city, town

OMB No. 1024-0018 Expires 10-31-87

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only RECEIVED received date entered AUG 191988

			. f >	NATIONAL REGISTER
1. Nam	е			
historic	Arthur Perkins Hou	se		
and or common	same			
2. Loca				
street & number	242 South Main Str	eet	~	not for publication
city, town	Rutland	N/A vicinity of	·	
state	Vermont code	50 county	Rutland	code 021
3. Clas	sification		,	
Category district _X_ building(s) structure site object	Ownership public _x_ private both Public Acquisition N/A in process being considered	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted		museum park x private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Proper	ty		
name	Thomas P. Martin			
street & number	242 South Main Stre	eet		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
city, town	Rutland	N/A_ vicinity of	state V	ermont 05701
5. Loca	ition of Lega	l Descriptio	n	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc. Office	e of the City Clerk	· 	
street & number	1 Strongs Avenue			
city, town	Rutland		state V	ermont 05701
6. Repi	resentation i	n Existing S	urveys	
title	N/A	has this prop	perty been determined eligib	ole? yes _x no
date			federal state	county loca
depository for su	ırvey records			
-				

state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
excellent	deteriorated ruins	_x_ unaltered altered	X_ original site moved date
fair	unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Surrounded by mixed commercial and residential development near the southern Rutland city limits, the Arthur Perkins House stands within expansive, diversely landscaped grounds. The two-and-one-half story, two-by-six bay house of blended Colonial Revival and late Queen Anne style is constructed of brick together with various precast and poured concrete features. The latter include the water table, corner quoins, window sills, and the components of two porches below roof level. The irregular fenestration incorporates brick polygonal and rectangular window projections and several large-light windows with leaded transoms. A bracketed cornice follows the flared eaves of the slate-shingled, cross-gable roof. The interior of the house retains virtually its original finish, the abundant birch woodwork being enriched by classical details. The house possesses an unusually high degree of historic architectural integrity. The grounds display an extraordinary variety of flowers, shrubs, and trees arranged within a relatively formal plan.

The Arthur Perkins House is situated on relatively flat terrain near the south boundary of the City of Rutland. The house stands at the south corner of the intersection where Curtis Avenue joins South Main Street (U.S. Route 7) from the east. The property encompasses a total of five original city lots (each of 60 by 150 feet), bounded on the east by Chase Avenue. The narrow avenues traverse a residential area while the heavily trafficked South Main Street, newly widened to five lanes, is being redeveloped into a commercial strip.

A paved driveway passes along the south and east elevations of the house, intersecting both South Main Street and Curtis Avenue. The property lacks a garage. A tool shed and greenhouse are sited a short distance to the southeast of the house near the south edge of its grounds. A latticed summerhouse is placed at the east edge next to Chase Avenue.

The moderate setback of the house limits its front (west) and north grounds. The grounds expand somewhat southward and achieve their fullest extent to the rear (east) of the house. There, two more formally arranged flower gardens and an adjoining vegetable garden cover three of the original city lots. Hard-surfaced perpendicular walkways subdivide the east grounds into four unequal quadrants. One walkway leads from the driveway behind the house eastward through an arched rose arbor to the summerhouse, and the other leads from Curtis Avenue to the tool shed.

The two-and-one-half story house of essentially rectangular plan rests on a high poured concrete foundation punctuated by multiple single-light square windows and capped by a water table of beveled precast concrete blocks. The brick walls are laid up in six-course American bond, and are defined at the corners by precast concrete quoins. The window openings have beveled precast concrete sills and splayed flat-arch brick lintels. They are fitted predominantly with one-over-one sash, some being coupled on the second story.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page 2

The principal exterior application of wood occurs at the eaves of the cross-gable roof. A broad frieze surmounts the wall below a band of dentils. The deeply overhanging molded cornice is sheathed on its soffit with beaded matched boards, and is supported by curvilinear wood brackets that are enlarged and paired at the corners. Above the flared eaves, the roof ascends at moderate pitch, being shingled with green slate. A massive rectangular central chimney straddles the ridge and culminates in a corbeled cap.

The main (west) facade presents to South Main Street an asymmetrical two-bay arrangement. The left section projects forward between concrete-quoined corners and contains the main entrance. The entrance ensemble is comprised of a hardwood door with nearly full-length undivided glazing flanked by sidelights with corresponding glazing, all enframed by a narrow molded surround. The right section of the first story is illuminated by a large single-hung, single-light window with transom of decoratively leaded clear glass.

A full-width, two-bay porch built largely of concrete shelters the first story, repeating the projection of the left section. Approached by unsheltered closed-string concrete steps both at the main entrance and the south end, the poured concrete deck is protected by a precast concrete balustrade with single-bellied balusters. Standing atop concrete pedestals, triplet precast concrete Tuscan columns support the shallow-pitched, slate-shingled roof whose eaves treatment lacks only the brackets of the main eaves. The porch ceiling is sheathed with beaded matched boards.

On the second story, a three-sided bay window with one-over-one sash projects from the left section. Surmounting the bay window, a wood-faced gable forms another forward projection that incorporates the stepped-out main cornice (and identical raking cornice). Turned pendants hang from the outer corners next to angled pierced screens that connect to the bay window. A three-light gable window (replacement of the original twenty-light version) is flanked on three sides by molded sunbursts. Above the facade's right bay, a smaller gabled dormer emerges from the roof slope. Its overhanging eaves lack both brackets and cornice returns. The three-light window (replacement of the 24-light original) is surmounted by a sunburst while each side of the dormer bears another.

The longer north (Curtis Avenue) elevation of the house consists of a three-bay right half below the main gable and a three-bay left half below the horizontal eaves. Projecting from the right-center of the gabled half, a five-sided brick bay window rises from the continuous concrete foundation to a slated hip roof with denticulated cornice. Its only fenestration occurs at the one-and-one-half story level, where slender sash with leaded

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

upper lights (and continuous concrete sill) illuminate the landing of the main interior staircase. To the right of the bay window is a large transomed window like that on the right of the main facade. To the left, a shallow rectangular projection with denticulated cornice contains a threepart window with large central transomed light flanked by slender sash with leaded upper halves. The left half of this facade is arranged in an Xpattern of standard-sized windows above a ground-level central entrance with single-light paneled door.

The opposite (south) elevation shares the same division into gable and eaves halves with irregular arrangement. The gable half includes on the left a two-story version of the north elevation's shallow rectangular projection with three-part window. To the right of this projection, another three-part window is mounted in the wall plane. The eaves half contrasts by having a three-bay porch with concrete components recessed into its first story. The deck, balustrade, and steps match those of the front porch while the precast concrete chamfered pillars apparently reflect different structural requirements. The left-bay kitchen entrance has a hardwood door with fulllength glazing.

Projecting from the second story, a shed-roofed balcony shelters the entrance steps. The balcony incorporates paneled wood pillars, turned balustrade, and a continuation of the main frieze and cornice (angled downward to follow the balcony's eaves line) with sunburst screens mounted below the frieze. Turned pendants hang from the outer corners of the balcony's underside, which is sheathed with beaded matched boards like its ceiling. Opening onto the balcony from a bedroom are double-leaf doors with full-length glazing.

The rear (east) gable elevation of the house displays an irregular three-bay arrangement lacking an entrance. The end bay of the recessed porch occupies the left corner but does not include steps for access.

The interior of the house is arranged on an irregular plan. On the first floor, an entrance hall in the northwest corner leads to the front parlor on the south and the dining room on the east. A dog-leg stair ascends to the second floor from the north side of the entrance hall. A second parlor adjoins the front parlor on the east. Next to the east of the dining room, a serving pantry provides access to the spacious kitchen in the southeast corner. A much smaller maid's room occupies the opposite (northeast) corner. The second floor differs by having a longitudinal (east-west) hall flanked by four bedrooms on the south and utility rooms on the north. The third floor contains a full-width recreation room adjoined on the east by two small bedrooms.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

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The first-floor rooms share the same finish materials. The abundant woodwork consists of naturally finished birch enriched with classical details. The door and window surrounds incorporate molded pilasters, plain frieze, and egg-and-dart bed molding at the cornice projection. The plastered walls are finished with earth-tone glazings, accented by stenciling of various patterns that follows the cove molding with miniature egg-and-dart band next to the plastered ceilings. The floors are laid with narrow matched hardwood boards, and the baseboard carries a top molding.

The entrance hall is distinguished by vertically paneled birch wainscoting with molded top rail. The wall surfaces of the staircase are entirely paneled to match. Its balustrade is comprised of turned balusters, a molded handrail, and a square newel with egg-and-dart molding. The lower flight ascends to a landing in the north bay window; a spindle screen surmounts the embayed opening. Opposite the stair, a broad trabeated opening supported by birch Tuscan columns on square pedestals enters the front parlor.

A vertically paneled single pocket door opens from the hall into the dining room, where paneled wainscoting reaches a greater height (about five feet) than in the hall. Another pocket door leads from the dining room to the east parlor. A large pressed-brick fireplace is placed diagonally across its northeast corner; above the semielliptical—arched firebox, a corbeled mantel carries a marbleized shelf. Double pocket doors provide an enlarged opening between the two parlors.

A vertically paneled swinging door enters the serving pantry from the dining room, providing the only passage between the front rooms and the kitchen. The east wall of the pantry is wholly enclosed by original built—in cupboards and drawers. Another swinging door opens into the kitchen, which possesses similar cupboards and drawers on its west wall along with other matching woodwork.

The upper-floor rooms generally share the finish materials of the first floor. Among the four south bedrooms on the second floor, the middle two are equipped with diagonal corner brick fireplaces. The third bedroom from the front is distinguished by the double-leaf exterior doors that open onto the balcony above the kitchen entrance.

Sited a short distance southeast of the house, the circa 1920 tool shed is a one-story, three-by-one bay, wood-framed and clapboarded building of rectangular plan. Its asphalt-shingled gable roof has deeply overhanging eaves. The three-bay north eaves front includes a central entrance with six-panel door. The window openings are fitted with six-over-six sash. An added smaller-scaled, shed-roofed wing is attached to the rear (south) elevation.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Placed circa 1950 near the shed's south elevation and oriented perpendicular to it, a small greenhouse possesses a metal skeleton of gambrel form fitted with clear glass lights. A central doorway enters its north gable end.

Facing the house from the east edge of the grounds, a circa 1920, one-story, wood-framed summerhouse is enclosed with wood lattice of rectangular pattern below its asphalt-shingled hip roof. A large rectangular opening marks its west front, revealing the interior floor laid with dressed marble slabs.

The landscaped grounds are subdivided informally into three principal sections. The front section nearly surrounds the house, extending from South Main Street to a parallel hedgerow of large shrubs opposite the kitchen entrance of the south elevation. The middle section, including the so-called Arbor Garden, extends from that hedgerow eastward to an interrupted hedgerow beyond the arched rose arbor. The third section, known as the Far East Garden, continues from there to the Chase Avenue border of the property.

Along the west, south, and east sides, the front grounds are enclosed by hedgerows of various shrubs and trees. Barberry and syringa parallel the South Main Street sidewalk, terminated by honeysuckle at the northwest corner. A row of medium-height balsams and a parallel picket fence define the south edge of the front grounds, appended by lilacs and rugosa roses toward the southwest corner. The hedgerow defining the east edge of the front section comprises white fringe bush, lilacs, and hawthorne. Iris and day lilies form a lower story along the inside of the hedgerows.

The house itself is closely surrounded by shrubs and festooned with climbing vines. Spirea and syringa shelter the front porch between a Chinese fringe bush at its southwest corner and barberry at the northwest; entangle the columns. Hydrangea follows the foundation of the north elevation, whose wall surface is partly shielded by grape and wood vines. An evergreen bittersweet enshrouds the first story of the east elevation. Honeysuckle and syringa flank the south porch while a large clematis ascends to the second-story balcony.

The Arbor Garden is defined along its west edge partly by a lattice fence with climbing roses and partly by a hedgerow of honeysuckle, barberry, and roses along the east leg of the driveway. Spirea and honeysuckle parallel the Curtis Avenue sidewalk and barberry forms an outer hedge next to the street pavement. White, pink, purple, and Japanese lilacs constitute the east hedgerow. Day lilies, phlox, and iris compose a lower story around the inner edge. Standing near the center of this garden, the namesake roundarched, wood lattice arbor with integral benches supports climbing roses. Circular beds of flowers, principally iris, surround paper birches and pussy

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

willows on the lawn areas. Next to the south hedgerow of lilacs and boxelder, a wildflower bed contains lady's-slippers, jack-in-the-pulpit, trilliums, and other native species.

The Far East Garden is bounded on the Curtis Avenue side by a spirea and lilac hedgerow. Along the Chase Avenue side, paper birches, blue spruces, and cedars are intermingled. Junipers flank the summerhouse while both tree and bush hydrangeas occupy the garden's northeast and southeast interior corners. The south hedgerow includes highbush cranberry and Concord grape vines, the latter entwined on the metal backstop of a former tennis court. Flower beds curve toward the center from the corners of this garden. Beyond the south hedgerow lies a rectangular vegetable garden bounded by lilacs and sumac.

More than twenty mature American elms formerly shaded the house and grounds. Only two remain alive (near the northeast and southwest corners of the grounds), the others having been killed by Dutch elm disease and removed during the past decade. Three sugar maples (one mature) and a silver maple on the east grounds are now emerging as the dominant shade trees. Four paper birches contribute a more ornamental nature among the deciduous species. A massive white pine towers above the southeast grounds.

The grounds are planted luxuriantly with many species and varieties of perennial and annual flowers. Iris are represented by the largest number of varieties followed by roses, day lilies, tulips, and peonies. The flowers are distributed throughout the grounds, both in distinct beds within the lawns and along the margins of the lawns, walkways, and hedgerows.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899X 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture architecture art commerce communications	community planning	landscape architectur law literature military music philosophy politics/government	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1915–16	Builder/Architect All	pert J. Bissell	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Arthur Perkins House embodies a distinctive blend of Colonial Revival and late Queen Anne style characteristics of residential architecture dating from the second decade of this century. Furthermore, the brick house incorporates to an unusual extent both poured and precast concrete features. These indicate the influence of a nearby reinforced concrete factory that was constructed five years earlier by the same contractor, Albert J. Bissell, for the Rutland Fire Clay Company owned by Arthur Perkins and other members of the Perkins family. The substantial house reflects the contemporary prosperity of that company, whose clay-based products were being distributed throughout the United States. By its virtually unaltered exterior and interior appearance, the Perkins House provides an exceptional record of period architectural and decorative fashion in Vermont.

The parents of Arthur Worden Perkins, Rufus and Olive Perkins, lived in East Middle-bury, Vermont when Arthur was born in 1861. Some years later, the family moved to Rutland where Rufus subsequently operated a grocery store. He also pursued an active interest in minerals and, while prospecting southeast of the town center, discovered a small deposit of iron ore. In 1872, he leased mineral rights at the site, and proceeded to build a furnace to reduce the iron.

Finding red clay near the site, Rufus Perkins used that material in the construction of the furnace. The iron deposit, however, soon proved insufficient. Rufus then shifted his effort to the clay itself. After the 1874 purchase of land containing the clay bed, he installed a small mill and began selling the clay to local foundries. Within a few years, he developed a new product using the clay, a moldable stove lining material, that became highly sucessful in the retail market.

Arthur Perkins entered the mercantile business while yet in his teens but soon joined his father in the clay enterprise. In 1883, he along with a brother and their father formed the Rutland Fire Clay Company, and a small factory was constructed on the mine property. Also in 1883, Arthur married Louise Fisher, and the couple occupied a house built near the factory.

Additional products using the clay were devised and the company expanded its production. Rufus Perkins died in 1898, and Arthur thereupon succeeded to the presidency of the firm. Disaster struck in 1902 when the factory was destroyed by fire. The company then moved its manufacturing to a former toy works at the intersection of Curtis Avenue and the Rutland Railroad track within the Rutland city limits, about one and one-half miles west of the mine.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Ge	eograpi	nical Data			
	ninated propert me <u>Rutlan</u> es	-		Quad	rangle scale 1:24000
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G	ary description	on and justification			
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List all states	and counties	s for properties over	Tapping state o	county bounda	ries
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street & numbe	r Green Mour	ntain Turnpike		telephone, 802-	-875 - 3379
ity or town	Chester			state Vern	
12. Sta	ate His	toric Pres	ervation	Officer	Certification
The evaluated s		his property within the			
665), I hereby naccording to the	ominate this pro	operty for inclusion in cocedures set forth by	the National Regis	ter and certify that	on Act of 1966 (Public Law 89- t it has been evaluated
itle Director	r/State Hist	toric Preservatio	n Officer	da	te 08/15/88
For NPS use	e only	property is included in			te 9-27-88
Keeper of the	ne National Reg	gister		ua ua	/ a/ 10
Attest:				dat	to
Chief of Reg	gistration				

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

Far NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

j**e** 2

Fire struck again in 1910 when the Curtis Avenue factory was destroyed. To avoid a future recurrence, Arthur Perkins then decided to provide fireproof buildings for the company. M. C. Tuttle designed the new factory in modern industrial style using reinforced concrete, and Albert J. Bissell contracted for its construction. Similar additions were made during the 1920s; the extant complex remained in Rutland Fire Clay Co. ownership until 1978.

The efficacy of that fireproof factory undoubtedly impressed the company's president. When the time came to provide a new residence for his family of four children, Arthur Perkins chose a site west of the factory where Curtis Avenue joins South Main Street. He purchased a total of four standard city lots (each of 60 by 150 feet) bounded by streets except along the south side. Then he retained Albert Bissell to build the house, whose exterior shell consists almost entirely of fireproof materials including a significant proportion of concrete. (He later bought an additional city lot.)

The origin of the house's rather conservative design is not known although Bissell constructed at least one similar house elsewhere in Rutland. In the Perkins House, Bissell used an extraordinary variety of concrete structural and stylistic features. Some were poured in place while others were precast. Both porch ensembles are built wholly of concrete below the roof level, their decks and steps being poured while the Tuscan columns, chamfered pillars, and balustrades are precast. Other precast components include the beveled water table, corner quoins, and window sills. Construction of the house began in the autumn of 1915 and was completed the following year.

Siting of the house near the northwest corner of the property provided surrounding grounds that expanded southward and, especially, eastward. During the early 1920s, Amy Louise Perkins (the elder daughter of Arthur and Louise, and a graduate of the Museum School of Fine Arts in Boston) designed and directed the landscaping of the grounds. She selected a diverse array of perennial flowers, ferns, vines, shrubs, and both coniferous and deciduous trees. Several rarer species of wildflowers, including three varieties of lady's-slipper (Cypripedium), were transplanted from the mine property or elsewhere. The plantings on the east grounds were complemented by arched rose arbors and a latticed summerhouse, the latter placed at the east edge of the property. A tennis court with clay surface was also installed on the east grounds.

Apart from his leadership of the increasingly successful Rutland Fire Clay Co., Arthur Perkins engaged prominently in local political and financial affairs. In 1908, while residing in the house on the mine property, he represented the Town of Rutland in the Vermont legislature. After moving to his new house within the City of Rutland, he served several terms on the Board of Aldermen. Then in 1927 he was elected Mayor of the city and held

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

that position until 1935. Meanwhile in 1933 he became president of the Killington National Bank in Rutland. Declining health caused him not to seek re-election as Mayor, and he died on December 29, 1935 at age 74.

Both of Arthur Perkins' sons, Cleon A. (1896-1975) and Craigue S. (1903-) Perkins, joined the Rutland Fire Clay Co. and pursued careers in its management. Upon the death of his father, Cleon succeeded to the presidency. The house on South Main Street remained the residence of Arthur's widow until her death in 1946. Subsequently the daughters, Amy Louise (1888-1976, and a director of the company until 1972) and Vera A. (1898-) Perkins, have resided here.

The house has retained to the present (1987) its original exterior design without alteration. The interior has received only minor changes in decoration. The classically detailed woodwork and many original furnishings (including Arthur's massive billiards table in the large third-floor recreation room) impart directly its period character. The house, therefore, constitutes a tangible record both of the architectural and decorative preferences of the original owners and the contemporary fashion. Only to a somewhat lesser extent have the surrounding grounds retained their original plan and plantings. Among the latter, the principal losses, e.g., several American elms, have been to disease rather than intentional removal.

In the degree of its historic integrity, the Arthur Perkins House surpasses most other examples of stylistically similar brick residential architecture in Vermont. This house is further distinguished by its unique array of poured and precast concrete features, an extraordinary application of building technology usually restricted to industrial and engineering structures. Its use in the Perkins House illustrates the apparent influence of probably the earliest substantial factory in Vermont constructed of reinforced concrete by the same contractor for the same owner. Remaining in family ownership, the house represents the multifarious achievements of Arthur Perkins and the members of his family prominent in the industrial, financial, and political affairs of Vermont's second largest city.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1

- 1. "Arthur W. Perkins, Rutland's Mayor Eight Years, Dies." Rutland Herald, 82 (December 30, 1935), 1.
- 2. Downs, Winfield Scott, ed. <u>Encyclopedia of American Biography</u>. New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1938.
- 3. Martin, Janet P. Rutland Fire Clay Company 100th Anniversary. Rutland, Vt., 1983?
- 4. Perkins, Amy Louise. Notebook describing species and arrangement of plantings on grounds of Arthur Perkins House, 1920s-1970s. Collection of Vera A. Perkins, Rutland, Vt.
- 5. Stone, Arthur F. The Vermont of Today. (5 vols.) New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1929.

NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB No. 1024-0018 Expires 10-31-87

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

10

Page

The property being nominated consists of the Arthur Perkins House and outbuildings together with three contiguous parcels of land that form the lot bounded by South Main Street on the west, Curtis Avenue on the north, and Chase Avenue on the east. The lot extends 120 feet along the west side, 300 feet along the north side, 180 feet along the east side, and a total of 360 feet in three courses along the south side. The deed to the property is recorded in Book 257, Pages 38-40 of the Rutland City Land Records. The nominated property is sufficient to protect the historic resources.