

Cusick House

315 E. Amerige Avenue

ca. 1895

Queen Anne Victorian

Status: Local Landmark



The Cusick House is the only large house in the Queen Anne style intact in Fullerton. Although not an elaborate version of the style, the building shows most of the distinguishing characteristics: a complex roof line, an emphasis on the vertical (particularly in the slender front porch supports), the use of different textures of shingling, the verandah as a key design element, and fine detailing such as the gable's returns reminiscent of pediments. There are reportedly handmade, square nails still visible in some places.

The house was built in the mid-1890s, with the Morris Cusick family gaining ownership by 1903. The Cusick family resided here until the mid-1920s.

The house was saved from a proposed demolition and fully rehabilitated in 1993. The exterior features were repaired or replicated, and the foundation of the house was completely upgraded. With the rehabilitation, the house was converted into two residential units, which required a minor modification on the backside to allow for the entry to the second unit. The three-story "water tower" structure at the rear of the property was also built at that time. Altogether, there are now four residential units on this property.

The favorable resolution of the property's development in 1993, which led to the restoration of this house, had some clear lessons. It showed that a rehabilitation and reuse of older buildings could be a feasible endeavor even when a significant amount of structural repair is needed. Similarly, it illustrates that a request to demolish a building, based on the owner's claim that there is no economic return otherwise, must be carefully scrutinized.