basement with a two-story piazza. The French hero, the Marquis de Lafayette, was entertained here in 1824.

The house remained in the Ford family for more than a century. Dr. Edmund Ravenel, Timothy Ford's son-in-law, lived in the house in the early 19th century. He was one of the founders, in 1824, of the Medical University of South Carolina. His medical office stands today in the southwest corner of the garden.

During renovation of the carriage house, foundations of an older building were uncovered. Since the lot was within the old walled city of Charles Towne, it is possible the site has been occupied by structures since the 1680s.

### **GARDEN NOTES**

The swirls of brick surrounding the three planting beds are striking as you enter the garden. Bricks further divide the central bed. Pollarded crape myrtles, pruned to create beautiful balls of summer color, and Kwanzan cherries, adding glorious color, form a shaded allee. A pathway lined with a hedge of Korean boxwood, all rooted from one belonging to Mrs. Pruitt's grandmother, leads toward the Folly, designed by the late Sir Russell Page, which is covered with Confederate Jasmine.

As the path continued deeper within the garden, one passes two large benches which also belonged to the owner's grandmother, behind which is nestled the family pet cemetery. Beyond this is the formal all-green pattern garden designed by Loutrell Briggs, and restored by the present owners with his personal supervision. Native holly with darker green leaf is held within the lighter green dwarf boxwoods. The circle motif is repeated around each segment. Every other boxwood bed is trimmed in a concave pattern, with interfacing convex patterns. The whole is surrounded by a hedge of Korean box.

**GARDEN OF THE TIMOTHY FORD HOUSE**  
**PAGE 2**

The periphery of the garden contains many varieties of camellias, several of which were propagated in Charleston by the Lowcountry gardener, Mr. Sam Borum.

**PLANT LISTING**

Azaleas  
Bradford Pear Trees  
Camellia  
Confederate Jasmine  
Crape myrtle  
Elm Tree  
Fig Vine  
Korean Box  
Kwanzan' Cherry  
Live Oaks  
Loquat  
Magnolia Grandiflora  
Magnolia Salangiana  
Tea Olive  
Wisteria  
Yellow Jasmine

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION APPLICATION  
PART 1 — EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

NPS Office Use Only

NRIS No:

158002497

APR 7 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Office Use Only

Project No:

0163-93-5C

Instructions: Read the instructions carefully before completing application. Application will be returned unless a completed application form has been received.  
Type or print clearly in black ink. If additional space is needed, use continuation sheets or attach blank sheets.

1. Name of property: The Timothy Ford House  
Address of property: Street 54 Meeting Street  
City Charleston County Charleston State S. C. Zip 29401  
Name of historic district: Old and Historic District of Charleston  
☒ National Register district ☐ certified state or local district ☐ potential historic district

2. Check nature of request:

- ☒ certification that the building contributes to the significance of the above-named historic district (or National Register property) for the purpose of rehabilitation.  
☒ certification that the structure or building and, where appropriate, the land area on which such a structure or building is located contributes to the significance of the above-named historic district for a charitable contribution for conservation purposes.  
☐ certification that the building does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.  
☐ preliminary determination for individual listing in the National Register.  
☐ preliminary determination that a building located within a potential historic district contributes to the significance of the district.  
☐ preliminary determination that a building outside the period or area of significance contributes to the significance of the district.

3. Project contact:

Name Jonathan H. Poston, Director of Preservation Programs  
Street Historic Charleston Foundation City Charleston  
11 Fulton Street  
State South Carolina Zip 29401 Daytime Telephone Number (803) 724-8486

4. Owners Dr. & Mrs. A. Bert Pruitt

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, correct, and that I own the property described above. I understand that falsification of factual representations in this application is subject to criminal sanctions of up to \$10,000 in fines or imprisonment for up to five years pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 1001 and Mrs.

Name A. Bert Pruitt Signature A. Bert Pruitt Date 2/25/93

Organization [REDACTED]

Federal Security or Taxpayer Identification Number [REDACTED]

Street 54 Meeting Street City Charleston

State South Carolina Zip 29401 Daytime Telephone Number (803) 577-4432

NPS Office Use Only

The National Park Service has reviewed the Historic Preservation Certification Application — Part 1 for the above-named property and hereby determines that the property:

- ☒ contributes to the significance of the above-named historic district (or National Register property) and is a "certified historic structure" for the purpose of rehabilitation.  
☒ contributes to the significance of the above-named district and is a "certified historic structure" for a charitable contribution for conservation purposes in accordance with the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980.  
☐ does not contribute to the significance of the above-named district.

Preliminary Determinations:

- ☐ appears to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely be listed in the National Register of Historic Places if nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer according to the procedures set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
☐ does not appear to meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and will likely not be listed in the National Register.  
☐ appears to contribute to the significance of a potential historic district, which will likely be listed in the National Register of Historic Places if nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer.  
☐ appears to contribute to the significance of a registered historic district but is outside the period or area of significance as documented in the National Register nomination or district documentation on file with the NPS.  
☐ does not appear to qualify as a certified historic structure.

APR 15 1993

Date

National Park Service Authorized Signature

☐ See Attachments

SOUTHEAST REGION  
15 SPRING ST, SW  
ROOM 1150  
Ft. GEORGIA 30903  
National Park Service Office/Telephone No:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

REVIEW SHEET

Historic Preservation Certification Application—Significance

Property: Timothy Ford House, 54 Meeting Street, Charleston, SC Project No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic District: Old & Historic District of Charleston

3-1-93 date initial application received by State \_\_\_\_\_ date(s) additional information requested by State

3-1-93 date complete information received by State \_\_\_\_\_

4-6-93 date of this transmittal to NPS \_\_\_\_\_

Inspection of property by State staff? ☒ no ☐ yes date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

☒ There is adequate documentation enclosed to evaluate the historic character and integrity of this property.

☐ There is insufficient documentation to evaluate the property adequately. The application is missing the following items:

Reasonable efforts have been made to obtain this information. Copies of the information requests are enclosed.

NUMBER	This property involves:												
1	<table><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Extensive loss of historic fabric</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Obscured or covered elevation(s)</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Substantial alterations over time</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Moved property</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary determination of listing</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> State recommendation inconsistent with NR documentation</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> _____ for district</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation different from the applicant's request</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> _____ for individual property</td><td></td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Significance less than 50 years old</td><td></td></tr></table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive loss of historic fabric	<input type="checkbox"/> Obscured or covered elevation(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Substantial alterations over time	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved property	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary determination of listing	<input type="checkbox"/> State recommendation inconsistent with NR documentation	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ for district	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation different from the applicant's request	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ for individual property		<input type="checkbox"/> Significance less than 50 years old	
<input type="checkbox"/> Extensive loss of historic fabric	<input type="checkbox"/> Obscured or covered elevation(s)												
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<input type="checkbox"/> _____ for district	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation different from the applicant's request												
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ for individual property													
<input type="checkbox"/> Significance less than 50 years old													

NUMBER	Complete item(s) below as appropriate.
2	<p>(1) The documentation on file with the National Register cites the period(s) of significance of this historic district as <u>1700-1941</u></p> <p>(2) The property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> contributes _____ does not contribute to the historic significance of this registered historic district in: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> location <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> design <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> setting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> workmanship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> feeling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> association _____ Property is mentioned in the NR or State or local district documentation in Section _____, page _____.</p> <p>(3) For properties less than 50 years old: _____ the historical merits of the district (the periods and areas of significance) are documented in the National Register form or district documentation on file as less than 50 years old, justifying the certification of this property's contribution. _____ the exceptional historical or architectural significance of this property as described in the National Register form or district documentation on file justifies its certification as contributing. _____ there is insufficient justification to consider this property as contributing to the district for its individual exceptional architectural or historical significance or the significance of the district does not extend to the last 50 years.</p> <p>(4) For preliminary determinations: A. The status of the nomination for the property/historic district: _____ Nomination has already been submitted to State review board, and nomination will be forwarded to the NPS within _____ months. (Draft nomination is enclosed.) _____ Nomination was submitted to the NPS on _____. _____ Nomination will be submitted to the State review board within twelve months. _____ Nomination process likely will be completed within thirty months. _____ Other, explain: _____</p> <p>B. Evaluation of the property: _____ Property is individually eligible and meets National Register Criteria for Evaluation _____ Property is located within a potential registered district that meets National Register Criteria for Evaluation: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D Criteria Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G</p> <p>(5) The property is located in a registered district, is outside the period(s) or area(s) of significance as documented in the NR form and: _____ appears to contribute to the expanded significance of the district. Enclosed is the revised nomination documentation. _____ does not appear to contribute to the period(s) or area(s) of significance of the district.</p>

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
CERTIFICATION APPLICATION—  
PART 1**

NPS Office Use Only

The Timothy Ford House

Property Name

54 Meeting Street, Charleston, S. C. 29401

Property Address

Project Number:

5. Description of physical appearance: The Timothy Ford House at 54 Meeting Street is a three and one-half story stucco brick single house. It has a single pile, center hall floor plan. The hipped roof, clad in gray slate, has a single dormer on the street (west) facade and three chimney stacks rise from the north slope. The stucco is unscored and flat in texture. The west elevation of the original building, which overlooks Meeting Street, is three bays wide with 9/9 sash on the first and second floors and 6/6 on the third floor and garret dormer. Two later belt courses separate the three floors of windows. A substantial water table foots the building. A two story piazza runs along the south facade of the building, which was originally five bays wide, but with a rear (east) addition, is now seven bays wide. The primary entrance is the street door of the first floor piazza. Two arched windows grace the stair landings on the north facade with multiple windows along the first floor of the same facade. To the rear of 54 Meeting Street is a kitchen house also along the north property line. The southern portion of the lot is one of Charleston's longest gardens, running from Meeting Street the whole length of the property.

Date of Construction: 1800-1806 Source of Date: Historic Charleston Foundation/Robert Stockton

Date(s) of Alteration(s): c. 1915

Has building been moved? ☐ yes ☒ no. If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Statement of significance: The Timothy Ford House at 54 Meeting Street has been identified as "high style, rare, and worthy of preservation at all costs" by the Feiss-Wright survey. Its contribution to the City of Charleston's Historic District is unquestionable as a "Category Two" structure. As an excellent example of a single house with fine Adamesque detailing and as a property with a distinguished history, The Timothy Ford House is clearly worthy of designation as "contributory."

Timothy Ford, the house's first owner, served in the American Revolutionary War with honors before attending Princeton University. After graduating in law, Ford, probably following his classmates, removed to Charleston to practice. Befriending Chancellor Henry W. DeSaussure, Ford not only became his law partner but also shared a double residence on Meeting Street at Tradd before building the house at 54 Meeting Street between 1800 and 1806.

The house remained in the hands of Ford's family for longer than a century. On many occasions, prominent personalities were guests of the family. In 1824, the Marquis de Lafayette was entertained in the house during his visit to Charleston. One of Ford's two daughters married Edmund Ravenel, M. D., a conchologist of national repute. The prominent 19th century naturalist, Louis Agassiz, resided as a guest of Dr. Ravenel at the family's Sullivan's Island residence while studying the sea island habitats. Such was Ravenel's dedication to knowledge that he is said to have sacrificed a crop on his local plantations by restricting the irrigation waters so Agassiz could complete his local fish collection.

A University of South Carolina English professor, Dr. Frank Durham, feels certain that  
(Con't)

7. Photographs and maps.

Attach photographs and maps to application.

Continuation sheets attached: ☐ yes ☐ no

# CONTINUATION/AMENDMENT SHEET

## Historic Preservation Certification Application

The Timothy Ford House  
Property Name  
54 Meeting Street, Charleston, S. C. 29401  
Property Address

Instructions. Read the instructions carefully before completing. Type, or print clearly in black ink. Use this sheet to continue sections of the Part 1 and Part 2 application, or to amend an application already submitted. Photocopy additional sheets as needed.

This sheet: ☐ continues Part 1 ☐ continues Part 2 ☐ amends Part 1 ☐ amends Part 2 NPS Project Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6) STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Con't)

Dr. Ravenel was the narrator of Edgar Allen Poe's "The Gold Bug." He bases his hypothesis on the fact that Ravenel spent time on Sullivan's Island while the author was stationed at Fort Moultrie, and both studied shells.

The house left Ford's family in 1913, and in 1915 Mrs. Nannie Miles Durant bought the property and restored the house. She embellished the street facade with two molded brick string courses and added the present piazza screen. The garden was designed by Loutrel Briggs.

The Category Two rating on the Feiss-Wright survey, the excellent condition of the fine Adamesque detailing, the long term residence of a prominent Charleston family and the visitation of the Marquis de Lafayette combined, identify 54 Meeting as a building worthy of state-wide recognition. The easement donated over this property will preserve this excellent example of Neoclassical architecture and the heritage of its associated prominent personalities.

Name Dr. & Mrs. A. Bert Pruitt Signature *Helen A. Pruitt* Date 02/25/93  
Street 54 Meeting Street City Charleston  
State S.C. Zip 29401 Daytime Telephone Number (803) 577-4432

### NPS Office Use Only

- ☐ The National Park Service has determined that these project amendments meet the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation."
- ☐ The National Park Service has determined that these project amendments will meet the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" if the attached conditions are met.
- ☐ The National Park Service has determined that these project amendments do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation."

Date \_\_\_\_\_ National Park Service Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_ National Park Service Office/Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ See Attachments