

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic President Gerald R. Ford, Jr., House

and or common

2. Location

street & number 514 Crown View Drive

___ not for publication

city, town Alexandria

___ vicinity of

state Virginia

code

county

code

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
 - private
 - both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
 - being considered

Status

- occupied
 - unoccupied
 - work in progress
- Accessible**
- yes: restricted
 - yes: unrestricted
 - no

Present Use

- agriculture
 - commercial
 - educational
 - entertainment
 - government
 - industrial
 - military
- museum
 - park
 - private residence
 - religious
 - scientific
 - transportation
 - other:

4. Owner of Property

name Moussa Moadel

street & number 10240 Arizona Circle

city, town Bethesda

___ vicinity of

state Maryland

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alexandria City Hall

street & number 301 King Street

city, town Alexandria

state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____ has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date _____ ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____

state _____

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Gerald R. Ford, Jr., house on Crown View Drive is located in an upper middle-class residential development of single-family homes in a suburb of Washington, D. C. It consists of a rectangular 2-story main block with a two-story extension at the east side built to house a garage and the master bedroom, and a one-story extension in the middle of the rear elevation. The exterior is faced with brick, except for wooden siding on the second floor front and on the gable of the rear extension. In the house are 7 rooms, 2 and 2/3 baths, and a finished basement room.

When the Fords had the house built and moved into it in 1955, theirs was the second house on the block.¹ The Fords themselves arranged for a builder to construct the house and reviewed floorplans for it. President Ford has credited Mr. Viktors Purins of Grand Rapids, Michigan, with the design of the house.² Mrs. Ford was unsatisfied with the landscaping provided by the builder, and upon construction of the house, she saw to much of the lawn and garden work.³ In 1961, the Fords installed a 20- x 40- foot swimming pool, which the President enjoyed regularly.

When Mr. Ford became Vice President, the Secret Service installed a "Command Post" in the garage of the house, and made a number of related changes. These included:

- bricking up of the entrance to the garage and installation of a bay window in the former entrance as an observation point;
- removal of a garage window and replacement of that window with an entrance for Secret Service access to the Command Post;
- installation of a half-bath, closet, and partition for the office/squad room of the Command Post, and of a sink/stove/refrigerator combination;
- installation of sound-proofing for the Command Post;
- installation of equipment needed for various protective equipment, including fire, smoke, and radiation detection systems, which were connected to a control console in the Command Post;

1. Betty Ford with Chris Chase, The Times of My Life (New York: Ballantine Books, 1978, 1979), pp. 84-5.

2. Gerald R. Ford to Viktors Purins, October 25, 1974, folder "PP 13-5-2 Homes-Alexandria, Va.," White House Central Files, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

3. Betty Ford, Times of My Life, p. 85.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
... prehistoric	... archeology-prehistoric	... community planning	... landscape architecture	... religion
... 1400-1499	... archeology-historic	... conservation	... law	... science
... 1500-1599	... agriculture	... economics	... literature	... sculpture
... 1600-1699	... architecture	... education	... military	... social/
... 1700-1799	... art	... engineering	... music	... humanitarian
... 1800-1899	... commerce	... exploration/settlement	... philosophy	... theater
X 1900-	... communications	... industry	X politics/government	... transportation
		... invention		... other (specify)

Specific dates 1955-74

Builder Architect

Viktors Purins

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Gerald R. Ford, Jr., and his family lived at 514 Crown View Drive, Alexandria, Virginia, from the time of their house's construction there until the Fords moved into the White House on August 19, 1974, ten days after Mr. Ford took the oath of office as President of the United States. During this period, Mr. Ford served as Representative of the 5th district of Michigan in the U. S. Congress, as House Minority Leader, and as Vice President of the United States. Though from 1950 to 1979 the Fords owned a house at 1624 Sherman Street in Grand Rapids in order to maintain residence in Mr. Ford's home district, the Alexandria house became the family's primary home.

While living in this house, the future President established himself as a long-standing leader in the Congress, building up the reputation that eventually led to his confirmation as Vice President. The house represents both the economic and social circumstances of the Fords' life through a nineteen-year period when Ford's Congressional career and the Ford children were both maturing. Since the Fords had the house built for them, the house also evidences the quality of their domestic life and arrangements in a particularly direct way.

FAMILY LIFE

Mr. and Mrs. Ford moved to Washington after he was elected to Congress in 1948. They lived in two apartments before moving to Crown View Drive. The first was at 2500 Q Street in Georgetown. The second, where they moved after the birth of their first child, Mike, in 1950, was in a complex of buildings in Virginia known as Parkfairfax. They moved there so that the child would have a better environment for play. Around the time of the arrival of a second son, Jack, the Fords considered buying a house. Mrs. Ford felt that the apartment was cramped, and "also, I thought it would be best for Mike, now that he was reaching grammar-school age, if we settled in one place. Jerry was not going home to Michigan, that was obvious. He planned to stay in Congress."⁷ This contrasted with earlier years, when the family spent substantial periods in Grand Rapids, and Mike attended a kindergarten there.⁸ The house at Crown View Drive thus was an important part of the development of a stable community and family life

7. Betty Ford, Times of My Life, p. 84.

8. Ibid., p. 79.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Alexandria

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8
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3	1	9	3	8	0
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4	2	9	7	8	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

House and Lot 4, Block 3, Section 4, Clover; boundaries include the house and lot owned by Gerald R. Ford, Jr.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura J. Feller, historian

organization National Park Service, History Division

date February 19, 1985

street & number 1100 L Street, N. W.

telephone (202) 343-8167

city or town Washington, D. C.

state

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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- installation of a separate meter for Secret Service electrical power service;
- installation of bullet-resistant windows and of an alarm on one master-bedroom window;
- installation of low-intensity exterior lighting for night use, and of high-intensity lighting for emergencies at the front and rear;
- placement of two temporary guard booths with electricity, heat, and telephone service in the southeast and southwest corners of the rear yard; and
- addition of a storage shed on the west side of the house to replace the storage space in the garage occupied by the Secret Service Command Post.⁴

In addition, the equipment needed for the telephone system of the White House Communications Agency necessitated installation of framing, lighting, and electrical service in the attic. This basic work was completed in early 1974.⁵

4. Arthur F. Sampson, Administrator of the G.S.A., to George H. Mahon, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, December 7, 1973, folder "Vice Presidential Residence (Alexandria Home)," Office of Legal Counsel Files (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Arthur F. Sampson, Administrator of the G.S.A., to George H. Mahon, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, December 20, 1973, folder "Vice Presidential Residence (Alexandria Home)," Office of Legal Counsel Files (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan; "Schedule of Estimated GSA Costs Incurred at Vice President Ford's Residence, 514 Crown View Drive, Alexandria, Va. as of January 31, 1974," February 12, 1974, folder "Vice Presidential Residence (Alexandria Home)," Office of Legal Counsel Files (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

5. Sampson to Mahon, December 20, 1973, Ford Vice Presidential Papers; Letter from General Services Administration (no signature) to John L. McClellan, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations, no date, folder "Vice Presidential Residence (Alexandria Home)," Office of Legal Counsel Files (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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In addition, the Fords' driveway was altered to accommodate the Vice Presidential Lincoln. Added to the bill for that job were charges for work on the house's brick sidewalk and front stoop and the brick steps to the Secret Service facility.⁶

The Ford house on Crown View Drive is typical of middle-class housing in the northern Virginia suburbs of Washington built during the past three decades. The changes made for the Secret Service must have seemed especially major and obtrusive in the Fords' prosperous but unpretentious house and neighborhood on Crown View Drive.

6. Bill from Eugene J. Cullinane, Inc., January 23, 1974, folder "Vice Presidential Residence (Alexandria Home)," Office of Legal Counsel Files, (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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in Washington for the Fords. Mrs. Ford also commented on the growth of the family there:

If I'd known we were going to have two more babies, I'd have built more bedrooms and more bathrooms. And if I'd even considered the possibility that my little boys might grow up to be six foot something apiece, I'd have asked for thicker walls and higher ceilings.⁹

POLITICAL LIFE

President Ford's career in Congress developed while he lived in the Crown View Drive house. He had previously served on the Public Works Committee, and, in 1951, was named to the House Appropriations Committee. In 1963, he was selected as chairman of the House Republican Conference. He was permanent chairman of the Republican National Convention in 1968 and 1972. He became House Minority Leader in 1965, serving in that capacity until he became Vice President in 1973. He was also named to the Warren Commission, investigating the assassination of President Kennedy. Mr. Ford was at home on Crown View Drive when President Richard M. Nixon telephoned to tell him formally that he was Nixon's choice for the Vice Presidency.

When Ford was confirmed as Vice President in December, 1973, his new status brought changes in both his domestic and professional life. He and Mrs. Ford functioned as the Vice Presidential couple from their home on Crown View Drive. Though Congress had authorized use of the Admiral's Mansion at the Naval Observatory in Washington, D. C., as the official Vice Presidential residence, the Fords' preparations for moving to the mansion were cut short by President Nixon's resignation and Mr. Ford's assumption of the office of the Presidency. In the interim, Mrs. Ford used a corner of the Crown View Drive master bedroom as her social office. In at least one newspaper interview, she expressed a personal preference for remaining in her Alexandria home, rather than moving to the Naval Observatory.¹⁰

Secret Service personnel were, of course, assigned to the Fords when Mr. Ford took office as Vice President. The presence of the Secret Service and of

9. Ibid., pp. 84-85.

10. Newspaper clipping, "Mrs. Ford: Don't Move," Washington Star-News, April 5, 1974, folder "Vice Presidential Official Residence-General," Office of Legal Counsel Files: (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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the press in a neighborhood of the scale of the Crown View Drive address was, in some ways, disruptive for them and for the Fords' neighbors. As Mrs. Ford commented at the time, "The Secret Service say they're not used to working in a middle-income neighborhood."¹¹

The Fords lived on Crown View Drive throughout Mr. Ford's service as Vice President. After Mr. Ford took the oath of office as President on August 9, 1974, the Fords returned to their Alexandria house, to allow time for the Nixons' belongings to be moved. That evening, they had dinner at home with friends and associates, including Mr. and Mrs. Mel Laird.¹² They moved to the White House on August 19.

The drawbacks of President Ford's continued residence in a Northern Virginia suburban home were painfully evident to the White House staff by this time. As one staff member complained:

Those of us on the Press Office staff were very glad when the Ford family moved to the White House. One of us in the Press Office had to accompany the press "pool" to and from the Alexandria home each morning and evening....¹³

For other Americans, though, there was perhaps a reassuring quality in the normality of the new President's life, in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Mrs. Ford's description of the morning after Mr. Ford's swearing-in captures this quality:

August 10. At 7 A. M., the President of the United States, in baby blue short pajamas, appears on his doorstep looking for the morning paper, then goes back inside to fix his orange juice and English muffin. Before leaving for his office, he signs autographs on his lawn.¹⁴

11. Newspaper clipping, interview of Mrs. Ford in Women's Wear Daily, December 28, 1973, folder "Vice Presidential Residence (Alexandria Home)," Office of Legal Counsel Files: (1970) 1973-74, William E. Casselman, Ford Vice Presidential Papers, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

12. Memorandum, Philip W. Buchen to Warren Rustand, March 31, 1975, folder "PP 13-2, 1/1/75 to 4/30/75," White House Central Files, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

13. J. W. "Bill" Roberts to "Bob" Conrad, October 30, 1974, folder "PP 13-5-2 [Homes] Alexandria, Va.," White House Central Files, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

14. Betty Ford, Times of My Life, p. 177.

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The Fords retained ownership of the Crown View house and rented it out, until they decided that upon leaving the White House they would settle in California, partly because they felt that Mrs. Ford's arthritis would improve in a hot, dry climate. On January 13, 1977, eight days before President Jimmy Carter's inauguration, President Ford wrote to the next owner of 514 Crown View Drive: "I am happy to hear that you will soon be the new owner of our Alexandria home.... Betty, the children, and I had many wonderful years in that home."¹⁵ Mrs. Ford reflected later about leaving their home of nineteen years:

For me, leaving the White House wasn't nearly so much of a wrench as leaving our house in Alexandria. After we decided we weren't going to move back and put the house up for sale, I never went over there again. I didn't want to. We had built the place, the children had grown up there, all of our neighbors were friends. We'd been to so many block parties and Fourth of July celebrations, we'd planted gardens and put in trees, and I knew if I saw it again it would upset me. I wanted to think of my new life, to look forward.¹⁶

15. Gerald R. Ford, Jr., to Moussa Moaadel, January 13, 1977, folder "PP 13-5-2 [Homes] Alexandria, Va.," White House Central Files, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

16. Betty Ford, Times of My Life, p. 299.

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Ford, Betty, with Chris Chase. The Times of My Life. New York: Ballantine
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Ford, Gerald R., Jr. A Time to Heal. New York: Harper and Row and the
Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1979.

ter Horst, Jerald F. Gerald R. Ford and the Future of the Presidency. New York:
the Third Press, 1974.